

Gender Dynamics in the Planning Workplace: The Importance of Women in Management

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Problem - Planners' workplaces are diversifying with respect to gender, but office culture and policies do not always reflect such change. This research explores the influence of gender, management and organizational characteristics on planners' perceptions of workplace culture and benefits.

Research strategy - We conducted a national survey with the American Planning Association's Women and Planning Division in 2015 to assess whether planners' perceptions regarding workplace culture and benefits differ by gender and organizational characteristics of the planning office. A limitation of the survey is the small self-selected sample of mostly female respondents. We combine feminist planning theory with workplace management theories of Role Congruity, Expectation States, Representative Bureaucracy, and Transformational Leadership to explain workplace dynamics in planning agencies.

Findings: Qualitative analysis shows problems with exclusive communication and equal opportunity are linked to management characteristics. To test this, we build five regression models on gender respect, exclusive communication, work-life benefits, flexibility perception and equal opportunity in pay and advancement. Regression models control for gender, age and experience of respondent, and organizational characteristics (gender balance in staff and management, metro status, public or private planning agency). Results indicate that gender respect, work-life benefits, and flexibility perception do not differ by gender. However, women were less likely to feel heard in their workplace (exclusive communication) or perceive equal opportunity. Workplaces with female management were more likely to show sensitivity to gender issues, support for flexible benefits and equal opportunity for pay and advancement.

Takeaway for Practice: These results suggest planners feel they can raise gender issues and access flexibility benefits without prejudice. But planning workplaces need to address problems with exclusive communication and women's perceptions of lack of equal opportunities for pay and advancement. Introducing gender-inclusive planning and leadership development curriculum to planning programs would prepare future planners, while ongoing training for management may improve behavior, communication, and benefits for all genders in planning workplaces.

Keywords: gender, work-life benefits, management, planning practice, role congruity

Introduction

Planning scholars have written about the lack of gender diversity within the planning profession for over three decades (Sandercock & Forsyth, 1992; Hayden, 1994). As women make up almost half of practicing planners in 2018, increasing from a third in 2004 (APA, 2018; Johnson & Crum-Cano, 2011), we need to understand gender sensitivity within planning workplaces. This research explores the influence of gender, management and organizational characteristics on planners' perceptions of workplace culture and benefits. According to the American Planning Association's website, planning is a career "that makes better places for everyone" (APA, 2017), and yet structural inequalities in planners' workplaces persist. While Planning, as a profession, seeks to improve the lives of the public, planners often neglect the equitable treatment of women within the profession, as evidenced by the few women in management positions and certain planning subfields (Sandercock and Forsyth, 1992; Johnson & Crum-Cano, 2011; Siemiatycki 2019). Revealing unequal cultural norms within planning workplaces might offer opportunities for more inclusive workplace practices.

This research focuses on the experiences of women in planning workplaces. We conducted a survey of Planning Workplace Dynamics in partnership with the Women and Planning Division of the American Planning Association in 2015. The data offer an overview of planners' experiences with workplace dynamics and work-life benefits. Of the 327 planners who responded to the national survey, 267 were women. The survey explored planners' perceptions regarding workplace culture and benefits and if these differ by gender and organizational characteristics of the planning office.

This article first provides an overview of recent studies that explain why we surveyed planners about workplace gender bias, work-life balance, flexible work arrangements, and

gender wage and management gaps. Next, we describe the research approach used to design our survey, exploring the relationships between planners and workplace dynamics and benefits.

We apply organizational behavior and workplace psychology theories, such as expectation states theory (Berger, Conner, & Fisek, 1974; Correll & Ridgeway 2006), role congruity theory (Bosak, Sczesny & Eagly, 2012), and theories of representative bureaucracy (Kislov & Rosenbloom, 1981) and transformational leadership (Eagley, Johannesen- Schmidt, and Engen, 2003), to situate planners' experiences in the broader landscape of workplace gender equity. We highlight major studies that depict the experiences of professional workers across fields and geographic scales to frame our work.

We then present a set of five regression models that explore the factors that differentiate respondents' perception of gender respect, exclusive communication, work-life benefits, flexibility and equal opportunity in the planning workplace. We find that female respondents tend to disproportionately experience exclusive communication and lack of equal opportunity even though their workplace environments appear supportive in other ways. The models also find that workplaces with female management are more likely to exhibit workplace inclusion.

Based on the long history of women's exclusion from planning history and theory (Birch, 1994; Hendler, 1997), our survey data suggest that planners' workplaces still need changes in policy and workplace climate to be more inclusive of planners of all genders. Drawing from feminist planning theory (Flores, 2014; Ortiz Escalante & Gutiérrez Valdivia, 2015; Hendler, 2005), as well as our survey results, we recommend that training and education on gender in planning and leadership development may help promote more inclusive planning workplaces. These could be incorporated into the planning credentialing exam (AICP) as well as ongoing

training for practicing planners (CM credits) to develop planners' leadership skills and awareness of inclusive workplace gender policies.

