

Spring 2014

Women Struggle to Reach the Top: Gender Disparities in the Workplace

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Recommended Citation

Doherty, Shannon E., "Women Struggle to Reach the Top: Gender Disparities in the Workplace" (2014). *Departmental Honors Projects*. Paper 17.

Women Struggle to Reach the Top: Gender Disparities in the Workplace

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An Honors Thesis

Submitted for partial fulfillment of the requirements

for graduation with honors in Psychology

From Hamline University

April 28, 2014

Abstract

The study examined the degree to which gender role expectations, anticipated role conflict and same-gendered role models are related to women's career centrality. It was predicted that women who adhere more to male norms than female norms will indicate more career centrality than women who adhere more to female norms; women who anticipate less work-family conflict will indicate more career centrality; women will identify female role models more often than male role models; and women who identify female role models will report those individuals to have a higher degree of impact on their career centrality. There were 97 students male (19) and female (78) from a single private, Midwestern liberal arts college that participated. Participants completed a survey, in which they responded to items measuring their adherence to male and female norms, items measuring their anticipation of work-family conflict in their future career, one item measuring the degree of impact their identified role model had on their career centrality, and items measuring their career centrality. Findings, revealed women identify female role models more often than they do male role models. The results also reveal a strong positive relationship between reported role model impact and career centrality. Finally, the current study revealed a positive relationship between male norm adherence and career centrality.

Women Struggle to Reach the Top: Gender Barriers in the Workplace

Dating back to the beginning of the nineteenth century women have faced adversity in academic and professional roles. The first step towards equality for women began with the Women's Rights Movement in 1848 when the first convention devoted towards women's rights was held in Seneca Falls, New York. The convention was led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, who drafted a "Declaration of Sentiments, Grievances, and Resolutions" where they emphasized the preamble of the Declaration of Independence of the United States: "We hold these truths to be self evident: that all men and women are created equal" (History, Art & Archives, 2007). The convention at Seneca Falls was the initial step towards equality, setting the map for women such as Victoria Woodhull, the first woman to run for president in 1872, Lettie Pate Whitehead, the first American woman to direct a major United States corporation-The Coca-Cola Company in 1934, Margaret Floy Washburn who was the first woman to be granted a PhD in Psychology to Rosie the Riveter who encouraged women, in 1942, to enter the workforce. These women pursued their passions and represent the strong will women have to succeed in the academic and professional world. The journey towards equality has been extensive and despite making considerable progress, true equality has not been achieved.

Two Wall Street Journal reporters used the infamous metaphor of the "glass ceiling" to describe the limitation of women's advancement (Hoyt, 2010). The glass ceiling metaphor represents unseen and unsanctioned barriers in an allegedly nondiscriminatory organization that prevents women from securing top leadership roles (Hoyt, 2010). As time has progressed, women have been able to break through the glass ceiling. However, they are then often, confronted with a "glass cliff." The "glass cliff" refers to the phenomenon whereby women are overrepresented in leadership roles associated with high risk and an increased chance of failure

(Ryan, Haslam, Hersby, Kulich, & Atkins, 2007). According to the gender-stress-misidentification model (Ryan et al., 2007), the glass cliff positions are inherently stressful, reducing the sense of organizational identification women experience. An example of inheriting a glass cliff position would be a woman being hired to replace a more experienced male manager, and being assigned to take over an already failing project. The stress of the failing project would put more pressure on the woman to succeed.

According to Ryan et al. (2007), women are able to identify key organizational factors contributing to their leadership positions being more precarious. The three key factors identified are not being included in the informal networks that exist within their workplace that may provide support to cope with the challenges associated with such positions, the challenge of completing an assigned challenging task without sufficient information to complete the job, and the lack of acknowledgement, resulting in feeling of precariousness. The gender disparity in leadership roles may be difficult to eliminate if women are expected to overcome the glass ceiling and defy adversity in the glass cliff positions.

There continues to be a gap in earnings between genders, furthering support that true gender equality does not exist. Full-time, working women are currently earning roughly 77%, or 77 cents to every dollar, their white male counterparts are earning (Casserly, 2013). It is argued that the gap in wages is due to the type of jobs and industries women choose to work in. However, a 7-10% gap in earnings continues to exist when job, college attended, choice of major and employer are equivalent (Casserly, 2013). In addition to a discrepancy in earnings, there is disparity amongst men and women in top leadership positions. Women have made strides to obtain top leadership positions and success has been seen. However, when exploring the data closer, the disparity of men and women is significant. Women represent a mere 4% of CEOs of

Fortune 500 Companies (Clark, 2103) and occupy 18.3% of the 535 seats in the 113th Congress (Center for American Women and Politics, 2013). The aim of the current study is to explore factors contributing to the lack of representation of women in top leadership positions, with the purpose of identifying factors influencing women's career centrality.

Gender Role Expectations

Previous research (Budworth, 2010; Burke, 2011; Hoyt, 2010; Melero, 2011; Shantz, 2011) suggests that traditional gender role expectations contribute to women's lack of success in the workplace, along with inhibiting their motivation to pursue leadership positions.

Traditional gender stereotypes expect men to be agenic; that includes assertiveness, independence, and self-confidence (Budworth, 2010; Burke, 2011). Agency is represented in the workplace by speaking assertively, influencing others, and initiating tasks (Burke & Attridge, 2011). The expectations of women are quite the opposite. Women are perceived as more communal. They are expected to show kindness, sympathy, sensitivity, and nurturance. Communal style is reflected in the workplace by being concerned with the welfare of others, helping others, accepting others' direction, and maintaining relationships (Burke & Attridge, 2011). Budworth and Mann (2010) describe this passive and nurturing attitude as "feminine niceness."

