



Advancing Women in Leadership

JOURNAL

VOLUME 41, 2022
ISSN 1093-7099

EDITORS: BEVERLY J. IRBY, NAHED ABDELRAHMAN, AND BRAD BIZZELL
ASSISTANT EDITOR: JORDAN DONOP

Full Length Research Paper

Assessment of The Organizational Culture of The Cooperative Extension System

Authors: Ginger Cunningham, Jacklyn Bruce, Katherine McKee, K.S.U. Jayaratne, & Maria Correa

Ginger Cunningham: County Extension Director and Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development & Forestry, North Carolina

Cooperative Extension, ginger_cunningham@ncsu.edu

Jacklyn Bruce: Associate Professor, NC State University, jackie_bruce@ncsu.edu

Katherine McKee: Assistant Professor, NC State University, kemckee@ncsu.edu

K.S.U. Jayaratne: Professor, NC State University, jay_jayaratne@ncsu.edu

Maria Correa: Professor, NC State University, correa@ncsu.edu

Accepted December 21, 2022

Women face unique barriers that their male counterparts do not experience in male-dominated disciplines and careers, such as agriculture. The purpose of a recent study was to provide insight into the organizational culture (and viability) of the Cooperative Extension System by examining the leadership dynamics, power relationships, and cultural impacts experienced by women County Extension Directors/Coordinators (CEDs/CECs) across the United States. Using a critical feminist collaborative autoethnographical approach and utilizing methodologies of interviews, dialogue, and prolonged engagement, the findings of this study have given voice to those individuals in these unique positions, allowing all individuals to better understand the challenges and barriers to equality in this context. Resulting conclusions (valuing sexism, resisting change, etc.) were posed to address misogyny in all forms (i.e., exclusion, promotion practices, etc.) that currently exist. By enacting these strategies, Cooperative Extension can create meaningful change that is so direly needed.

Keywords: women, organizational culture, patriarchy, inequality, misogyny, autoethnography

The thing that differentiates scientists is purely an artistic ability to discern what is a good idea, what is a beautiful idea, what is worth spending time on, and most importantly, what is a problem that is sufficiently interesting, yet sufficiently difficult, that it hasn't yet been solved, but the time for solving it has come now.

-- Professor Savas Dimopoulos (Stanford University), Particle Fever

As we sit down to begin this journey - or perhaps more aptly said, end this journey with you - we find ourselves in unfamiliar waters. We did not expect to find ourselves immersed in such research in such a discipline, and yet, this feels like home. Because we have claimed this as my "home," we feel a very intimate connection to how this story will play out because - regardless of the characters, the setting, the plot, or the conflict - the resolution of the story will forever be a part of us on our lives' journey, and we can never distance ourselves from that realization... nor would we wish to. Our greater awareness of life and self has caused us to become better individuals, better leaders, better neighbours - better disciples. Some years back, we came across some sagacious words that drew us near when trying to determine if this was the pathway we would venture

down regarding this research: find your passion or your pain, and there's your research. We realized that most days our pain and our passion had become so entangled that we could not separate the two, and on days where we thought our discernment allowed me to put them in their respective corners, we found them to be almost too familiar, too connected, too similar, and undistinguishable. In a very transparent - and perhaps selfish - declaration on our part, we embark on this journey with you in an effort to once again lay claim to the distinguishing characteristics of what passion and pain have melded into one so that we can make sense of this for ourselves (and you) in hopes that we are all the better because of it.

Can beautiful ideas hurt? The kind of hurt that may bring physical pain, tax you emotionally, or bring about an angst that forces you to act on a vision, plan, course of action, or perhaps, even a beautiful idea, to bring about some alleviation? In our curiosity to gain deeper meaning and pursue such beautiful ideas, there is always an innate driver deep within our souls that causes us to expend our blood, sweat, and tears in pursuit of something much greater than ourselves. As Fals-Bord (1996) alludes, "maybe it is more than curiosity. Perhaps what you need is anxiety or you experience anguish and you look for an answer..." (p. 17). Perhaps such a time has come.

While initiating this journey, Richardson (1994) reminds us that a qualitative researcher must seek to reflexively understand one's self as a person writing at a specific time from a particular position. I know this position and time quite well. Being positioned in a role of leadership for a county-based Cooperative Extension office in a rural North Carolina county as a young professional, I have faced a number of unique challenges in my role in my short tenure; such challenges, I often ponder, that may be vastly different had this been a different time, different place, different organization, or perhaps, had I been different myself in some capacity. I found myself situated at the crux of an intersection point where two, historically, male-dominated realms collided: that of agriculture and leadership.