Background

Gender and Feminist Planning History

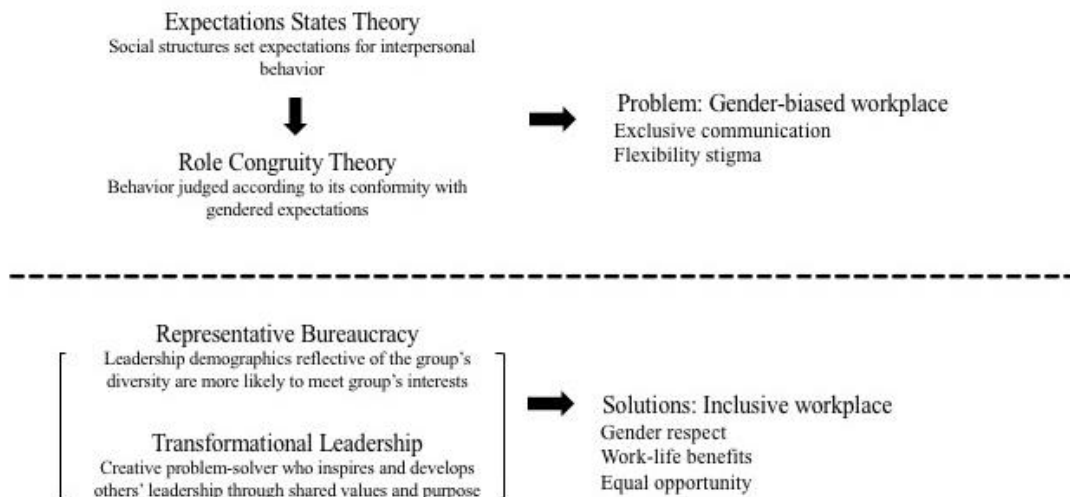
Advocacy for gender sensitivity in American planning predates the profession itself (Sandercock and Forsyth 1992). Once planning developed as a formal field, women in and outside of the profession challenged the urban planning profession to recognize women's unique experiences as legitimate (Jacobs, 1961; Birch, 1978). As women increased their access to the profession and academic discipline during the 1970s, attention to gender gained momentum. Research since then has focused on feminist planning theory (Ritzdorf, 1995; Hendler, 2005), history (Birch, 1994; Hendler & Harrison, 2000), and policy (Sandercock & Forsyth, 1992; Fainstein & Servon, 2005). Specific attention has been given to the influence of women's household work on the community and city (Markusen, 1980; Hayden, 1980; Saegert, 1985; Leavitt, 2003; Warner 2009; Warner 2006), gender roles and land-use laws (Ritzdorf, 1994; Micklow and Warner 2014), and housing reform with a gender lens (Hayden, 1984).

International research on gender in planning flourished in its own right (Moser & Levi, 1986; Moser, 2016; Greed 1994; Beneria 2003; Burgess 2008; de Madriaga & Roberts 2013; Kallus & Churchman, 2004). US urban planning researchers typically connect gender and feminism to planning vis-à-vis the multicultural planner (Sandercock 1998; Micklow & Warner 2014), aging or children's issues (Warner & Rukus 2013; Warner et. al. 2017; Warner & Zhang 2019), queer-inclusive planning (Doan, 2010; Spain, 2014; Doan, 2015) and attention to violence against women (Sweet & Ortiz Escalante, 2015; Ritzdorf, 1993; Beebejuan, 2009; Flores,

2017). In recent years, there has been renewed attention to gender in US planning practice (Curran, 2017) and theory (Parker, 2016). This work takes an intersectional feminist lens (Sweet & Ortiz Escalante, 2015; Kwan, 2008; Beebejuan, 2017; Flores, 2014). As part of this renewed attention, the Women and Planning Division of the American Planning Association approached us to collaborate with them on a survey of Workplace Dynamics, the analysis of which we report here.

We present theories from organizational and workplace psychology to set up the five aspects of gender dynamics which we study. As shown in our logic model in Figure 1, Expectations States and Role Congruity theory help us understand why problems with gender bias in the workplace (respect, exclusive communication), flexible work-life benefits and uneven opportunity for advancement exist in planning workplaces. Potential solutions may be found through Representative Bureaucracy and Transformational Leadership theories as we discuss below.

Figure 1. Logic Model



Expectation States Theory and Role Congruity Theory

Gender Bias in the Workplace

According to Expectation States theory (Berger et. al.,1974; Ridgeway & Lovin 1999; Correll & Ridgeway 2006), individuals can unconsciously reproduce structural inequalities through interpersonal behavior and reward structures (Ridgeway, 1997). Cultural ideals about status, such as gender, can manifest in workplace hierarchies of evaluation, influence, and participation through individual interactions (Correll & Ridgeway, 2006; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004; Carli, 1990). This bias can lead to people not hearing women. Mansplaining is one example of this bias. By explaining something in a tone perceived as condescending, mansplaining discounts the woman's knowledge and grants the man expertise. Such minimizing of women's experience and voice is reflected in a 2017 McKinsey study of over 130 companies and over 34,000 workers from entry-level to executives in the US that found men are more likely to feel they are able to meaningfully participate in their workplace meetings than women.

In an effort to be heard, women have found the need to align their behavior with those of men. Role Congruity theory helps explain women's experiences with exclusive communication (Bosak et. al., 2012). It posits that individuals are expected to align their gendered behavior with stereotypical roles. Women tend to be viewed as communal and characterized as care givers (Heilman, 2001). Men tend to be viewed as agentic, aggressive, independent, and decisive (Heilman, 2001). For instance, when women demonstrate stereotypical male behaviors by acting decisively with direct action, they are perceived and criticized as behaving in a manner that is inauthentic or too male (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Masculine-feminine cultural assumptions are baked into our consciousness, and result in judgements about appropriate ways of behaving

(Bussey & Bandura, 1999). For example, a study of 2,278 scientists and engineers found managers tend to evaluate their female workers based on whether the women meet expected gendered stereotypes, namely relational skills (Post et. al., 2008).