Social Role Theory

Social Role Theory (Budworth & Mann, 2010) suggests behavioral gender differences are caused by socialization. At a young age, males are encouraged and rewarded for being outgoing and achievement oriented, whereas females are taught to be emotionally oriented and reserved in their interaction with others (Budworth & Mann, 2010). This mechanism would lead women to conform to gender role stereotypes. A stereotypical image of a leader is someone who

has agentic, masculine traits, thus creating a dilemma for women. Women are faced with a decision to conform to their gender stereotype or adopt the traits of a stereotypical male. Research (Budworth & Mann, 2010) has demonstrated that when women adopt agentic behaviors congruent to men's, they are perceived as competent, but are seen as less socially skilled and less likeable. In comparison, communal men are viewed as less competent and hireable compared to agentic men (Budworth & Mann, 2010). The idea of being sanctioned for counter-stereotypical behavior is termed "backlash" (Budworth & Mann, 2010). Women are confronted with a double bind: As women they should be communal, but as leaders they should be agentic (Hoyt, 2010). There is further evidence (Budworth & Mann, 2010) supporting the double-edged sword women face in becoming leaders: If they act in a strictly communal way, they are viewed as less competent, thus decreasing their opportunity to succeed, but if they act in ways consistent with men, they are often socially and economically sanctioned.

Effective Leadership: Women vs. Men

If women strive to be leaders in their careers, there needs to be more clear guidelines for a leadership style that will allow them to reach and succeed in leadership positions. Although the stereotype of a leader reflects masculine traits, current research (Hoyt, 2010) reveals that a combination of feminine and masculine traits is most effective. Traits related to effectiveness include intelligence, emotional intelligence, risk-taking, empathy, assertiveness, openness to experience, extraversion, conscientiousness, integrity, trustworthiness, and the ability to persuade, motivate, and inspire others (Hoyt, 2010). The traits related to effectiveness indicate that it is necessary for both women and men to balance feminine traits with masculine traits in order to be a successful leader. Men have a slight advantage in leadership (Hoyt, 2010), because they are more likely to promote themselves for leadership positions than women. Self-promotion

for leadership roles and negotiation are important in achieving leadership success, but women face social costs for initiating negotiation and self-promoting, likely due to the backlash some women receive from behaving in such a manner (Hoyt, 2010). Overall, there is an inconsistency in the research related to whether men are more effective leaders than women (Budworth & Mann, 2010; Hoyt, 2010; Melero, 2010) and how or if women are able to lead effectively. Nevertheless, consistent findings among contemporary research studies (Hoyt, 2010; Burke & Attridge, 2011) identify the effectiveness of the transformational leadership style.

Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership style does not specifically relate to either gender role. It is associated with mentoring, motivating, inspiring, and empowering employees along with leading by example and with charisma (Burke, 2011; Hoyt 2010; Melero 2010). Women tend to have a style more closely related to the transformational style of leadership (Hoyt, 2010). Women may employ such characteristics because of gender role expectations of women to be more nurturing and supportive, enabling them to motivate and mentor their followers. In the corporate world and in education, transformational leadership style is preferred more by females in leadership positions (Hoyt, 2010). Women were devalued by male followers for using this style of leadership in comparison to men (Hoyt, 2010). Conversely, characteristics of transformational leadership relate to socialization processes that build positive relationships, create a vision, inspire others, foster intellectual stimulation, and offer personal recognition. Those characteristics are associated with leadership styles which studies have linked to positive outcomes of greater effectiveness, productivity, and learning to work in teams (Burke et al., 2006; Burke & Attridge, 2011).

Overall, evidence (Burke &Attridge, 2011; Hoyt, 2010; Melero, 2011) suggests women and men have the capability to be equally effective leaders.

Anticipated Role Conflict

Traditionally, men are the breadwinners and women are the homemakers. Historically, men have been more likely to engage in tasks that require speed, strength, and the ability to be away from home for extended periods of time, whereas women have been more likely to stay home and engage in family tasks (Burke & Attridge, 2011). Recent data suggests roles are changing. The number of women being the primary earner for her family has quadrupled since 1960. Four in 10 American households with children under age 18 include a mother who is either the sole or primary earner for her family (Rampell, 2013). The economic recession, beginning in 2007, forced many women to enter or re-enter the workforce because job positions in industries such as construction and manufacturing that are predominately occupied by men were impacted greatly (Rampell, 2013). Although it is now more expected for women to join the work force, there are mixed feelings on whether women should be working or at home, tending to household responsibilities and raising children.

The Struggle to Find Work-Life Balance

Anticipated role conflicts are keeping women from pursuing leadership positions. Women are feeling pressure to decide between having a family and moving up in their career (Drinkwater, 2008; Tully & Dornan, 2008). According to a study looking at medical students (Drinkwater et al., 2008), women were more willing to compromise professional attainment within their personal work-life balance. Drinkwater et al. (2008) found that both men and women perceive it as the woman's responsibility to be at home. In support of that finding, it was found

(Rampell, 2013) that half of Americans say children are better off if their mother is at home and does not have a job, but only 8 percent say the same about a father.

Women's awareness of the tensions between work and family lead them to think about the best time to have children. Often times a greater commitment is required in the workplace between the ages of 25 and 35 when they are likely to have children and family constraints (Guillaume & Pochic, 2009). If women are unable to commit to long hours at the office, it may hurt their chances of promotion, because their inability to find balance may come across as lack of commitment to the job. Women have also identified being of childbearing age as a disadvantage when applying for jobs (Drinkwater et al., 2008). Pregnant women often face hostile supervisors and co-workers in their work place. Hostile attitudes are related to the idea that pregnant women will receive special treatment, such as time-off and less demanding projects (Gatrell, 2009). In response to hostility, women are encouraged to keep their pregnancy hidden as long as possible to prove their ability to do their job (Gatrell, 2009). Hostile co-workers assume women will not give as much effort in their job, although evidence suggests otherwise. Women often undertake extra work (Gatrell, 2009). "Supra-performance" is the undertaking of significant extra work in addition to the reproductive labor of pregnancy and normal productive labor of paid work (Gatrell, 2009). Supra-performance, along with being as flexible as possible with antenatal appointments, is suggested to pregnant women to avoid hostility and to ensure that a woman's chances of being promoted in the future will not be negatively affected (Gatrell, 2009).

In addition, women assume greater responsibility for child rearing and domestic work even while working full-time outside the home (Hoyt, 2010). This may explain the findings in a

survey administered to 2,500 professional women that 44% of women took time off from work for family reasons compared to only 12% of men (Ryan et al., 2007).

