Female and Male Psychologists in Academic Administration: Resource Control and Perceived Influence

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Academic Leadership Journal

Chapter 1

Introduction

Research specifically relating to gender differences and the roles of women in the workforce began in the 1980s and has increased in recent decades (Broadbridge & Hearn, 2008). Women across all industries continue to experience discrimination in the workplace more often than men; they also earn less, experience more stress, have less secure employment, and do not achieve the same level of professional status as their male peers (Broadbridge & Hearn, 2008). The same pattern of gender differences has been demonstrated in academic settings. In a report of gender equality, across all academic disciplines, the American Association of University Professors (2006) said that, “the more prestigious an institution in the layer [of higher education institutions], the fewer women there are. And the higher the rank, the lower the likelihood that a woman will hold it.” (p. 25).

It might be expected that the feminization of psychology would have resulted in a different pattern in that academic discipline, but this seems not to have been the case. In 1970, women made up only 20% of Ph.D. recipients in psychology (Astin, 1972) while in 2005, 72% of new doctoral candidates were women according to information obtained by The American Psychological Association’s center for psychology workforce analysis and research (Cynkar, 2007). Similarly, current graduate students and internship applicants in psychology are predominantly female (Cynkar, 2007) with 79% of 2,208 internship applicants being women (APPIC Internship Applicant Survey, 2008). Yet despite the record numbers of women studying and earning advanced degrees in psychology, women with doctorates in psychology continue to be consistently underrepresented in the top levels of administration, particularly at doctoral academic institutions (Baker, 2006; Denmark, 1998; Monks & McGoldrick, 2004; Neuhaus, 1982).

Gender differences in demographic and employment characteristics

There is ample evidence that women psychologists in academic administration have a different experience than their male colleagues. Men climb the academic ladder faster than women; specifically, women are promoted to every academic rank later than male colleagues (Carroll, 1991; Emmons, 1982; Monks & McGoldrick, 2004). Women are under-represented as administrators in psychology departments (Baker, 2006; Denmark, 1998). Kite, Russo, Brehm, Fouad, Hall, and Keita (2001) note that male administrators in psychology are more likely to serve as presidents, deans, or department chairs while women are more likely to serve as directors of programs within larger academic units. Additionally, women hold positions in institutions that are significantly smaller in terms of enrollment and have significantly lower average faculty salaries (Monk & McGoldrick, 2004). Finally, while there are certainly many reasons for the lack of parity among male and female administrators, much of the research assumes that women are underrepresented in academic administration in large part because
of their family roles and obligations (Benschop & Brouns, 2003; Emmons, 1982; McElrath, 1992; Powell & Mainiero, 1992; Ward, & Wolf-Wendel, 2004).

Not only are there fewer women than men among psychology academic administrators, but there is also evidence that the ways men and women engage in their jobs is different. Female academics are more likely to hold teaching jobs instead of full-time administrative positions (Denmark, 1998) and often undertake heavy teaching loads, therefore limiting their time and energy to engage in research activities (Allen, 1998; Armenti, 2004). Even among psychology administrators, men are more likely to continue to publish than are women and women are more likely to continue to teach and advise (Kite, Russo, Brehm, Fouad, Hall, & Keita, 2001). Men and women also have different job descriptions as administrators. Hyde, Hall, Fouad, Keita, Russo, and Brehm (2002) observe that, “the division of labor is unequal in academia; Men do research and oversee personnel hiring and promotion while women do service, teaching, and student and faculty development” (p 2032). Thus, it should not be surprising that in clinical psychology departments, most department chairs and deans are men while directors of clinical training are women.

Gender differences in resource management and perceived influence

Kenkel and Crossman (2010) identify necessary skills of academic administrators within clinical psychology programs, among them creating a shared vision and managing people and financial resources. Further, Butcher (2009) suggests that it is important for an academic administrator not only develop leadership and management skills but also to become comfortable with his or her power over the academic department in order to create an identity as a leader and perceiving one’s own influence.