For decades, planning theorists and feminist scholars have written and debated about the need to address inequities within existing structures of communication (Forester, 1989; Sandercock & Forsyth, 1992). Cultural constructions based on gender norms and expectations can create barriers for social interactions even if participants are not conscious of it (Holmes, 2006). For planners, gender discrimination can manifest in workplace interactions (e.g. speaking patterns), policies (e.g. parental leave stigmas), or assignments (e.g. promotional opportunities) (Holmes, 2006; McKinsey 2017; Williams, Blair-Loy, & Berdahl, 2013; Sarson, 2017; Siemiatycki et. al, 2019). Our study focuses on the planning profession itself and how gender bias is experienced in the planning workplace.

Work-Life Imbalance

Traditional values around men and women's roles and responsibilities can impact workers' balance of family and work responsibilities, according to role congruity theory (Bosak et. al., 2012). Time conflicts between jobs and family exist for all workers, but may be most keenly felt by women. A survey of 233 companies and 2,200 employees found women spend over twice as much time on household activities on an average day than men (McKinsey, 2017). A national study based on the American Time Use Survey shows that among dual-career parents with some college education, mothers work four hours longer each week than fathers when combining paid and unpaid labor (Bianchi et. al., 2006). The study also shows that having children leads to women reducing their paid work hours while men tend to increase them (Bianchi, 2000).

Flexible work arrangements (e.g. flextime) and leave programs (e.g. parental, child, or elder care leave) can help workers balance their work and care responsibilities by allowing employees to decide when to conduct their work throughout the week (Catalyst 2018; Smith 2000). One study of a large professional organization found provision of work-life benefits led to greater loyalty and less stress among staff (Hipp, Morrissey, & Warner, 2017). A study of over 2,900 workers in the US found that working parents experienced more work-life balance when they had greater autonomy, less hectic jobs, and more job security (Galinsky, Bond & Friedman, 1996).

While expanding work-life policies is important (Goldin 2014), women workers often face stigmas when using such reforms. Taking advantage of flexibility policies can lead to wage penalties, lower evaluations, and fewer promotions, prompting Williams et al. (2013) to coin the term “flexibility stigma.” Flexibility stigma confirms Bosak et al.’s (2012) finding that workplace expectations are still grounded in gender-conforming behavior. For instance, when a woman uses flextime to pick up a sick child she can be perceived as a lazy worker, whereas her male counterpart would be seen as a diligent parent (Williams et al., 2013). A study of a large employer found workplace communication was key to ensuring that low and high-status workers access flextime at similar rates (Morrissey and Warner, 2009).

Representative Bureaucracy Theory

Unequal Opportunity for Pay and Advancement

Theories of representative bureaucracy argue that when the demographics of an organization’s leadership represent the diversity of the populations it serves, policy decisions are more likely to meet the interests of these populations (Kislov & Rosenbloom, 1981; Dolan, 2000). Given that

women make up 50% of the working age population but only 25% of management, women in the United States have less access to the people and opportunities that would advance their careers (McKinsey, 2017 based on a survey of 130 US workplaces). This worsens for women of color (AAUW, 2016). Scholars have cited many factors in women's disadvantage for promotional opportunities, such as challenges in work-life balance, unequal access to closed social networks (Eagly & Chin, 2010), and lack of mentorship (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Unequal pay is another problem. Based on panel data from 1980 to 2010, Blau and Kahn (2017) find education and labor-market experience do not explain the gender wage disparity. Salaries are even lower for women of color (US Census Bureau 2018; AAUW, 2018).

Many factors might influence women's unequal wages. For instance, part-time workers are paid less than full-time workers even on an hourly basis, which has gendered implications considering women work part-time more than twice as often as men (Hirsch, 2005; Catalyst, 2013). Taking significant breaks from employment, which women do most often for "family reasons," results in wage decreases. Such women never catch up, financially, with those who do not take breaks, according to data from a panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (Jacobsen and Levin, 1995). When women conform to the gender norms ascribed to them (i.e. nurturers and caretakers), they may face economic consequences (Heilman, 2001). The gender gap in earnings is partially attributable to a mother gap, as mothers pay this care penalty (Crittenden, 2001; Halpern, 2004). Wage gaps tend to be smaller in public than private sectors (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Evidence to support representative bureaucracy in the workplace is based on Dolan's (2000) stratified random sample of one thousand Senior Executive Service employees which found female executives were more likely to advocate for female friendly workplace policies,

compared to their male colleagues. Research finds female executives' advocacy increases proportionally to the number of senior women in the firm, creating opportunities and empowering other women leaders (Stainback, Kleiner, and Skaggs, 2016).

Johnson & Crum-Cano (2011) and Sneed (2007) study occupational segregation in urban planning and public policy, respectively. Planning subfields can be male-dominated (e.g. infrastructure and transportation planning) or female-dominated (e.g. community development), producing glass walls that segregate men and women within a profession (Johnson & Crum-Cano, 2011). On both sides of such walls, however, women tend to be promoted more slowly than men with fewer opportunities to advance. According to the American Planning Association's 2018 salary survey, 43% of planners are female but only 17% are in management positions. Numerous studies show that a gender gap in management exists (Holmes, 2006; Smith, 2000) especially in infrastructure planning (Siemiatycki, 2019). According to the APA Salary Survey (2018) of almost 12,000 planners, female planners still experience lower wages than their male counterparts. While male planners have, on average, more work experience, this discrepancy does not fully account for the wage disparity (APA Salary Survey, 2018).