In response to the difficulties in finding work-life balance, research (Drinkwater et al., 2008; Ryan et al., 2007) shows women are more prepared to sacrifice high professional goals and leadership positions to the realities of parenthood, whereas men assume the mother would care for their children. The men's assumption is often proven correct. Women often resort to or choose, positions that have child-friendly working hours, work part-time, or opt out of the work place altogether (Guillaume, 2009; Hoyt, 2010). Even if women are able to find work-life balance, they often have feelings of guilt for not staying at home with their children, especially if as a child their mother stayed at home (Drinkwater et al., 2008). Tensions between work and family may have a negative impact on women's career centrality with the pressure to choose between being a good employee or being a good wife and mother. Women need to be aware of policies within their organizations related to pregnancy and child rearing to ensure they are not being victimized by their organizations. Organizations need policies to ensure there are not prejudices against women, especially pregnant women. Women need encouragement to hold on to their future career goals of being promoted to leadership positions without sacrificing their desire to have a family.

Visibility of Same-Gendered Role Models

Despite gender role stereotypes and the struggle to achieve work-life balance, there are women who exemplify success in overcoming gender barriers and obtaining top leadership positions. Chief executive of HSBC USA, Irene Dorner, blames herself and her female colleagues for the lack of women on Wall Street (Sorkin, 2013). According to Dorner, women need to make themselves more visible in the workplace to other women. This will provide a

pathway for other women to follow to achieve the same success. It has been suggested that women look to other women who have achieved success in their choice of career as role models, but when those women are not visible there is no example to show success is possible (Lockwood, 2006). Furthering the support of the need for same-gendered role models, Quimby and DeSantis (2006) found students who had observed a successful role model in a specific career field were more likely to report a preference for pursuing that career and to believe they would be successful in that occupation. In traditionally male-dominated professions, such as engineering and science, the lack of women has been identified as a barrier for women who choose to enter these professions (Lockwood, 2006). If the women in these male-dominated fields were more visible, more women would develop confidence to pursue those careers (Lockwood, 2006; Quimby & DeSantis, 2006). In addition, women lack strength in numbers to create powerful alliances, which promotes equity (Skaggs, Stainback & Duncan, 2012) and impacts the amount of influence they have. Women would need to occupy 1/3 of the chairs in order to have an impact in boardroom discussions (Skaggs et al., 2012). Similarly, Skaggs et al. (2012), claims that 55% of corporate board positions would need to be occupied by women in order for women to have an equal share to men in managerial positions. Thus female board membership is an important factor in advancement of women at lower organization levels. If the number of women in managerially positions increases, the chances of other women reaching those positions is greater and is associated with a larger percentage of female non-managers (Skaggs et al., 2012). Among women who perceive themselves to be in a minority group for their profession, the success of another woman in that career group may have a positive impact on their self-perception. Therefore there is a need for women to have same-gendered role models to encourage them and provide a guide to pursue top leadership positions.

The disparity in men and women in top leadership positions needs to be examined further to reveal the factors that may affect women's career centrality. In line with the research summarized above, the current study aims to identify the degree to which gender role expectations, anticipated role conflict and same-gendered role models are related to women's career centrality. For the purpose of this study we define career centrality as the extent to which an individual perceives work as a main component of their life (Ball & Kooij, 2011).

In the present study, we predict: among women, higher male norm adherence will be correlated with more career centrality; women who anticipate less work-family conflict will indicate more career centrality; women will identify female role models more often than male role models; and women who identify female role models will report those individuals to have a higher degree of impact on their future career goals. The focus of this study is on women. However, data will be collected from men, with the purpose of identifying gender differences.

Methods

Procedure

Students enrolled in psychology courses were invited to participate in the research study in exchange for extra credit. Students were also recruited from a Criminal Justice Capstone course, as well as students of graduating-senior status participating in "Senior Day." All participants had their names entered into a drawing to win a gift-card. Participants were given a brief introduction to the survey informing them they were participating in a survey investigating the determinants of career preference. Participants signed a consent form, which reassured the individual their responses would be kept confidential and urged them to respond freely and honestly. It also indicated the research might result in publications or presentations without ever

identifying particular individuals. Participants received a debriefing statement following the completion of the study.

Materials

Adherence to male and female norms. The Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory-45 (CFNI-45) (Parent & Moradi, 2011) was used to measure female norm adherence. Responses were made on a 4-point scale, with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 4 being “strongly agree.” Higher scores indicate greater adherence to female norms. A couple of sample items from the CFNI-45 are, “I hate telling people about my accomplishments” and “Taking care of children is extremely fulfilling.” The Conformity to Male Norms Inventory-46 (CMNI-46) (Parent & Moradi, 2011) was used to measure male norm adherence. Responses were made on a 4-point scale, with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 4 being “strongly agree.” Higher scores indicate greater adherence to male norms. A couple of sample items from the CMNI-46 are, “In general, I will do anything to win” and “I tend to keep my feelings to myself.” The two questionnaires were combined in the current study; alternating between items from the CFNI-45 and CMNI-46, with the exception of the last two questions both being from the CMNI-46. Please see Appendix A for the combined CFNI-45 and CMNI-46 used in the current study.

Work-family conflict. There were 5 items derived from a work-family conflict and family-work measure (Boles, McMurrian & Netemeyer, 1996) to measure the anticipation of work-family conflict. Responses were made on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being “low anticipation” and 5 being “high anticipation.” Higher scores indicate high anticipation of work-family conflict. Sample items are, “I anticipate the demands of my work will interfere with my home and family life” and “The amount of time my job takes up will make it difficult to fulfill my family responsibilities.” Please see Appendix B to see the complete version of the measure

used in the current study.

Role model impact. To measure the impact of same-gendered role models on career centrality, participants were asked to indicate the person who has inspired them the most to pursue a career in their intended field, the organization the individual was affiliated with, and the job title they held. They were then asked to indicate the level of impact the identified individual had on their future career goals. Responses were made on a 7-point scale, with 1 being “low impact” and 7 being “high impact.” Please see Appendix C to view the role-model measure used in the current study.