To make better sense of these experiences, it was necessary to employ a method of inquiry that would bring sufficient light to the voices of those whose stories had previously been shrouded in silence. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) compared the qualitative researcher to a bricoleur, who would masterfully piece together experiences from research that would ultimately give light to the holistic representation of the much larger issue at hand. Data retrieved from resulting research would form the bricolage of that researcher. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) described the process as:

The bricoleur understands that research is an interactive process shaped by his or her personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting. The bricoleur knows that science is power, for all research findings have political implications. There is no value-free science. The bricoleur also knows that researchers tell stories about the worlds they have studied (p. 4).

Tasked with wearing the bricoleur badge, this study seeks to bring attention to a population that has positioned itself in providing guidance to all locally-based Extension offices across the nation: women County Extension Directors/Coordinators. These women lead staff who, in conjunction with land-grant universities, provide integral non-formal education to their communities, allowing individuals to improve their lives and livelihoods. Here in North Carolina, of 91 total County Extension Director positions, only 35 are held by women County Extension Directors (NCSU Extension Personnel, 2019).

These women, within the agriculture discipline, are also not well represented in the scholarly literature. While limited literature exists which addresses the needs and barriers of such women who have positioned themselves in areas of leadership within this particular field, one may question whether this could be attributed to a particular disciplinary or organizational culture. This study will examine the lived experiences of women County Extension Directors/Coordinators across the United States in a concerted effort to bring light to these experiences related to leadership dynamics, power relationships, and organizational culture in hopes of furthering a cultural shift for the betterment of us all.

A painfully beautiful idea for which the time to solve has come now.

Literature Review

Feminist theory and social cognitive theory constructs provided the frameworks used to ground this study. First, with regards to feminist theory, in an effort to bring a focus to empowerment and facilitate societal consciousness raising, feminist theory provides insight into both the constitution of gender and the resulting inequality present in gender relations. As such, feminist theory provides the groundwork for questioning the "cultural/historical context and biological premises of gender" through challenging the multiple gender-based social oppressions held by numerous populations (Nagoshi & Nagoshi, 2017). Aligned with the ideas of philosopher Michel Foucault, feminist theory's critique of historical gender concepts is based upon the framework that gender is a social construction, defined and enforced by societal processes, cultural norms, and by the exhibition of behaviors defined as being gendered (Rogers, 2016). Carlson and Ray (2011) explain that feminist theories can thus be used to explain how institutions operate with normative gendered assumptions and selectively reward or punish gendered practices (paragraph 1). Providing such insight into the feminine experience, via this framework, is a critical component of making meaning of leadership dynamics and power relationships within the Cooperative Extension organizational setting in which we have positioned ourselves.

Second, social cognitive theory has been coupled with feminist theory to provide a comprehensive guiding framework to provide depth, richness, and a holistic understanding of the constructs being examined. Bussey and Bandura (1999) note that social cognitive theory is based upon the human capability for observational learning and symbolization, a tool utilized to create, comprehend, and regulate environmental conditions. Learning experiences can come from three main sources: personal factors (namely gender-linked conceptions), behavioral patterns related to gender, and environmental factors that include social influences.

As societal views regarding gender roles continue to change and evolve, stereotypes continue to be influenced primarily by culture, not by inherent biological differences between males and females (Khajehpour, Ghazvini, Memari, & Rhamani, 2011; Rogers, 2016). With the prominent role that culture plays, Khajehpour et al. (2011) posit that modeling, abstract learning through observation, is the most powerful means of transmitting attitudes and behaviors, cultural values, and thought patterns across generations. Social cognitive theory provides guidance for how observed behavior (i.e., modeling) can "influence values, attitudes, and thoughts, thereby affecting stereotypes and regulation of gender roles that are typically associated with the feminist label" (Rogers, 2016, p. 8). As a result, by fusing feminist theory with social cognitive theory, we are afforded both a political/social lens and a learned behavior (i.e., modeling) lens (Rogers, 2016) through which to view the impact of gender and culture on female County Extension Directors.