Transformational Leadership Theory

The Role of Management

Certain styles of leadership tend to allow for greater inclusion of all genders. Transformational leaders innovate, question the status quo, and motivate followers. In doing so, they gain trust, become a role model, and encourage others to develop their full potential within the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Eagly et. al., 2003). According to a meta-analysis of 45 studies that compared gender differences to leadership styles and effectiveness, the managers who practice a

transformational style of leadership create greater equity within their organizations because they communicate the values and purpose of the organization's vision while encouraging individual employee achievement (Eagly et. al., 2003). In order for workers to experience fair treatment, they must have a voice in the organization (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015). Transformational leaders make space for staff to contribute their diverse experiences, advancing the entire organization toward a more collective vision (Eagly et. al, 2003). In a recent study of over 130 workplaces throughout the US, 78% of companies reported a commitment to gender diversity as a top priority, but fewer than one third of staff at these companies feel their senior leaders are actually held accountable for making progress (McKinsey, 2017). The gender composition of management might affect gender diversity and enforcement of daily behaviors and practices to support gender inclusion, something we explore in the analysis below.

We analyze the results of our survey on practicing planners in the US by building upon feminist planning scholarship and workplace psychology theories regarding expectations, role congruity, transformational leadership, and representative bureaucracy.

Methods & Data

We worked with leaders of the Women and Planning Division of the American Planning Association to study gender dynamics in planning workplaces. In 2014, we organized focus groups at the APA national conference in order to develop survey questions based on the lived experiences of practicing planners. Over 40 professional planners participated in the focus groups where they discussed both how planning addresses the needs of women in their community and the challenges they face with gender dynamics in the planning workplace. In preparation for the focus groups the team jointly read earlier planning scholarship on gender,

especially Sandercock and Forsyth (1992), which helped identify questions regarding the culture (i.e. theories, standards, and ideologies) perpetuating women's place on the periphery of planning. These questions resonated with the experiences of focus group participants and were reflected in survey question design.

We integrated the focus group feedback into an online survey, Planning Workplace Dynamics, which was launched in Spring 2015. The survey was advertised through multiple divisions of the APA (Small Town and Rural, Housing and Community Development, and Private Practice), and the APA's national monthly e-newsletter, Interact.

Of the 327 planners who responded to the survey, 121 answered all survey questions. We cannot assess the representativeness of the sample because we do not have access to data on the full universe of planners. However, the APA Salary Survey (APA 2018) measures some of the same organizational and respondent characteristics that we do, and we find a similar breakdown by metro status. Our survey respondents are more likely to be women and from large public agencies as compared to the APA Salary Survey, which is more balanced between male and female respondents and public and private planning agencies (see Appendix 1). Our survey asked respondents about their demographic characteristics, and found 87 percent were white, 63 percent were in staff positions, 83 percent identified as women and 59 percent were under 40 years of age. Regarding respondents' workplace characteristics, 79 percent work for a public planning agency, 63 percent work in a metro core community and 40 percent work in office smaller than 10 people. Geographic representation was 43 percent from the West, 30 percent from the Northeast, 15 percent from the South and 13 percent from the Midwest. See Appendix 2 for survey detail by question.

Our survey has several limitations. First it has a small sample size of 327 who answered, but most did not answer all questions. Thus, our models which follow have varying sample sizes and this limits their generalizability. Second, although the survey was widely advertised, respondents self-selected and thus there could be some response bias. The American Planning Association allows researchers to advertise in its monthly newsletter, but does not allow researchers to draw scientific stratified samples from its data base of members. Third, the majority of respondents were women, so the ability to compare to men is limited. In addition, racial and ethnic minorities were too small a proportion of our sample to show significant differences. This reflects the continued white dominance in the field (APA Survey, 2018). The survey also measures respondents' perceptions and experiences at a single point in time, so longitudinal analysis is not possible.

The survey had four parts: workplace environment, gender equity, work-life balance, and parental leave. Respondents were differentiated by position, department size, experience and demographic information. Questions about position identified if and how managers create inclusive workplace policies for workers of all genders. Questions about culture gauged planners' experiences of workplace justice and workers' voices. The survey then asked respondents about their workplace policies on flexible work options and leave policies as well as their own perceptions about whether they felt safe to use these policies. The survey ended with a qualitative section in which respondents could provide additional input regarding gender in the planning workplace. We utilize a mixed methods approach to synthesize both quantitative and qualitative data (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). STATA was used to analyze the quantitative portion of the survey, to create indices and the regression models.

Qualitative Analysis

We analyze the open-ended comments from our survey first and find that despite general feelings of respect and acceptance, female planners disproportionately face barriers in daily professional interactions. Gender issues can be raised, women are respected, but exclusive communication is still a challenge. Female respondents felt they must over-prepare in order to achieve acknowledgment. This is true despite over 97% of respondents reporting their decisions are respected. Why the disconnect? Are planning offices still masculine in terms of culture and communication?

Respondents elaborated on gendered communication. Many female respondents reported experiences of mansplaining such as the following planner in a suburban, public workplace with all male management:

My other female co-worker...and I have gotten used to not asking work related questions of certain male co-workers because of the same patronizing responses we get. "Did you look in the zoning code?" was a common response to a typical question. Gosh, it never occurred to me as a professional planner, to look - *gasp* in the zoning code! Or cutting us off before we finish our question, by answering what they assume to be our question. Which it never is. ...Because I'm not at all inclined to want to casually ask them about their thoughts or experiences, for fear of being patronized or belittled, it can be a breeding ground for inconsistency. It is really frustrating.

One respondent expressed her perspective that it "shouldn't be the job of the non-management to figure out how to have a voice in the organization. [It is] the responsibility of management to create a more inclusive office culture so staff is treated equitably."

Management's responsibility is not only to set the standard but also model the way forward for workplace justice. Managers often hold the power to challenge or reinforce gendered biases as depicted by the following respondent's experience with workplace communication:

[Male coworkers] assume we're asking a ridiculously simple question, rather than the actual subjective or nuanced question that we were just looking for some professional input on. It's extremely detrimental to fostering a collaborative environment and forces us into

silos....Luckily the other women planners in our department are VERY collaborative. I know it's a basic, basic premise, but I can't overstate how important it is to have women in leadership and men who recognize the importance and value of gender diversity.