Career Centrality. The Organizational-Commitment measure was used (Ellemers, Gilder & Heuvel, 1998) to measure career centrality. The items were rephrased to reflect future implications. Responses were made on 7-point scale, with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 7 being “strongly agree.” Higher scores indicate more agreement with career centrality. Sample items from the measure are, “My future career is one of the most important things in my life” and “I am prepared to do additional chores, if it will benefit my future career.” Please see Appendix D to view the career centrality measure.

Participants

There were 97 students who participated in the study. There were 78 females and 19 males included. The age ranged from 18-26 years ($M = 21.01$, $SD = 1.40$). Participants were recruited from a private liberal arts college in the Midwest. The sample was composed of freshmen (5.2%), sophomores (16.5%), juniors (26.8%), and seniors (51.5%).

Results

Descriptive Statistics for Women

Career Centrality. The career centrality measure indicated internal reliability ($\alpha = .875$).

Overall, women indicated more career centrality than not ($M = 5.57, SD = 1.01$), with a low score of 2.16 and a high score of 7.

Work-family conflict. Responses to the items on the work-family conflict measure ($\alpha = .918$) revealed fairly low anticipation for work-family conflict ($M = 2.77, SD = 0.83$), with a low mean score of 1 and high score of 4.8.

Adherence to female norms. The mean score of the responses to the items derived from the CFNI-46 ($\alpha = .875$) showed adherence to female norms to be on the higher end of the scale ($M = 2.84, SD = 0.34$). The low score was 2.16 and the high score was 3.84.

Adherence to male norms. The mean score of the responses to the items on the CMNI-45 ($\alpha = .785$) fell, approximately, in the middle of the scale ($M = 2.05, SD = 0.28$) with a low score of 1.46 and a high score of 2.91.

Role Models. On average women indicated their identified role model to be highly impactful on their future career goals ($M = 5.80, SD = 1.28$).

Descriptive Statistics for Men

Career Centrality. The mean score for career centrality was 5.65 ($M = 5.65, SD = 0.91$), indicates more career centrality. The low score was 4 and the high score was 7.

Work-family conflict. Men reported to anticipate a moderate level of work-family conflict with an average score of 3.06 ($M = 3.06, SD = 1.26$), a low score of 1 and a high score of 5.

Adherence to female norms. The average score for men on female norm adherence was 2.59 ($M = 2.59, SD = 0.22$), with a low score of 2.20 and a high score of 2.96.

Adherence to male norms. The average score for men on male norm adherence was 2.50 ($M = 2.50, SD = 0.38$), with a low score of 1.91 and a high score of 3.41.

Role Models. On average, men indicated their identified role model to be highly impactful

on their future career goals ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 1.10$), with a low score of 3 and a high score of 7.

Correlation Analyses

Correlation analyses were used to determine the relationships between the variables. There were 2 separate correlation analyses computed. The first analysis done was for women, the second analysis was for men. We used Pearson's Correlations Coefficient to express the relationship between the variables.

Correlation analyses for women. The results of the correlation analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between role model impact and career centrality ($r(67) = .43$, $p = .001$). Please see Figure 1 to view the relationship between role model impact and career centrality. There was a significant positive relationship between role model gender and male norm adherence ($r(62) = .32$, $p = .011$). There was a significant positive relationship between female norm adherence and role model impact ($r(64) = .26$, $p = .037$). If a one-tailed Pearson Correlation was computed between career centrality and male norm adherence there would be a marginally significant positive correlation ($r(69) = .17$, $p = .154$). Please see Table 1 for a complete table of correlations between variables for women.

Correlation analysis for men. The correlation analysis shows a significant positive relationship between male norm adherence and career centrality ($r(17) = .55$, $p = .015$). That is, the more the participant adhered to male gender norms, the higher the reported career centrality. Please see Figure 3 for a graphical representation of the relationship between male norm adherence and career centrality. There was a significant negative relationship between work-family conflict and female norm adherence ($r(17) = -.57$, $p = .013$), suggesting the higher the reported adherence to female norms the lower the anticipation of work-family conflict and vice versa. The negative relationship between male norm adherence and role model gender ($r(17) = -$

.40, $p = .086$) and between female norm adherence and role model gender ($r(17) = -.39, p = .100$) showed marginal significance. Please see Table 1 for a complete table of correlations between variables for men.

T-Test

Paired samples t-test for men. A paired samples t-test was used to determine if there was a significant difference in men's adherence to male norms and their adherence to female norms. The average score for male norm adherence was ($M = 2.50, SD = 0.38$) was similar to the average score for female norm adherence ($M = 2.59, SD = 0.22$). The results indicate men's adherence to male norms is not significantly different than their adherence to female norms ($t(18) = 1.07, p = .297$).

Paired samples t-test for women. A second paired samples t-test was used to determine if there was a significant difference in women's adherence to male norms and their adherence to female norms. The average score for female norm adherence ($M = 2.84, SD = 0.34$) was higher than the average score for male norm adherence ($M = 2.05, SD = 0.28$). It was found that females adhere to female norms significantly more than they do male norms ($t(70) = 14.70, p = .001$).

Independent samples t-test. An independent samples t-test was conducted, for men and women together, to determine if male role models ($n = 27$) and female role models ($n = 61$) differed in the amount of impact they had on the participant's career centrality. The average role model impact score for female role models ($M = 5.85, SD = 1.12$) was slightly higher than that of male role models ($M = 5.59, SD = 1.47$). The results revealed male role models and female role models did not significantly differ in the degree of impact they had on the participants ($t(86) = -0.91, p = .367$).

Another independent samples t-test by role model gender was used to determine if male role models and career centrality ($M = 5.69, SD = 1.06$), work-family conflict ($M = 2.72, SD = 1.10$), female norm adherence ($M = 2.71, SD = 0.32$), male norm adherence ($M = 2.24, SD = 0.46$), and role model impact ($M = 5.59, SD = 1.47$) differed significantly from female role models and career centrality ($M = 5.61, SD = 0.95$), work-family conflict ($M = 2.90, SD = 0.86$), female norm adherence ($M = 2.83, SD = 0.34$), male norm adherence ($M = 2.14, SD = 0.28$), and role model impact ($M = 5.85, SD = 1.12$). There was no significant difference in male and female role models on career centrality ($t(86) = 0.36, p = .718$), work-family conflict ($t(86) = -0.82, p = .417$), male norm adherence ($t(81) = 1.19, p = .236$), and role model impact ($t(86) = -0.91, p = .367$).