Evidence suggests that even when they have the same job titles, men and women manage different resources. Women administrators in clinical psychology programs are likely to control fewer resources because they tend to serve at smaller and less prestigious institutions and are directors of small programs that have fewer faculty, staff and students (Monk & McGoldrick, 2004). Further, there is clear evidence that men and women in administration are perceived differently, by themselves and by others. Both women and men perceive women administrators as less effective agents than they do men in the same situations. This is especially true when those rating the administrators held more traditional (i.e. stereotyped) gender beliefs (Rudman & Kilianski, 2000).

The present study

The purpose of the present study is to compare the employment characteristics, the job activities, the resource control and the self-perception of leader influence of female and male psychologists working in academic administration in clinical psychology, a feminized discipline in which there are roughly equal numbers of male and female administrators. Based upon past literature, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Employment characteristics of male and female administrators were expected to differ. Specifically, women were expected to report that their job title was a director of clinical training, that their administrative position had less than a .5 FTE, that they had fewer years of experience in their current position, and fewer years since receiving their doctorate than male respondents.
Hypothesis 2: Use of time by female and male administrators was expected to differ. Specifically, women were expected to spend more time on instruction and less time on research activities than did men. Further, it was expected that women administrators would be more likely to have children or elders requiring care in their home than the men who responded.

Hypothesis 3: Resource control by male and female administrators was expected to differ. Specifically, female psychologists in academic administration were expected to control fewer financial and staffing resources than men in the same positions.

Hypothesis 4: Self-perception of influence by male and female administrators was expected to differ. Specifically, female psychologists in academic administration were expected to perceive that they have less influence than the men holding the same positions.

Chapter 2

Method

Participants

Participants were 24 male and 32 female psychologists currently employed in doctoral-level academic administration in clinical psychology training programs. Participants were recruited from among the administrators listed for the National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (NCSPP), the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology (CUDCP), and the Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology (COGDOP). It should be noted that although COGDOP members include many sub-disciplines in psychology (e.g., industrial organizational, counseling, school, experimental, and clinical) only directors of clinical psychology programs were contacted. The invitation to participate was emailed to 309 program directors. Of those contacted, 89 opened the survey and 56 completed the survey. Thus the response rate was 18.1%.

The demographics characteristics of the sample are shown in table 1. The administrators who responded to the survey were predominantly EuroAmerican, heterosexuals in their early 50s. Female and male administrators did not differ significantly on any of the characteristics listed in table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic characteristic of the male and female clinical psychology administrators in the study sample</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>50.16 (sd = 9.61)</td>
<td>51.75 (sd = 10.73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of EuroAmericans</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Heterosexuals</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Married or partnered</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instruments

A questionnaire was developed to gather demographic information as well as to obtain information regarding the structure of each participant’s current place of employment, how they spend their time, perception of resource control and actual resource control. The intent of this measure was to identify whether male and female psychologists in academic administration differed in their levels of perceived and actual influence as academic administrators. The questionnaire took approximately 15 minutes of the participant’s time to complete and is shown in Appendix A.

Procedure

Participants’ email addresses were collected from the public membership information available for three professional organizations of administrators of clinical psychology training programs (i.e. NCSPP, CUDCP, and COGDOP). Participants were contacted by email and asked to participate in a short survey about their experiences as psychologists in academic administration. The email indicated that the study had received IRB approval, outlined the limits of confidentiality, and provided a link to a web-based survey. When participants arrive at the survey web-site, they were presented with an informed consent statement and upon their agreement to participate, they were presented with 32 multiple choice and short answer, open-ended questions. These questions took approximately 15 minutes to complete. No incentives were provided in return for participation in this study.