A female planner in an urban, public organization with all male management explained:

The Director of my department instructs me to go through my supervisor (and not communicate with him directly), but I notice other colleagues are not restricted in this way. I am not invited to meetings as often as my male counterparts. Access to management appears easier to obtain for males than females for policy/planning matters. It seems females who are handling administrative functions, however, do have access to management. In this way, if this observation is true, I believe males could easily outcompete females due to access biases. In other words, it is still not an even playing field for women in my workplace, even if the rules in place are the same.

The experiences expressed by these planners show the importance of equitable communication for all genders in order to foster long-term career advancement opportunities for all genders.

Regarding opportunity and flexibility, respondents noted there are different expectations for women and men. Planners often must attend meetings at night and on weekends to engage public participation. Such nontraditional work hours help planners meet the needs of a diverse community, but they create challenges for planners' work-life balance, particularly in the public sector where planners' schedules can revolve around the Planning Commission, the City Council, the public, and/or the client. Work-life policies might exist, but the resulting stigma shows that workplace expectations are still grounded in the gender-conforming behavior, which *expects* women to bare a disproportionate care burden. Because flexible work can be "strongly discouraged in practical terms," according to one respondent, many female respondents reported workplaces perceiving them as less diligent than their male counterparts when they use work-life policies to care for children. A female respondent in a public, urban workplace with all male management explains:

Working moms are also treated differently than working dads. It is viewed as a negative, or an unreliability for a mom to be working. I might need a day off or work from home or need an hour here or there to attend to my son. For men, it's treated as 'oh what a good dad to help out and be involved.'

Another respondent, a manager in an office managed and staffed primarily by women, explains the importance of representative bureaucracy (Kislov & Rosenbloom, 1981) on flexible work options:

“One of our firm’s principals was the first person to have a baby while working at the company, and also needed to work remotely for three years while a spouse was in school in a different part of the country. I think these factors have significantly influenced our leave policy [and] flexible work schedule.”

Female respondents also critiqued the lack of advancement opportunities: “I am considering leaving this position because there is no career progression track. ... There are no real mentoring opportunities, they only exist on paper.” The respect that some planners experience in daily interactions does not necessarily translate to equal leadership opportunities. These comments left us wondering whether the gender of management matters. To find out, we constructed a set of regression models.

Quantitative Analysis - Dependent Variables

We differentiate five workplace dynamics in our models: (1) respect for gender issues, (2) exclusive communication, (3) access to work-life benefits, (4) perceptions regarding use of flexible benefits, and (5) perceptions of equal opportunity. We aggregate survey questions into these five indices and these become the five dependent variables for our regression analyses. See Table 1.

Table 1. Workplace Dynamics Index Elements

Gender Respect Index

Maximum Index Value=16 | (Likert scale: 4=strongly agree...1=strongly disagree) Cronbach's alpha= .679

Mean: 13.07 Std. Dev.: 1.84 Median: 13 N for index =132	% agree/strongly agree
Gender issues are easy to raise in my workplace (N=170)	86
If a concern is expressed about a gender equality issue, it is taken seriously (N=209)	94
My superiors respect my decisions (N=237)	97
My co-workers respect my decisions (N=252)	99

Exclusive Communication Index

Maximum Index Value=8 | (Likert scale: 4=strongly agree...1=strongly disagree) Cronbach's alpha= .861

Mean: 6.12 Std. Dev.: 1.78 Median: 6 N for index =121	% agree/strongly agree
Men are more likely to be heard than women in professional meetings (N=167)	84
I find it necessary to be more prepared than my co-workers of a different gender (N=153)	84

Work-Life Benefits Index

Maximum Index Value=6 | (1= yes) Cronbach's alpha= .533

Mean: 3.94 Std. Dev.: 1.42 Median: 4 N for index=181	% yes
Comp time for night meetings (N=261)	70
Flexible work hours (N=262)	76
Flexible work location (N=262)	48
Part-time work options (N=259)	40
Paid leave to take care of an elderly family member or sick child (N=211)	74
Parental leave (N=212)	81

Flexibility Perception Index

Maximum Index Value=12 | (Likert scale: 4=strongly agree...1=strongly disagree) Cronbach's alpha= .799

Mean: 7.89 Std. Dev.: 2.04 Median: 8 N for index=256	% agree/strongly agree
Flexible work is actively encouraged in my department (N=259)	44
I have the flexibility I need to manage my work and caring responsibilities (N=257)	78
My commitment will be questioned if I chose to use flexible work options (N=257) (reverse coded, e.g. strongly disagree =4...strongly agree=1)	60

Equal Opportunity Index

Maximum Index Value=8 | (Likert scale: 4=strongly agree...1=strongly disagree) Cronbach's alpha= .964

Mean: 1.78 Std. Dev.: 1.78 Median: 6 N for index=140	% agree/strongly agree
Women and men are paid the same rates for performing similar work within my department (N=160)	68
Equal opportunities for advancement exist for women and men (N=216)	79

Source: Author analysis: APA Women in Planning Survey, 2015

Note: Numbers in parentheses signify the N for each question, which differs from each index N.