Analysis of Variance

A univariate analysis of variance was conducted to explore if average role model impact scores varied significantly by participant and role model gender. The mean score for role model impact reported by males for male role models ($M = 5.58, SD = 1.24$) was similar to the reported average role model impact score of females for male role models ($M = 5.60, SD = 1.68$). Similarly, the reported average impact score of female role models reported by male participants ($M = 6.00, SD = 0.82$) was comparable to the average impact score of female role models reported by female participants ($M = 5.83, SD = 1.16$). The main effect of role model gender was not significant ($F(1,88) = 0.86, p = .355$). Male role models and female role models did not differ on the reported level of impact on career centrality. No significant main effect was found for participant gender ($F(1,88) = 0.05, p = .831$). Male and female participants did not differ on the reported impact of their role model on their career centrality. Finally, there was no significant

interaction between role model gender and the gender of the participant on role model impact scores ($F(1,88) = 0.07, p = .794$).

A univariate analysis was, also, used to examine if the average score for career centrality significantly differed by participant and role model gender. The average career centrality score for male participants ($M = 5.86, SD = 0.91$) with a male role model was slightly higher than the average score for female participants ($M = 5.56, SD = 1.17$) with a male role model. Conversely, female participants with a female role model had a slightly higher average career centrality score ($M = 5.65, SD = 0.96$) than males with a female role model ($M = 5.29, SD = 0.84$). Overall, the responses to the career centrality measure were high. Please see Figure 3 for a graphical representation of the responses. The main effect for role model gender and career centrality was not significant ($F(1,88) = 0.76, p = .384$). There was no significant main effect for participant gender and career centrality ($F(1,88) = 0.01, p = .913$). The interaction between role model gender and participant gender was not significant ($F(1,88) = 1.50, p = .225$).

Crosstabulation

Pearson's chi-squared test was used to test for differences in identifying role models of different genders by participant gender. Male participants identified a male role model ($n = 12$) more than they did female role models ($n = 7$). Female participants identified female role models ($n = 54$) more than they did male role models ($n = 15$). The results of the chi-squared test revealed a significant relationship between participant gender and role model gender ($\chi^2(1) = 12.02, p = .001$).

Discussion

The major goal of this study was to identify the degree to which gender role expectations, anticipated role conflict and same-gendered role models are related to women's career centrality.

First, we hypothesized that among women, higher male norm adherence would be correlated with more career centrality. The results of the correlation analysis for women offered some support for this hypothesis. At the one-tailed level, a positive relationship between women's adherence to male norms and career centrality was shown. Previous research (Budworth & Mann, 2010; Hoyt, 2010; Melero, 2010) discusses how women adopting masculine traits in the workplaces are seen as competent, but are seen as less socially skilled and less likeable. Other research (Hoyt, 2010) has shown that men have a slight advantage in leadership because of stereotypical male behaviors such as self-promoting and negotiation. However, the same research also reveals that a combination of feminine and masculine traits is most effective. The results of the current study offer support for more research to be done to explore how women's adherence to male gender norms is associated with their opportunities in the workplace.

Our second hypothesis, women who anticipate less work-family conflict will indicate more career centrality, was not supported. Overall, the anticipation for work-family conflict was low. Low anticipation scores may reflect the age of the participants and their status as students. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the current average age of first birth is 25.8 years. The average age of participants in the current study was approximately 21 years. This might suggest participants do not know what their future family dynamics and responsibilities will be. Similarly, participants might not know the demands of their future career, as they are in school and likely do not have a full-time position yet.

Hypothesis three, women will identify female role models more often than male role models, was supported. The Pearson's chi-squared test provided evidence that role model gender is significantly related to participant gender. The women in the current study identified a female role model more often than they did a male role model. The results of the current study support

previous studies (Lockwood, 2006 & Quimby & DeSantis, 2006) suggesting women look to other women who have achieved success in their choice of career as role models and are more likely to pursue a career in which they observed a successful role model. The findings strengthen the argument that women need successful same-gendered role models in their career field to encourage their pursuit of similar success in their career.

The final hypothesis, women who identify female role models will report those individuals to have a higher degree of impact on their career centrality, was not supported. The correlation analysis for women showed a positive relationship between role model impact and career centrality. This finding suggests that identified role models have significant impact on career centrality. However, the univariate analysis of variance between-subjects test tells us male and female role models are comparable in the influence they have upon their admirer. The relationship between role model impact and career centrality is not surprising, due to the way the item was worded on the role model impact scale. Participants were asked to identify the person who has inspired them the most to pursue a career in their intended career field. Further research needs to be done to support the positive relationship between role model impact and career centrality.

Limitations

The current study had a few limitations that are important to discuss. First, the data was collected from a single private, Midwestern liberal arts college; therefore the findings have limited generalizability to other college campuses, and women currently in the workplace. Future studies would benefit from looking at more universities, including public and private universities, with a focus on students with graduating-senior status. It may also be beneficial to examine a population of employees in entry-level positions, as they have a clearer understanding

of what the demands of their job are and what the promotion possibilities are in their workplace. An additional step may be to focus on specific career areas, such as the business sector or the medical field. Second, the career centrality measure showed a restriction of range, showing that all the participants believed their career to be a central component in their life. The sample as a whole reporting more career centrality may have skewed the results. Future studies may benefit from having a larger sample size and recruiting participants from more diverse settings. Finally, overall, there was little anticipation of work-family conflict. Again, the small sample size and demographics of the sample may have played a role in the reported low anticipation of work-family conflict. It is likely, participants are unaware of what the demands of their future career and family life will be, decreasing the accuracy of their reported anticipation. In future studies measuring work-family conflict it may be beneficial to have a slightly older population of people who are already working in their preferred career field.