Chapter 3

Results

Hypothesis 1: Employment characteristics

Participants were asked to provide their current job title and the percentage of their academic employment that was dedicated to administration (i.e., FTE). Most survey respondents were program directors or chairpersons (35.1%), while 1.8% identified themselves as presidents, 14% as deans, 12.3% as research or other program sub-unit directors, and 22.8% directors of clinical training. Additionally, 7 respondents (12.3%) identified themselves as faculty members in non-administrative roles, although they did have dedicated FTE for administrative work. The data were re-coded to create two administrative categories, one for directors (i.e. faculty with some training director responsibilities, research directors and [most] clinical training directors) and the other for deans (i.e., department
chairs, deans, vice presidents, and presidents). The representation of women (directors = 15; deans = 17) and men (directors = 12; deans = 12) at these two levels of administration did not differ, $C^2(1) = .05, p = .82$). Eighteen participants reported that they work 1 FTE (full time equivalent), with 17 reporting that they work .50 FTE, 16 working .30 FTE, and only 5 reporting that they work .80 FTE as an administrator. The percentage of men and women working 1 FTE was similar with 33% of men and 31% of women working full time as an administrator. Women ($M = .59, sd = .31$) and men ($M = .65, sd = .29$) did not differ in percentage of their work dedicated to an administrative assignment (i.e. FTE), $F(1,55) = .43, p = .53$, $eta^2 = .08$ (no effect). Women ($M = 5.34, sd = 5.17$) and men ($M = 6.46, sd = 5.37$) also did not differ in the number of years they had held their current job title, $F(1,55) = .62, p = .44$.

**Hypothesis 2: Use of time**

Table 2 shows how male and female administrators reported they spent their time in the prior week. Overall, male and female respondents did not differ in how they spend their time at work. Specifically, a MANOVA was conducted using all six of the questions about how administrators spent their time as dependent variables (i.e., supervision, teaching, advising, administration, fund-raising, and research); The results indicated that gender had no significant effect on the way administrators spent their time, Wilk’s Lambda $(6, 49) = .89, p = .51$, $eta^2 < .10$ (no effect). As might be expected, none of the constituent ANOVAs shows a significant gender effect either (see table 2).

Of the 32 female administrators, 15 (47%) were caring for children or elders in their home whereas only 7 of the 24 male administrators (29%) were caring for children or elders. A Chi-squared test showed that this difference was not statistically significant, $C^2(1) = 1.80, p = .18$. It is likely that with a larger sample size, these proportions would have been significantly different.

**Hypothesis 3: Resource control** This hypothesis was tested using responses to questions about the resources administrators actually controlled. Specifically, “How many budget dollars do you control?” and “How many

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>$eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the last week what percentage of your time was spent in supervision?</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>6.42</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.01$a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...in teaching?</td>
<td>12.47</td>
<td>14.06</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>$&lt; .01^a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...in advising?</td>
<td>17.03</td>
<td>13.04</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.02$a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...in administration?</td>
<td>42.53</td>
<td>40.63</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>$&lt; .01^a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...in fund raising and marketing?</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>$&lt; .01^a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...on dissertations and research?</td>
<td>13.50</td>
<td>8.54</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.05$a$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $^a$ This effect size indicates “no effect” according to Cohen (1992).
faculty report to you?” Women (M= $329K, sd = $694K) and men (M = $288K, sd = $640K) did not differ in the number of budget dollars they controlled, F(1, 53) = .05, p = .83, eta² < .01 (no effect). Likewise, women (M= 4.27, sd = 5.89) and men (6.12, sd = 6.56) did not differ in the number of faculty members who reported to them, F(1, 54) = 1.21, p = .27, eta² = .02 (no effect).