- (1) *Gender Respect* had four elements: “Gender issues are easy to raise in my workplace,” “If a concern is expressed about a gender equality issue, it is taken seriously,” “My superiors respect my decisions,” and “My superiors respect my decisions.” This was measured on a Likert scale where 1= strongly disagree ... 4= strongly agree. As seen in Table 1, the vast majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with these statements. We aggregated these into a Gender Respect Index, with mean 13 (out of a possible 16) and alpha .68, which shows high congruence among the elements.
- (2) *Exclusive Communication* had two elements: “Men are more likely to be heard than women in professional meetings” and “I find it necessary to be more prepared than my co-workers of a different gender.” This was measured on a Likert scale where 1= strongly disagree ... 4= strongly agree. The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with these statements, so we aggregated these two elements for our index, mean of 6 and a Cronbach’s alpha of .86.
- (3) *Work-Life Benefits* had five elements. These were measured as 1= provided, otherwise =0. The most common benefit offered was “parental leave” reported by 81% of respondents, followed by “flexible work hours” (76%), “paid leave to take care of an elderly family member or sick child” (74%), “comp time for night meetings” (70%), “flexible work location” (48%) and “part time work options” was least common (40%). These elements had a lower Cronbach’s alpha (.53) but we aggregated them as a measure of real benefits offered. The mean was 4 out of 6 possible benefits.
- (4) *Flexibility Perception* had three elements. These measure if a respondent perceives support to access flexible work-life benefits, without stigma. This was measured on a Likert scale where 1= strongly disagree... 4= strongly agree. While 78% of respondents

agreed or strongly agreed that “I have the flexibility I need to manage my work and caring responsibilities,” only 44% agreed or strongly agreed that “Flexible work is actively encouraged in my department” and 40% agreed or strongly agreed that “My commitment will be questioned if I chose to use flexible work options.” We reverse coded this last element so all elements in the index measure a positive direction of perception.

- (5) *Equal Opportunity* had two elements regarding equal pay and equal opportunity. This was measured on a Likert scale where 1= strongly disagree... 4= strongly agree. While 79% respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “Equal opportunities for advancement exist for women and men,” only 68 percent agreed or strongly agreed that “Women and men are paid the same rates for performing similar work within my department.” These are highly correlated (Cronbach’s alpha = .96).

Independent Variables

We are interested in the extent to which our dependent variables are differentiated by respondent and workplace characteristics. The majority of survey respondents are female (84%). We hypothesize that female respondents are less likely to report gender respect, more likely to report problems with exclusive communication, less likely to report positive flexibility perception and less likely to report equal opportunity. However, we expect work-life benefits will not differ by gender, as human resource law requires equal application. Similarly, we expect that respondents in staff (as opposed to managerial positions) will be less likely to report gender respect, more likely to report problems with exclusive communication, less likely to report positive flexibility perception and less likely to report equal opportunity. Likewise, we expect younger staff to be less likely to report gender respect, more likely to report problems with exclusive

communication, less likely to report positive flexibility perception and less likely to report equal opportunity. The intersection of staff position, gender and age can undermine the power of a planner to access work-life benefits and feel respected in the planning workplace. See Table 2 for descriptive statistics of model variables. For disaggregation of responses by gender, see Appendix Table 2.

Table 2. Workplace Dynamics Model Variables: Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variables	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Gender Respect (# of elements=4; Likert scale 1...4)	132	13.07	1.84	8	16
Exclusive Communication (# of elements=2; Likert scale 1...4)	121	6.11	1.78	2	8
Work-Life Benefits Offered (# of elements=6, I=yes)	181	3.94	1.42	1	6
Flexibility Perception (# of elements=3; Likert scale 1...4)	256	7.89	2.04	3	12
Equal Opportunity (# of elements=2; Likert scale 1...4)	140	5.67	1.78	2	8
Respondent Characteristics					
Female respondent (yes=1)	267	.84	.37	0	1
Position: staff (not management) (yes=1)	261	.64	.48	0	1
Age: under 40 years old (yes=1)	260	.6	.5	0	1
Workplace Characteristics					
Female management (scale 1=all male, 2=mostly male, 3=balanced, 4=mostly female, 5=all female)	291	2.68	1.25	1	5
Female staff (scale 1=all male...3=balanced...5=all female)	278	3.18	.88	1	5
Department smaller than 10 people (yes=1)	294	.4	.49	0	1
Metropolitan Core (yes=1)	257	.63	.48	0	1
Public organization (yes=1)	293	.78	.41	0	1

Source: Author analysis: APA Women in Planning Survey, 2015

We also account for workplace characteristics. We expect that offices that have a larger percentage of female management or staff will be more responsive to gender issues.

Respondents reported the gender composition of management and staff on a scale of 1 = all men, 2= mostly men, 3= balanced, 4= mostly women, and 5= all women. On average, both means are near neutral with management tending more male and staffing tending toward female. But we see much wider dispersion in the composition of management (st dev = 1.25).

We also control for department size, urban core location and public (as compared to private) firm. We expect lower performance on our model variables for smaller departments and better performance for planning offices located in the urban core and the public sector.

Results

Table 3 presents model results. We report standardized coefficients for ease of interpretation. Four of our dependent variables are coded so that more positive responses reflect greater gender respect, more work-life benefits and better flexibility perception and perceptions of equal opportunity. Only for exclusive communication do higher values reflect a more negative workplace environment. Regarding respondent characteristics, only female respondents exhibit any significant differences across our five models. We see women are more likely to report problems with exclusive communication and less likely to report equal opportunity. Age and staff position have no effect. Gender respect, work-life benefits, and flexibility perception do not differ by gender. These results suggest good news on the ability to raise gender issues and receive work-life benefits and access them without prejudice. But planning workplaces still have work to do to address problems with exclusive communication and women's perceptions of the lack of equal opportunities for pay and advancement.