Traditionally, males have dominated the agriculture field, and while females were present within agriculture, the main role they served was as a farmwife (Sachs, Barbercheck, Braiser, Kiernan, & Terman, 2016). Today, females continue to have an increasingly greater presence within the field of agriculture, but such advancements have been met with adversity. Researchers noted that the success of females depends on creating opportunities for access to resources, knowledge, and social support through nontraditional means. While these women can accomplish much on their own, “their efforts are thwarted without the support of agricultural institutions to create equal opportunities for them [...]” (Sachs, Barbercheck, Braiser, Kiernan, & Terman, 2016, p. 4).

Furthermore, females are lacking representation in all levels of agricultural leadership in education and business. In 2015, female faculty held 37% of positions in the biological, agricultural, and environmental life sciences and related fields at four-year universities (National Science Foundation, Science & Engineering Indicators, 2018). With regards to representation amongst senior faculty, deans, and university presidency, the American Council on Education’s American College President Study in 2017, only 30 percent of the nation’s college and university presidents are female (Bartel, 2018). However, at agricultural and land-grant institutions nationwide, females accounted for less than 10% of deans and vice presidents (Griffeth, 2013).

To better understand this discrepancy in the representative numbers of females, a discussion of culture is necessary. While cultures are predisposed to change, they are concurrently predisposed to resist change. Eagleton (2016) explains that culture is what an individual has done before, and perhaps his/her ancestors before that, countless times, where one’s conduct can be validated if/when it aligns with that of his/her predecessors. Resistance to change is built on habit and the solid integration of cultural traits. In that regard, culture becomes not only a way of life, but it is also a matter of custom and something that is not acquired all at once or at a finite point in one’s life. Hofstede (2011) explained that societal cultures often reside in such unconscious values, namely in the sense of individuals’ broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others; in contrast, organizational cultures reside in visible and conscious practices based on how individuals perceive what takes place in their organizational environment.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand the barriers faced by female County Extension Directors/Coordinators across the United States through an examination of the leadership dynamics, power relationships, and organizational culture of Cooperative Extension. Established by legislation passed in 1862, land-grant universities were established to focus on educating common people in agriculture and engineering (Buys & Rennekamp, 2020). Later legislation in 1890, 1994, and 1998 expanded land-grant institutions to include historically Black-, Native American-, and Hispanic-serving universities (APLU,

2020). Cooperative Extension, established by the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, serves as the outreach mechanism of the United States’ land-grant university system by translating the research and teaching happening at the university for everyday individuals (Buys & Rennekamp, 2020).

It is known that females have both a presence and impact in both agriculture and leadership, but the body of literature reflecting their presence and impact is lacking. The intent of this study was to show how females contribute to areas of agriculture and leadership, and what hurdles they may encounter. Furthermore, we have examined unique challenges and/or barriers with which their male counterparts do not contend. To guide data collection and seek to better understand the research problem that was posed, the following research questions provided direction to gain insight into the understanding that fails us:

1. What are the cultural values and beliefs exhibited by Cooperative Extension?
2. How does Cooperative Extension respond to change?

Methods

Using a constructivist philosophy as the lens, this study employed a critical feminist collaborative autoethnographical approach. The population for this study was female County Extension Directors/Coordinators based across the United States. The working definition of female County Extension Director/Coordinator for the purpose of this study was the individual who identified as female and was tasked with providing oversight to an entire county’s Extension program, ensuring that it is all-encompassing, functioning properly, and addressing community needs in alignment with the mission work of the respective land-grant university. Purposive sampling was used within this study to maximize the discovery of knowledge related to this particular population and to lend the most intimate insight regarding our guiding research questions (Patton, 2002). The 10 participants served in the CED/CEC role from 4-22 years, represented the Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Midwest regions of the US, and were affiliated with 1862, 1890, and 1994 land-grant institutions.

Through online asynchronous interviews, those 10 participants were presented with written question prompts within a Google Doc. Participants were provided with generic Google accounts through North Carolina State University Information Technologies to provide them with anonymity during this process. With the protection of anonymity, participants shared stories freely and honestly. Participants were able to provide commentary to the responses of their peers through resulting member checks. Four subsequent rounds of prompts were posed to the participants, resulting in five separate rounds of responses and attributable commentary.

Positioned as autoethnographic research, the lead author concurrently responded to question prompts in a combined methods and reflexive journal along with the participants. Data retrieved from the commentary was analyzed in conjunction with the data gathered from the participants. By answering

prompts, journaling for reflection, and merging these data sets of writing into “one corpus of autoethnographic data,” we were able to build a richer and more expansive autoethnographic record (Holman Jones, Adams, and Ellis, 2013, p. 72). As Chang (2008, p. 109) has noted, we engage in collaborative autoethnography to create rich context in an effort to not risk only privileging one perspective. By including others as co-informants in this study, this approach broadened the database by elucidating others’ stories while the research focus was still anchored in my own personal experience, an approach similar to that employed by Foster, McAllister, and O’Brien (2005) and Smith (1987).