Hypothesis 4: Self-perception of influence

This hypothesis was tested using responses on a 5-point Likert scale to questions about the administrator’s perceived influence, where a response of “zero” indicated no perceived influence and a “four” indicated the highest level of influence. Examples of specific questions include, “How much influence do you feel you have in budget/spending decisions?” and “How much influence do you feel you have in hiring and firing of faculty and staff?” For all analyses, alpha was set at .05. As can be seen in table 3, responses indicate that men and women did not differ in their perceived levels of influence. Interestingly, both men and women felt they had the greatest amount of influence over student discipline and the least amount of influence over the budget. A MANOVA was conducted using all four of the influence questions as dependent variables (i.e., budget, student discipline, curriculum, and faculty/staff employment); It indicated that there was no significant effect of gender on the administrators’ perceived influence, Wilk’s Lambda(4,51) = .10, p = .98, eta² < .01 (no effect). As might be expected, none of the constituent ANOVAs shows a significant gender effect either (see table 3). Pearson Chi-Square was conducted to cross tabulate respondents’ answer to the survey question “Do you feel that the power you actually have in your current position is equal to your job title?” No significant difference was found between the responses from men and women, C2(1) = .007, p = .93.. Twenty-nine percent of women (n = 9) reported that the power they have in their current position was not equal to their job title, while 28% of men (n = 7) reported the same.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much influence do you feel you have in hiring and firing of faculty and staff?</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… in student disciplinary actions</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… in curriculum decisions</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… in budget/spending decisions</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * This effect size indicates “no effect” according to Cohen (1992).
The number of years since obtaining their degree did differ significantly for directors (M = 15.33, sd = 8.57) and deans (M = 22.69, sd = 10.07), F(1, 55) = 8.60, p < .01, eta^2 = .14 (large effect). However, directors and deans did not differ significantly on any other employment characteristics.

The groups differed significantly in how they spent their time, Wilk’s Lambda (6, 49) = 3.61, p < .01, eta^2 < .31 (large effect). Directors spent significantly more time than deans in supervision (F(1, 54) = 5.67, p = .02), and teaching (F(1, 54) = 4.64, p = .04). Deans spent significantly more time than did directors in administration (F(1, 54) = 13.22, p < .01) and fund-raising (F(1, 54) = 3.80, p < .05). Directors and deans did not differ in the proportion of their time spent in advising (F(1, 54) = 0.22, p = .64) or engaging in research (F(1, 54) = 3.50, p = .08).

The groups did differ in the actual resources they controlled. Specifically, directors (M = 3.47, sd = 6.05) and deans (M = 6.55, sd = 6.03) did differ significantly in the number of faculty who reported to them, F(1, 54) = 3.58, p = .06, eta^2 = .06 (small effect). Similarly, directors (M = $100K, sd = $290K) and deans (M = $508K, sd = $842K) differed significantly in the size of the budgets they controlled, F(1, 53) = 5.47, p = .02, eta^2 = .10 (medium effect).

The groups also differed significantly in their perceived influence, Wilk’s Lambda (4,51) = 4.60, p < .01, eta^2 < .27 (large effect). The two influence questions which showed a significant difference between directors’ and deans’ responses were related to influence over hiring and firing (F(1, 54) = 6.18, p = .02) and influence over budget (F(1, 54) = 15.71, p < .01). The groups did not differ in their perceived influence over student disciplinary actions (F(1, 54) = 0.17, p = .68) or influence over curriculum (F(1, 54) = 1.88, p = .18).

The differences between directors and deans reflect an expected pattern of significant differences between the groups and suggest that the survey used in this study is both sensitive and valid.

Chapter 4

Discussion

This study was concerned with determining the differences between male and female psychologists in academic administration. Surprisingly, the findings do not support the hypotheses that male psychologists in academic administration will have and perceive that they have more power than women in the same administrative positions. In fact the results suggest that male and female psychologists in academic administration do not differ in terms of the budget and staff resources they control nor in their self-perception of their own power and influence. The results also reveal that male and female psychologists in academic administration do not differ significantly in a variety of demographic and employment-related variables nor do they differ in the ways they spend their time at work. The possibility that the lack of significant gender differences was the result of an insensitive or invalid survey was addressed by demonstrating that the instrument was able to establish significant differences and an expected pattern of results for each of the hypotheses with respect to directors and deans.

Effect size analyses associated with these non-significant gender differences are so small as to indicate that the lack of statistical significance is not due to small sample sizes but is instead due to the
lack of gender effect on the dependent variables. Cohen (1992) recommend that effect sizes in the ranges found for gender comparisons in this study should be considered “no effect” or “clinically irrelevant.” Thus, even if the sample sizes had been increased to over 500 men and 500 women, finding statistically significant differences based on gender would have been unlikely (Cohen, 1992).