Regarding workplace characteristics we see that respondents in organizations with more female management are more likely to report more gender sensitivity, work-life benefits and ability to access flexible benefits without stigma, and equal opportunity. However, there is one place where female management has no effect, and that is on exclusive communication. Cultural dynamics within the workplace change slowly, and according to the literature (McKinsey, 2017)

inclusive communication has been hard to achieve. Our models support the broader findings in the literature.

Table 3. Regression Results: Planners' Workplace Dynamics —Standardized Coefficients

Respondent Characteristics	Gender Respect	Exclusive Communication	Work-Life Benefits	Flexibility Perception	Equal Opportunity
Female respondent (yes=1)	-.343	2.48**	-.302	-.568	-1.58**
Staff position	-.437	-.333	.056	.023	-.149
Age: under 40 years old (yes=1)	.124	.318	-.258	-.151	.332
Workplace Characteristics					
Female staff	.290	-.167	.007	.094	-.068
Female management	.400**	-.225	.234*	.348**	.489**
Department smaller than 10 people (yes=1)	-.332	.561	-.370	-.330	-.139
Metropolitan Core (yes=1)	-.931*	-.152	.158	.143	-.154
Public organization (yes=1)	-1.079**	1.102**	-.704*	-.732*	-.079
	N=114	N=108	N=169	N=234	N=126
	R ² =.225	R ² =.262	R ² =.103	R ² =.078	R ² =.242

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Ns vary by model based on the number of respondents who answered all questions in each model. We did not substitute for missing values.

Source: Author analysis: APA Women in Planning Survey, 2015

Contrary to our expectations, female dominance on staff has no effect in any of our models, nor does department size. Surprisingly, we find respondents from urban core departments report less sensitivity to gender issues than suburban and rural respondents. In addition, planners who work for public agencies report less sensitivity to gender issues, more problems with exclusive communication, fewer work-life benefits and more flexibility stigma. Only equal opportunity shows no difference between public and private planning organizations. The broader literature shows the public sector is more likely to represent a gender balanced work

place (Eagly & Carli, 2007), but the public sector lags in provision of work-life benefits (Barnett and Greene 2018). Women are more represented in both staff and management in private and non-profit planning organizations in our survey, and this may explain our findings of greater gender inclusion. Our results suggest female representation in staff and management may be key, and this lends support to theories of representative bureaucracy (Kislov & Rosenbloom, 1981; Dolan, 2000).

Our model results should be interpreted with caution due to the limitations of our sample and the use of respondent perceptions. Nevertheless, these results bring attention to the need, especially for public organizations, to address workplace dynamics. It also shows the positive role that female managers and private planning organizations may provide in leading the way.

Discussion

Our analysis above shows the importance of role congruity theory (Bosak et. al., 2012), expectation states theory (Berger et. al., 1974; Correll & Ridgeway 2006), representative bureaucracy theory (Kislov & Rosenbloom, 1981) and transformational leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2003) in understanding planners' workplace dynamics. Paired with feminist planning theory (Flores, 2014; Ortiz Escalante & Gutiérrez Valdivia, 2015; Hendler, 2005), these organizational behavior theories provide insights for addressing gender disparities in planning workplaces, which center around training and education.

Role congruity theory (Bosak et. al., 2012) and expectation states theory (Berger et. al., 1974) can explain female respondents' overwhelming experiences with exclusive communication and mansplaining. Planning workplaces might favor women acting in ways that align with stereotypical gender roles, such as communicating less directly and less decisively. When women do not communicate in these ways, their voice is not heard. Structural gender

inequalities manifest in planners' everyday communications, which lead to a lack of recognition and value for female planners' voices and contributions. Exclusive communication, whether in professional meetings or social gatherings, can mean less access to essential information and institutional support for women in particular. Role congruity theory helps us understand respondents who wrote about their experience with flexibility stigma and offers insight into women's perceived lack of access to advancement opportunities.

We found planners at predominantly female managed offices experience greater gender sensitivity, flexible work-life benefits, and perceived equal opportunity. Applying the theory of representative bureaucracy (Kislov & Rosenbloom, 1981; Dolan, 2000) to planning management may lead to workplace policies and communication better reflecting the interests of staff planners of all genders. Equal access to professional social networks, mentorship, and work-life balance are key factors that may improve women's promotional opportunities (Eagly & Chin, 2010). Stainback et al. (2016) find that women in top management roles tend to serve as "agents of change" within their organizations. Increasing the proportion of women in planning management positions can lead to more equitable opportunities for female planning staff.

Our results suggest that female managers may be disproportionately practicing a transformational leadership style given that respondents with female management are more likely to experience gender sensitivity, flexible benefits and access, and equal opportunity (Eagly et. al., 2003). Transformational leaders encourage personal development of their staff and help people understand the need for change (Dubrin, 2013). When managers of all genders practice transformational leadership, they make space for a greater diversity of voices, improving the organizational trajectory (Bass and Avolio, 1993).

Training planners for more inclusive communication can start in the classroom and continue through AICP exams and annual conferences. Introducing planning students to professional development training and literature can improve gender sensitivity, leadership skills, and organizational dynamics (Dalton, 2007; Glasmeier & Kahn, 1989). Hendler (2005: 64) calls for a feminist code of planning ethics which could set expectations across the profession to streamline ways of improving “equity, process, integration, and interrelationships”. We echo the suggestion from other feminist planning scholars (Flores, 2014; Sandercock & Forsyth, 1992) to add critical analyses of gender to core planning courses, a strategy that Ortiz Escalante and Gutiérrez Valdivia (2015: 123) report to have used successfully to “change attitudes and deepen understanding” in graduate and undergraduate courses in the School of Architecture of Barcelona. Educating future planners with theories and strategies to promote equitable norms and transformational leadership can ultimately create more inclusive workplaces for planners of all genders (Parker, 2012). Such training is particularly important within public sector organizations, which Schraeder et. al. (2005: 496) characterize as “often autocratic, very structured, and rules oriented,” in contrast with private organizations which are “becoming more participatory/team oriented”. The experiences expressed by the planners in our survey show the importance of equitable communication for all genders in order to foster long-term career advancement opportunities for all.