In order to analyze and interpret the resulting data produced during the interviews and member checks, the following six best practices for autoethnographic analysis and interpretation (Chang, 2008; Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013; Maxwell, 2005) were employed: 1) To initiate “meaning-making,” an important preparatory step was taken to review data holistically (Chang, 2008; Maxwell, 2005); this entailed reading textual data of resulting interviews. 2) Segmental reading was then employed, which included reviewing each data set line by line. 3) This was followed by another holistic reading that reviewed the entire data set through with little interruption. That review afforded me a broader understanding of what was being said within the data (Chang, 2008). 4) To help fracture each data set into smaller bits on the basis of topical commonality and to regroup the data bits into topical categories, we then coded and sorted data (Chang, 2008, p.119). 5) We then identified recurring topics/themes/patterns. With this data organization, we were able to see where deficiencies were (and where more data needed to be collected), where redundancy had occurred (where more than sufficient data had already been accumulated), and where collected data needed to be trimmed and discarded in the data set as well. 6) With moving from analysis to interpretation, while the process of creating initial salient themes refrained from including nuanced interpretations, we worked to build culturally meaningful thematic interpretations to coincide with our posed research questions.

Trustworthiness of this study was established utilizing tenants of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Due to the fact that an autoethnography “can also be judged in terms of whether it helps readers communicate with others different from themselves or offer a way to improve the lives of participants and readers or the author’s own” (Ellis, 2004, p. 124), when coupled with the need to demonstrate trustworthiness, considerable care was taken to present sound research to the reader. To enhance credibility, peer debriefs, and member checking was utilized. The peer debrief process was enacted to hold the researcher accountable by utilizing external sources to ensure the research process is held in check (Creswell, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The exchange of information and feedback was conducted in full with the peer debrief team before the subsequent round of data collection occurred. “Thick description” was utilized to establish transferability (Denzin, 1989). Dependability was established from a two-pronged

approach: journaling and documentation trail. Journaling was implemented to maintain objectivity as researcher personal bias must be taken into account (Vagle, 2014). In addition to journaling, a documentation trail was produced to track and monitor collection methods, decisions made, and conclusions drawn to assist with tracking methodological decisions and reflections (Dooley, 2007, p. 39).

Key Findings and Conclusions

Due to the nature of this study, key findings are presented with conclusions and implications regarding each research question posed.

Research Question: What are the Cultural Values/Beliefs Exhibited by Cooperative Extension?

With this question, our aim was to determine what values and beliefs are held in high regard - and thus exhibited - by Cooperative Extension. Social cognitive theory provides needed guidance for how observed behaviors can influence values and attitudes (Rogers, 2016), allowing us to conclude that all resulting behaviors stem from such values. With this research question, we looked to the culturally meaningful themes centered around “Difficulties of the Job are Valued by the Organization”, “Battling Hostility and Being Alone are Valued by the Organization”, “Cautious: On Alert For Making Waves,” and “The Positive Power of Others Helps Women Navigate Hostilities.”

Difficulties of the Job are Valued by the Organization

We began with stories that spoke to the difficulties of the job, first regarding the sheer volume of hours that it requires - from managing staff, to coordinating county programming, to conducting educational programs, to building collaborative partnerships, to seeking funding, to maintaining budgets, and a plethora of tasks in between - in acknowledging this is no 40-hour-week-type job. It is important to explicitly make known to the reader that by stating difficulties of the job are “valued,” we are stating that the organization espouses such job traits, does not act to change these difficulties, and acknowledges that such difficulties are ingrained as part of the organizational culture. These difficulties are not “valued” in the traditional sense because if this was the case, the organization would seek out alternatives to address these difficulties, increase compensation for CEDs/CECs, etc.