The lack of gender differences found in this study are not consistent with previous findings which suggest that although psychology as a whole has become more gender inclusive in recent decades, it is still less inclusive in the higher levels such as administration (Baker, 2006). It is almost certainly true that the characteristics of this sample do not match those of male and female administrators in clinical psychology programs. A 2005 self-study by the National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (NCSPP) reports that although 55.6% of administrators in NCSPP schools were women, the majority of them were Directors of clinical training and not department chairs or deans (Paszkiewicz, 2006). However, in the most recent self-study of the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology (CUDCP) only 19% of the DCTs were women, although it should be noted that this percentage has probably increased by now (Wisocki, Grebstein, & Hunt, 1994). In both groups women are the minority among department chairs and deans. In contrast, the women and men in this study did not differ in terms of their job title (i.e. director or dean), their administrative FTE, years since receiving their degree, years at their institution or years in their current position.

The effect size results and non-representativeness of this sample can be used to create a coherent narrative; that is, although men and women have not achieved parity of numbers within the ranks of department chairs and deans of clinical psychology programs, when men and women of equal rank are compared they report similar use of time, experiences of their resources, and perceptions of their own influence. So the bad news is, there may not be enough women leaders, but the good news is that the women leaders who are active in the field do not necessarily have access to different resources or perceive their leadership differently than their male peers.

**Limitations**

One limitation of this study is the narrow definition of resources and perception of influence that was used. There are indefinite number of differences that could exist for psychologists in academic administration and the indefinite number of barriers that female psychologists in academic administration face that were not explored by the current study’s instrument. Future research may benefit from taking a more qualitative approach that allows participants to relate their own experiences being effective psychologists in academic administration. A qualitative approach would also allow administrators to discuss their own leadership models and understandings of power.

The generalizability of this study is limited to psychologists who are academic administrators in programs which train clinical psychologists. It is possible that administrators with degrees from clinically-based programs in psychology may have different characteristics than do administrators in other sub-disciplines of psychology. Future research should focus on assessing an even wider spectrum of psychologists in academic administration and even in disciplines beyond psychology as having more varied demographics may produce increased variation in perceived levels of power. As with any convenient sample, it is possible that those who chose to participate have a more positive view of their power and career than a more representative sample of administrators.
The size of the current sample was certainly not ideal. The small sample size increased the sampling error associated with this study, thus increasing the likelihood that this sample would appear different than the population from which it came. In other words, the small sample size made it more likely that this sample has unique characteristics. However, the very small effect sizes (i.e. no effect according to Cohen, 1992) suggest that the small sample size probably does not account for the lack of gender differences in the hypothesis tests within this particular sample. Finally, it should be noted that the sample was too small to allow for the examination of the effects of some variables such as ethnicity.

Conclusions

If we believe that women and men in administration in clinical psychology programs don’t differ much, why should we care whether women achieve parity of numbers with men? One reason is to provide an adequate number and diversity of models of women in leadership. Because most students in doctoral clinical psychology programs are women, they should be able to observe multiple, active and powerful models of women in leadership. Pate (2009) argues that demographics are a metric for diversity and that increased diversity promotes inclusion, reduces discrimination, and results in a more effective workforce.

However, we might wonder whether men and women in academic administration differ in important, yet subtle, ways that were not measured in this study. Chin (2004) noted that few models of feminist leadership exist and therefore few studies have focused on more subtle ways that men and women in academic leadership may differ. Canon (1992) argues that the ethical character of administrators within doctoral psychology programs serve as the standards for students and for the profession. If women and men in academic leadership are using different ethics and expressing virtues differently, even though they are managing the same resources similarly, then understanding those gender differences would be important.

Thus we can celebrate that the results of this study suggest that when men and women are matched in experience and job title, they do not differ significantly in the resources they manage or their perception of their own influence. However we are still left with the reality that women have not achieved parity in academic administration within clinical psychology programs and the possibility that women and men in leadership positions differ in important ways that have not been documented in this study but would be important in shaping their students, programs and the field of clinical psychology.

References


Butcher (2009)


VN:R_U [1.9.11_1134]