Although every member of an organization can influence inclusivity and equity, managers play a special role in helping employees understand the urgency for cultural adaptation, especially in the public sector (Valle, 1999). The Annual APA conference would be a good place to begin training managers to improve gender inclusion in their workplaces. With requisite training, managers can set a new standard that increases inclusion for all genders in

planning workplaces by opening debate and starting dialogue (Ortiz Escalante & Gutiérrez Valdivia, 2015). Planners who are transformational leaders may facilitate discussion groups and listening sessions in which staff and management feel comfortable to identify potential workplace changes (Dubrin, 2013). Educating managers to be transformational leaders could include a specific focus for government leadership (Ingraham & Getha-Taylor, 2004) in addition to addressing general concerns of trust, team-building, collaboration, creative thinking, motivation, empathy, self-awareness, and conflict management (Dubrin, 2013). For example, gender-inclusive initiatives are being implemented in the infrastructure field, as in USAID's Engendering Utilities, and Workplace Advancement for Gender Equality initiatives.

Conclusion

Why is gender bias so intractable? What can be done? Our analysis of a 2015 national survey of gender and workplace dynamics in planning offices finds that although women feel respected, they still perceive unequal opportunity, pay and continued bias in communication (e.g. mansplaining). We have shown the importance of insights from theories on expectation states, role congruity, and representative bureaucracy. Our analysis finds respondents in private or nonprofit agencies, and those managed predominantly by women report a more supportive environment for women. The models suggest the potential for transformational leadership as a path toward greater workplace inclusion. As planners seek to reach out to a more diverse community, we must also look inward on how we can accommodate a changing workforce. A planning workplace that enables and encourages *all* planners to contribute their full breadth of knowledge and experience will benefit both planners and the communities they serve. Some progress has been made, but more work needs to be done.

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Appendix Table 1. Comparing APA 2018 Salary Survey to the Workplace Dynamics Survey 2015

	APA Survey 2018	WD Survey 2015
Agency Characteristics		
Public Agency	72%	79%
Private Agency	21%	14%
Nonprofit Agency	3%	7%
Other	4%	
Department Size, Public Agency		
Over 10 employees	49%	63%
Under 10 employees	49%	37%
Department Size, Non-Public		
Over 10 employees	66%	52%
Under 10 employees	32%	48%
Urban	54%	64%
Suburban	32%	26%
Rural	11%	10%
Exurban	2%	
Benefits Offered		
Maternity leave	62%	
Parental Leave		81%
Paternity Leave	41%	
Sick days	92%	74%
Flex time	56%	76%
Respondent Characteristics		
Male	57%	15%
Female	43%	83%
Age		
Over 40	56%	41%
Under 40	44%	59%
Director/Manager		
Male	26%	31%
Female	17%	37%

Source: APA Salary Survey 2018 <https://www.planning.org/salary/>, Workplace Dynamics Survey, 2015

Appendix Table 2. Disaggregated Analysis by Gender of Respondent, Workplace Dynamics Survey

Gender Respect			
Gender issues are easy to raise in my workplace	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
Male	16	81	3
Female	17	65	18
If a concern is expressed about a gender equality issue, it is taken seriously	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
Male	21	76	3
Female	26	67	7
My superiors respect my decisions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
Male	30	67	3
Female	31	65	4
My co-workers respect my decisions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
Male	26	71	3
Female	35	64	1
Exclusive Communication			
Men are more likely to be heard than women in professional meetings	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
Male	12	41	47
Female	32	58	10
I find it necessary to be more prepared than my co-workers of a different gender	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
Male	8	25	67
Female	28	62	10
Work-Life Benefits			
Comp Time for Night Meetings	Yes	No	
Male	83	17	
Female	67	33	

Flexible Hours	Yes	No
Male	79	21
Female	75	25

Flexible Location	Yes	No
Male	45	55
Female	48	52

Part-time Work Options	Yes	No
Male	24	76
Female	43	57

Paid leave to take care of an elderly family member or sick child	Yes	No
Male	84	16
Female	72	28

Parental Leave	Yes	No
Male	85	15
Female	80	20

Flexibility Perception

Flexible work is actively encouraged in my department	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	12	32	51	5
Female	10	34	40	16

I have the flexibility I need to manage my work and caring responsibilities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	17	61	22	0
Female	20	58	15	7

My commitment will be questioned if I chose to use flexible work options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	5	27	56	12
Female	12	30	50	8

Equal Opportunity

Women and men are paid the same rates for performing similar work within my department

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	47	50	0	3
Female	19	42	24	15

Equal opportunities for advancement exist for women and men

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	39	58	0	3
Female	17	58	17	8

Agency Characteristics

Gender of Management by Respondent

	All Male	Mostly Male	Balanced	Mostly Female	All Female
Male	29	20	34	15	2
Female	17	32	22	16	13

Gender of Management by Agency Type

	All Male	Mostly Male	Balanced	Mostly Female	All Female
Public	18	31	28	13	10
Private/Non-profit	24	28	13	21	14

Organization Type by Gender of Respondent

	Public	Private/Non-profit
Male	93	7
Female	77	23

Source: Workplace Dynamics Survey, 2015