With the time demands that are placed on CED/CECs, we saw that it took an incredible toll on these women as individuals. Most all participants spoke to how damaging this was to them. These data were similar to findings obtained by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2020), Foster (2001), and Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004) whose respondents noted the incredible stress on their marriages/partnerships as a result of their careers. Additionally, some of the respondents even noted that they should seek out medical assistance for their own health problems, but they simply couldn’t do this because they had no spare time to devote to those needs (Foster 2001; Seevers & Foster, 2003). With

these physical, emotional, and mental challenges that are brought onto female CED/CECs, many participants explained the need to have mental fortitude and ‘tough skin’ as well; these findings were congruent with findings established by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019), Foster (2001), and Seevers and Foster (2003). The women also explained how being critiqued - and overly critiqued - was so draining for them. They noted they felt overly scrutinized for no reason other than their gender. This finding aligned with work conducted previously by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020), Foster (2001), and Seevers and Foster (2003).

Battling Hostility and Being Alone are Valued by the Organization

All of the women shared a multitude of experiences that caused them to battle hostility from supervisors/administration, peers, direct reports, and clientele, just to name a few encounters. Hostilities - in numerous forms - aligned with findings reported by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020), Foster (2001), and Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004). Many of the women voiced how detrimental a toxic office culture has been to them and their peers where individuals were demeaning or caustic or even when male camaraderie was not extended to female colleagues. These findings align with Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) that specifically mentioned toxic work environments where competition and inappropriate/sexist comments were commonplace. Furthermore, findings related to male camaraderie not being extended to female colleagues aligned with data resulting from the work of Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) and Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004).

Most of the difficulties and hostilities that these women faced stemmed directly from misogyny where prejudice, malice, and/or contempt towards women finds a safe haven within various patriarchal cultures. Many women, working to overcome the hostilities associated with misogyny, “work long hours, often working ‘twice as hard as men,’ to be viewed as equally competent, perhaps sacrificing spouse and children in deference to career, these women have been inculcated into a patriarchal corporate environment” (Tosone, 2009, p. 1). This is compounded by doubt, criticism, and the continual and incessant need to prove one’s worth. These findings were congruent with data previously obtained by Foster (2001) and Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004).

Participants explained at great length environments that were very much “a man’s world” where the “Good Ol’ Boys Club” was both prominent and prevalent; participants explained how they felt they did not belong or benefit from such a club/identity. Numerous participants had their competency regularly questioned by others. Such findings aligned with the work of Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) and Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004).

Current research shows that working in misogynistic settings has dire negative effects on the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of both women and men (Tosone, 2009). Tosone

(2009) notes that being a bystander to gender-based work incivility lends to decreased job satisfaction, productivity, and morale. Participants noted the distress they felt related to sexism. These data align with the work of Szymanski, Gupta, Carr, and Stewart (2009) which explained the role misogyny plays in connecting sexist events with psychological distress. As the work of Szymanski, Gupta, Carr, and Stewart (2009) has identified, the “personal is political posits that sexism is likely to contribute to women’s mental health problems directly through experiences of sexist events and through the internalization of negative and limiting messages about being a woman” (p. 101). As a result of continual devaluing of women through oppression and omission through various acts of misogyny, participants in our study expressed being frustrated, discouraged, and tired. While these data align with work conducted by Seevers and Foster (2003,2004), Foster (2001) specifically noted that many participants stated they were simply “tired” (p. 7).

It is not hard to understand that due to the field we find ourselves in (where Seevers and Foster (2003) reported that less than 15% of AEE faculty are women), a number of participants noted that they were often found in situations where they were the only woman present (in the room, in the meeting, at the table, etc.). However, what is hard to accept is how some of these women were “kindly” excluded from events that show various social exclusion in their Extension careers. These findings were congruent with data produced by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) and Seevers and Foster (2004). Several participants noted that they felt they were the recipients of attacks that were gender-driven but directed (and disguised) towards their age, newness/inexperienced status, etc. which were deemed “safer” or “easier” targets than gender.

Cautious: On Alert for Making Waves

Numerous participants mentioned that they were very mindful of what they said, how they shared those messages, and with whom they shared that information. Some noted that when they expressed concerns, those concerns were portrayed in a negative light, and at other times, some feared being reprimanded for “making waves” as a woman in leadership. Women noted that pushing the boundaries of a female in agriculture in leadership in a somewhat powerful role that had not been done before made others extremely uncomfortable. Such findings were congruent with data produced by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019) and Foster (2001).

The Positive Power of Others Helps Women Navigate Hostilities

In the CED/CEC role, many participants noted that it has been critical to have support and mentoring opportunities to enable them to succeed. For many individuals, they have had supervisors/mentors who took considerable risks to help them advance/succeed. Mentors and supervisors were there for the women when they faced hardships. This aligns with previous work of Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019) that noted leadership development within an agricultural context for women should

involve a formal connection to a mentor to strengthen their knowledge base, work personas, and professional networks.