Future Research

The findings of the current study have further implications for future research to understand the gender disparity among leadership positions in the workplace. Our research demonstrates that women choose other successful women as role models. We also found a positive relationship between role model impact and career centrality. Future research should focus on how successful women can encourage other women to set high career goals, pursue leadership positions, and help them take the steps necessary to succeed in their career. Researchers should propose mentoring programs and internship programs with special focus on educating women on how to take on leadership roles in their career. Future studies, could also explore the positive relationship between male norm adherence and career centrality. Specifically, they could explore the degree to which current men and women in leadership

positions in the workplace adhere to masculine norms. Researchers could further that study by evaluating the effectiveness of a leader in relations to the extent they adhere to masculine norms. As other research suggests, although the stereotype of a leader reflects masculine traits, a combination of feminine and masculine traits is most effective (Hoyt, 2010). It may be beneficial to explore to what degree both men and women need to adhere to masculine norms to be seen as a competent and effective leader in the workplace.

Despite its limitations, the current study contributes to the literature on the importance of having role models, especially for women, to be confident in their effort to attaining success in the workplace. Further research would add to the understanding of how to decrease the disparity in leadership positions in the workplace.

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Appendix A

The following pages contain a series of statements about how people think, feel or behave.

Thinking about your own actions, feelings and beliefs, please indicate how much you personally agree or disagree with each statement by circling the number on the scale that best corresponds to your feelings. The scale ranges from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4). There are no right or wrong responses to the statements. You should give the responses that most accurately describe your personal actions, feelings and beliefs. It is best if you respond with your first impression when answering.

Strongly Disagree =1 Disagree=2 Agree=3 Strongly Agree=4

Please circle your response.

1. I would be happier if I was thinner.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

2. In general, I will do anything to win.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

3. It is important to keep your living space clean.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

4. If I could I would frequently change sexual partners.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

5. I spend more than 30 minutes a day doing my hair and make-up.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

6. I hate asking for help.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

7. I tell everyone about my accomplishments.

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
8. I believe that violence is never justified.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
9. I clean my home on a regular basis.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
10. Being thought of as gay is not a bad thing.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
11. I feel attractive without makeup.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
12. In general, I do not like risky situations.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
13. I believe that my friendships should be maintained at all costs.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
14. Winning is not my first priority.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
15. I find children annoying.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
16. I enjoy taking risks.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
17. I would feel guilty if I had a one-night stand.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
18. I am disgusted by any kind of violence.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|

19. When I succeed, I tell my friends about it.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

20. I ask for help when I need it.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

21. Having a romantic relationship is essential in life.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

22. My work is the most important part of my life.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

23. I enjoy spending time making my living space look nice.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

24. I would only have sex if I was in a committed relationship.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

25. Being nice to others is extremely important.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

26. I bring up my feelings when talking to others.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

27. I regularly wear makeup.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

28. I would be furious if someone thought I was gay.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

29. I don't go out of my way to keep in touch with friends.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

30. I don't mind losing.

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
31. Most people enjoy children more than I do.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
32. I take risks.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
33. I would like to lose a few pounds.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
34. It would not bother me at all if someone thought I was gay.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
35. It is not necessary to be in a committed relationship to have sex.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
36. I hate telling people about my accomplishments.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
37. I never share my feelings.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
38. I get ready in the morning without looking in the mirror very much.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
39. Sometimes violent action is necessary.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
40. I would feel burdened if I had to maintain a lot of friendships.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
41. In general, I control the women in my life.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|

42. I would feel comfortable having casual sex.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

43. I would feel good if I had many sexual partners.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

44. I make it a point to get together with my friends regularly.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

45. It is important for me to win.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

46. I always downplay my achievements.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

47. I don't like giving all my attention to work.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

48. Being in a romantic relationship is important.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

49. It would be awful if people thought I was gay.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

50. I don't care if my living space looks messy.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

51. I like to talk about my feelings.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

52. I never wear makeup.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

53. I never ask for help.

- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
54. I always try to make people feel special.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
55. More often than not, losing does not bother me.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
56. I am not afraid to tell people about my achievements.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
57. I frequently put myself in risky situations.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
58. My life plans do not rely on my having a romantic relationship.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
59. Women should be subservient to men.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
60. I am always trying to lose weight.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
61. I am willing to get into a physical fight if necessary.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
62. I would only have sex with the person I love.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
63. I feel good when work is my first priority.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree
64. When I have a romantic relationship, I enjoy focusing my energies on it.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

65. I tend to keep my feelings to myself.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

66. There is no point to cleaning, because things will get dirty again.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

67. Winning is not important to me.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

68. I am not afraid to hurt people's feelings to get what I want.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

69. Violence is almost never justified.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

70. Taking care of children is extremely fulfilling.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

71. I am happiest when I'm risking danger.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

72. I would be perfectly happy with myself even if I gained weight.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

73. It would be enjoyable to date more than one person at a time.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

74. If I were single, my life would be complete without a partner.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

75. I would feel uncomfortable if someone thought I was gay.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

76. I rarely go out of my way to act nice.

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
77. I am not ashamed to ask for help.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
78. I actively avoid children.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
79. Work comes first.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
80. I am terrified of gaining weight.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
81. I tend to share my feelings.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
82. I would only have sex if I was in a committed relationship like marriage.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
83. No matter what the situation I would never act violently.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
84. I like being around children.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
85. Things tend to be better when men are in charge.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
86. I don't feel guilty if I lose contact with a friend.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
87. It bothers me when I have to ask for help.
- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------|

88. I would be ashamed if someone thought I was mean.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

89. I love it when men are in charge of women.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

90. I hate it when people ask me to talk about my feelings.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

91. I try to avoid being perceived as gay.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

Appendix B

Imagine you are working in a career related to your major area of study. You are on a career path that shows promise in advancement. Imagining that you are on a path towards success in that career, consider the following statements and the level of anticipation you expect these statements to apply to your life. 1 being your anticipation level is low and 5 being your anticipation is high. Please circle the number that best corresponds to how you feel.

I anticipate the demands of my work will interfere with my home and family life.

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

The amount of time my job takes up will make it difficult to fulfill my family responsibilities

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

I anticipate things I want to do at home will not get done because of the demands my work will put on me.

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

I anticipate my job will produce strain that will make it difficult to fulfill my family duties.

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

I anticipate that due to work-related duties, I will have to make changes to my plans for my family activities.

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

Appendix C

Identify the individual who has inspired you the MOST to pursue a career in your intended career field. Circle their gender, identify the organization they are affiliated with, identify the job title they hold and circle the level of impact they have had on you and your future career goals.

Name of the Individual:

Please circle the gender of the person that has inspired you most.

Male Female

Organization Affiliated With:

Job Title:

Please circle the level of impact they have had on you and your future career goals.

Low Impact 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *High Impact*

Appendix D

Imagine you are working in a career related to your major area of study. You are on a career path that shows promise in advancement. Imagining that you are on a path towards success in that career, consider the following statements and the level of anticipation you expect these statements to apply to your life. 1 being your anticipation level is low and 5 being your anticipation is high. Please circle the number that best corresponds to how you feel.

I anticipate the demands of my work will interfere with my home and family life.

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

The amount of time my job takes up will make it difficult to fulfill my family responsibilities

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

I anticipate things I want to do at home will not get done because of the demands my work will put on me.

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

I anticipate my job will produce strain that will make it difficult to fulfill my family duties.

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

I anticipate that due to work-related duties, I will have to make changes to my plans for my family activities.

Low Anticipation 1 2 3 4 5 *High Anticipation*

	Women			Men		
	Career Centrality	Work-Family Conflict Anticipation	Role Model Impact	Career Centrality	Work-Family Conflict Anticipation	Role Model Impact
Male Norm Adherence	.17	.06	-.01	.55*	-.32	-.16
Female Norm Adherence	.14	-.05	.26*	.38	-.56*	.38
Career Centrality	1	-.01	.43*	1	-.28	-.04
Work-Family Conflict Anticipation	-.01	1	-.05	-.28	1	.02
Role Model Impact	.43*	-.05	1	-.04	.02	1

Table 1. Table of correlations between variables for women and men.

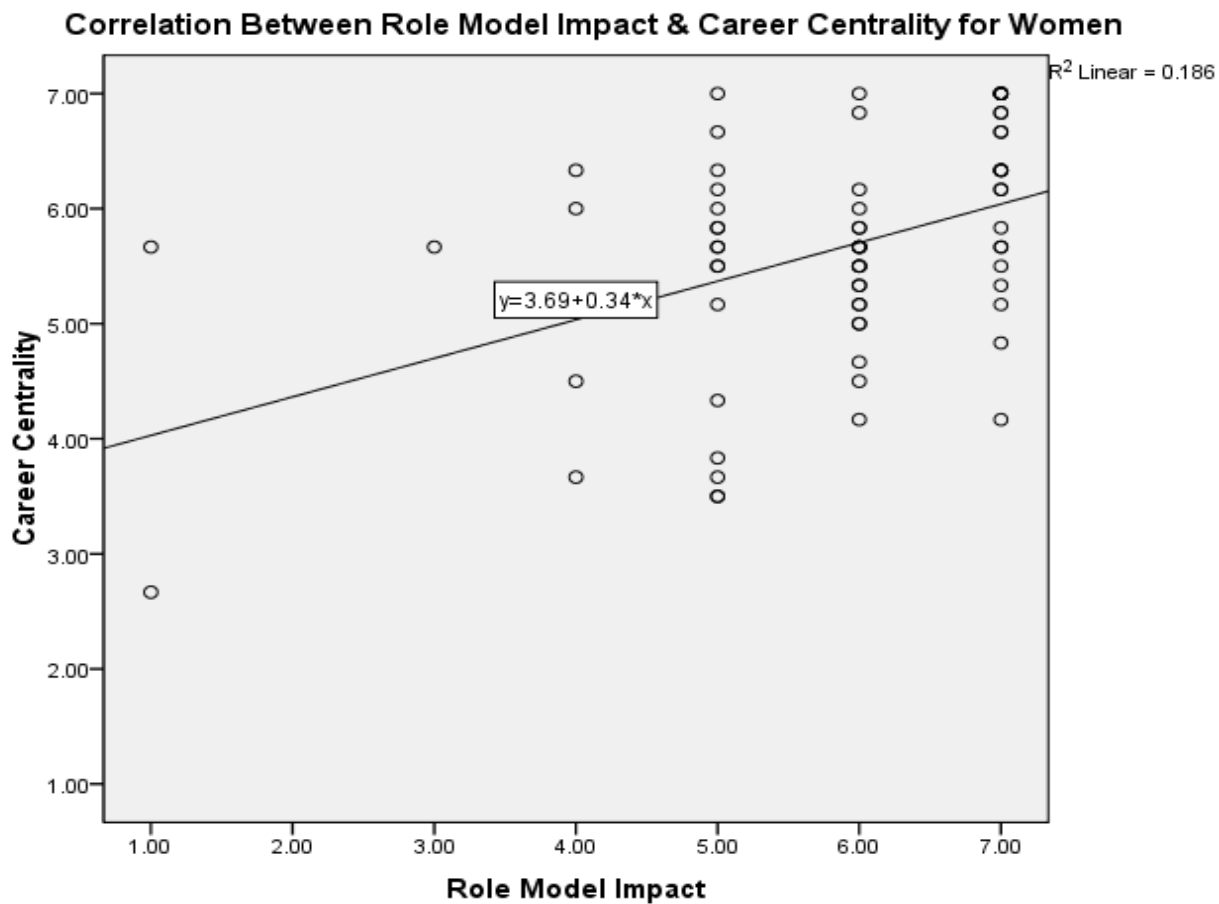


Figure 1. Correlation between Role Model Impact and Career Centrality for women.