Female colleagues serving as informal mentors were invaluable to others; for some many of these women, having others in their lives to mentor, act as sounding boards, and hold them accountable empowered them. This further supports work completed by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) showing the necessity of women supporting other women leaders within the agriculture industry. This also aligns with the “social capital” notion that Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) spoke of where females were invested in working to create learning opportunities for other females and would be willing to share what they knew with one another. This is congruent with the findings of Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019) where participants believed in the notion of ‘it takes a village’ to achieve success and to give back, furthering the concept of participants’ vested interest in the need to mentor others.

Conclusions and Implications

Based on the findings presented here, cultural values/beliefs exhibited by Cooperative Extension show that the job requirements and expectations of a CED/CEC force this position to be much more than a 40-hour per week job; this is more commonly at least a 60-hour per week lifestyle. It appears that there is a belief that CEDs/CECs should give freely of their time in order to accomplish such tasks - during the evenings, weekends, etc. - and they are chastised if they choose family/personal obligations over work. The implications of this include creating a work/life balance that is abysmal for many women, and it is likely that such expectations/beliefs will lead to higher attrition rates. It is likely that fewer and fewer women will view this as a viable pathway for them to follow as their chosen career pathway due to personal sacrifices they are forced to make and the numerous barriers they face regarding advancement and tenure (Cline, Rosson, & Weeks, 2019, 2020).

With regards to academia, whether this is an artifact of academia (as one participant put it) or otherwise, there is a great value on outputs in the form of scholarly work, prestige, national honors, numbers, etc., and this is evidenced across the country. Implications from this include work environments that become increasingly more competitive and hostile. As was evidenced in our study - and congruent with work performed by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019) - higher education environments can produce greater prevalence of conflict when high levels of competition among colleagues can create unhealthy, toxic work environments. Participants noted several issues with undercutting and marginalization of women - by both male and female faculty members - that was both “painful and counterproductive” (p.8). If not addressed, this implies that land-grant institutions and Cooperative Extension would value such hostile, counterproductive academic environments.

From all appearances, this population of CEDs/CECs seemed to be inclusive, understanding, and community service-oriented women. If we value those administrators within Cooperative

Extension who saw the value in hiring them for these attributes and many others, we know there is the capability for the organization to be aware that many of these women find themselves in locations where they face social, political, and religious exclusion. When we acknowledge that these individuals appear to be lacking the appropriate support afforded by an organization to enact change, then we face the implication that such hires were performed only to give the semblance of empty lip service. As Tondl (1991) explained, Extension sends a message when it resists or accepts change, either actively or passively.

Many women spoke highly of mentors - formal and informal - and others who have supported them and their professional (and personal) efforts over the years. It appears that Cooperative Extension values this support system across the country, so we view this as yet another investment towards building that “social capital” which is direly needed. Participants explained frequently that encouragement towards and from other female Cooperative Extension/AEE faculty/staff was critically important, in addition to being honest and transparent regarding needs and expectations of the profession. As has been evidenced by other studies (Cline, Rosson, and Weeks, 2019), it is important for us to be mindful that even though honesty and transparency – in regards to encouragement (and discouragement) of the profession – could intentionally turn other women faculty away from certain personal and professional pursuits, research participants have felt a responsibility to portray the profession authentically.

The practices/policies regarding hostility - in all of its forms - and how that is handled can be seen as incomplete at best; if/when such hostile exchanges do occur, it is unclear as to whether individuals are reprimanded in any way when matters are handled internally. Across the country, some offenders appeared to be held accountable by supervisors while others received no such reprimands. Furthermore, many continued and perpetuated these acts for several years, and many continued until they departed the organization via retirement. Several women spoke of Extension events - many of them social-based - where they were “kindly excluded” from participation due to their gender, so without the organization directly condemning this, we can only conclude that it condones such behavior. Likewise, many women acknowledged that there was a great fear of “making waves,” and to persist in the organization, it was best to “not rock the boat.” We know that Extension is capable of creating a culture of openness, safety, and respect for its clientele, so we demand the same professional courtesy for the staff that serve it. Without a standardized system to air grievances, formally file complaints, and issue corrections, it appears that addressing and correcting hostility-related complaints is not something held as a priority by Cooperative Extension and their respective land-grant institutions. Implications of this conclusion would imply that Cooperative Extension becomes (or rather, maintains) its status as a patriarchal culture-oriented safe-haven for those difficulties/hostilities and acts of prejudice, malice, and