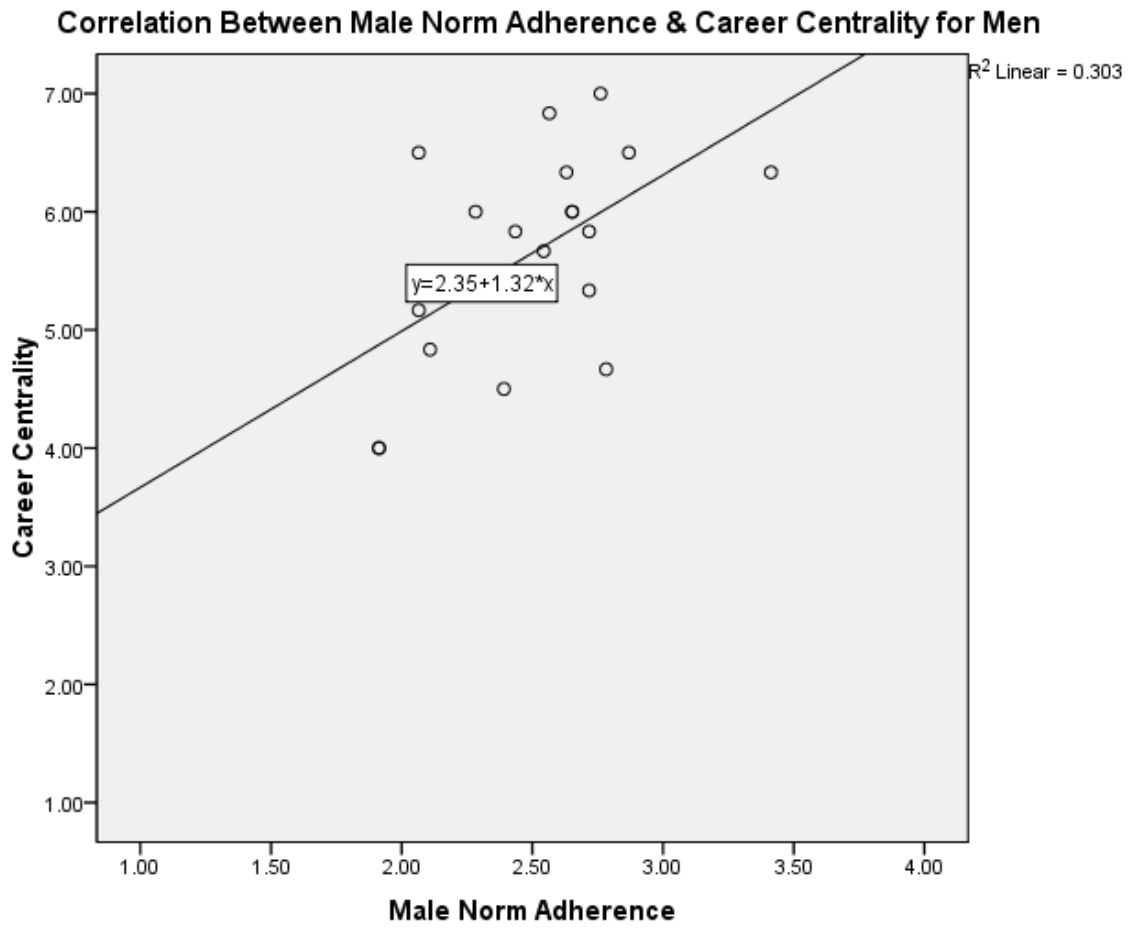


Figure 2. Correlation between male norm adherence and career centrality for men.

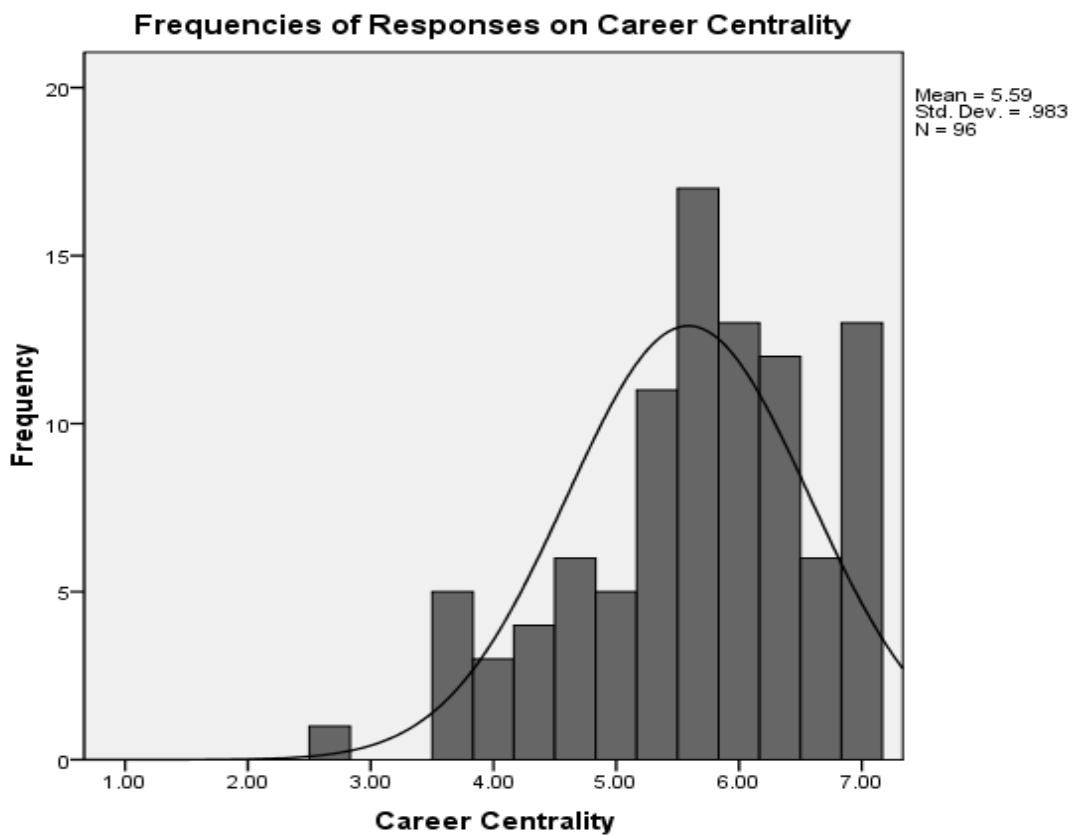


Figure 3. Frequency of scores reported on the career centrality scale. Low scores of 1 indicate less career centrality and high scores of 7 indicate more career centrality.