contempt that women face directly from misogyny. We should expect fewer women to enter this profession because of the transparency of those within the organization to relay these concerns to emerging faculty, graduate students, interns, etc. These sentiments were echoed in numerous studies, including the work of Seevers and Foster (2003) who succinctly stated: “there are many, many other professional opportunities for young women today with fewer barriers and more advantages” (p. 35). Finally, in acknowledgment of the findings presented here, we conclude that the organization values sexism at its core. Regardless of cultural values/beliefs that are “enacted” within the organization, similar to criteria that are marked off a rudimentary checklist (which are superficial at best), the innate patriarchal culture that is truly representative of its operational/cultural values drive this organization. Right. Into. The. Ground.

Research Question: How Does Cooperative Extension Respond to Change?

Our aim here is to discern how Cooperative Extension responds to change: willingly/unwillingly, proactively/reactionarily, knowingly/unknowingly. With this research question, we looked to the culturally meaningful themes centered around “Hesitance to Change: Navigating Traditional Gender Roles/Expectations” and “Hesitance to Change: R-E-S-P-E-C-T”.

Hesitance to Change: Navigating Traditional Gender Roles/Expectations

As we progressed into stories that delved into gender roles and expectations, all of these women were confronted with “traditional” roles/expectations for both men and women. When addressing “traditional” duties that women have held in the past, we also encounter “traditional” familial obligations - or lack thereof - that women feel critiqued for still to this day. Many participants shared that they are mothers and grandmothers themselves. But for those women without children, it was seen to be somewhat “abnormal” and “unnatural.” Likewise, some participants encountered a great deal of exclusion when accounting for who they were married to when expectations and assumptions were made that they were in a heterosexual relationship. County Extension Directors/Coordinators attend a variety of functions in their capacity and many of them - county- and state-level based - are centered around the inclusion of “family,” but we are all mindful that “family” is not viewed the same for all individuals. Within this field, the concept of a labyrinth is both very real and present. This is congruent with Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004) noting that barriers inhibiting women in nontraditional fields are complex and interrelated.

As we think about these sources of consternation, angst, and doubt, many of these women have been shamed by other women. Because women often find themselves living in patriarchal cultures, numerous women have been exposed to various forms of sexism resulting from the media, religious institutions, political and legal systems, familial and interpersonal relationships, and places of work. This is

perpetuated by not only men, but also by women, who reinforce the central male culture of devaluing women through acts of horizontal oppression and omission, which result from internalized misogyny; findings here are congruent with work conducted by Szymanski, Gupta, Carr, and Stewart (2009). Aligning with the previous work of Tosone (2009), this notion of internalized misogyny is real and present and not something unique to the field of agriculture. Shaming can take different forms, and one of the most prevalent encounters was when women found themselves in roles where they took stands to fight for causes they believed in which were not held in high regard by others. Still others have faced shaming and hostility by their direct reports who did not respect their role. Many of those women noted that such staff had never before been supervised by a woman. Others spoke of times where women - peers and administration - tried to manipulate their efforts through personal attacks. These findings were congruent with the work of Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020).

As we explored discrepancies regarding pay, benefits, and expectations that women have seen or experienced in their CED/CEC roles, many participants voiced frustration first over the increased amounts of scrutiny that they face that male colleagues do not seem to receive. Others noted that if they did not meet expectations of supervisors, they should expect to be reprimanded while many colleagues did not. Several women across the country also voiced frustration at the discrepancies in pay, benefits, retention packages, etc. between men and women that they could not attribute to differing qualities, skills, academic accomplishments, etc. Because the salaries of state employees are public information, the differences in wages are quite apparent. These findings aligned with work conducted by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) and Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004) that noted several barriers surrounding status, benefits, salary, and promotion inequities. As noted in the work of Seevers and Foster (2004), “until we are paid our worth and are treated with respect, there's no need to encourage anyone to go into this discipline.”

Hesitance to Change: R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Stories based upon respect showed that the women felt they were often ignored, not taken seriously by others, or overlooked altogether. Some perceived that others viewed them as weak or “pushovers.” As many women alluded to, whether facing missed job opportunities, staff/committee assignments, etc., similar sentiments were echoed that it was due to their gender. Many women spoke specifically to facing male privilege at work and how they have navigated such situations. This was congruent with findings of previous work conducted by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) and Seevers and Foster (2003). For many women, they felt others (colleagues and other administration) did not consider them worthy of training or instruction like many of their male peers. This traces back to work conducted by Seevers and Foster (2004) that females and minorities within the Cooperative Extension System encounter additional barriers related to lack of commitment from senior managers and

university administration and the resistance of some clientele groups to work with staff from diverse backgrounds. Many participants noted that men preferred to work with other men, and often, men simply seemed to tolerate the women. These findings were congruent with the work of Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020), Foster (2001), and Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004), where female exclusionary practices were well documented.

Conclusions and Implications

When we acknowledge that actions and behaviors are reflective of values and beliefs held by an organization (Bandura, 2002), when we view the external and internal forces (from an organizational and societal standpoint) that are warranting change(s) within that organization, we can then assess if there are visible changes stemming from new/different behaviors enacted by the organization. Based on those understandings, the findings presented here allow us to assess the ability/inability of Cooperative Extension to respond to change. Findings show that changes to diversify the workforce have been slow, inadequate, and superficial at best. This conclusion is made based on the continued under-representation of women in AEE and Cooperative Extension as a whole. While individuals may be hired into the organization, protocols and support systems to help grow and empower these women do not exist, bringing to light a distributive justice concern.

Likewise, changes to address discrepancies in pay, benefits, retention packages, etc. have not been made. Data obtained from this study are congruent with previous work conducted by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) and Seevers and Foster (2003, 2004), showing that progress has not been made. Universities have not been transparent in their hiring practices and how promotions, advancements, salaries, etc. are handled and assigned. Based on these conclusions, implications include high attrition rates for impactful women employees, furthering the organization's lack of diversification and progress. This also has implications for the clientele that Cooperative Extension serves as many clientele may receive sub-par assistance from county offices as positions remain vacant or are filled by less-than-ideal candidates. Likewise, from a Title IX perspective, this may impact federal funding received by universities because this violates some discriminatory practices on the basis of sex related to educational programs and services that those universities deliver.

Even with more women entering the field of AEE/Cooperative Extension, Extension has not done a sufficient job of addressing misogyny in all its forms. Data obtained for this study showed that there was no formal system or procedures across universities to file complaints, nor was there formal follow-up regarding how complaints were addressed. Likewise, Extension allowed organization-sponsored events to continue, even though many women had been excluded. As noted previously, implications include women becoming highly dissatisfied within the profession which could ultimately lead to high attrition rates for impactful women employees, furthering the organization's lack

of diversification and progress. As noted previously, from a Title IX perspective, this may impact federal funding received by universities because of violations of discriminatory practices on the basis of sex related to educational programs and services provided.

Finally, in acknowledgment of the data presented here, we conclude that the organization is reluctant to committing to change (that of diversified staff, clientele, demands for programming, etc.) due to the inherent disruption in the power system which currently undergirds the foundation of Cooperative Extension. Because Cooperative Extension was built upon support structures which have benefited from a patriarchal culture, the willingness to reorganize such power structures to create meaningful change - not just that enacted on a superficial level - has not yet been forced, and as a result, has not willingly been enacted or espoused as part of the organizational culture (Bandura, 2002). As such, implications based on this conclusion would imply that this organizational pathway may not be a viable outlet for women - approximately half of the available workforce - to develop, grow, advance, and realize professional success and fulfillment. Likewise, we should expect to see an internal organizational stalemate on the part of Cooperative Extension while similar organizations and universities advance and firmly situate themselves as progressive 21st century institutions. This could likely impact federal funding/backing, legislative support, and community viability, causing the organization to enter a state of obsolescence that renders it a vestigial entity altogether

Recommendations

This study provided insight into the implicit organizational culture (and viability) of Cooperative Extension by examining the leadership dynamics, power relationships, and cultural impacts experienced by women County Extension Directors/Coordinators across the United States. Based on these findings, the researcher proposes the following suggestions for actionable practices.

As we begin to outline recommendations for practice, we would be remiss if we did not explicitly explain that such issues identified in this study cannot be appropriately addressed and remedied by any one singular approach. As this issue itself is both multifaceted and complex at face value, the solution we seek can be described in much the same way. As we have made frequent mention of the notion of the labyrinth that women navigate as they try to advance themselves, this multifaceted solution set is indeed a labyrinth parallel of its own. Advancement in one area is dependent on successful navigation in yet another; some obstacles/barriers are much more apparent while others are quite hidden and deeply ingrained within cultural constructs. By accepting this mindset that true change will require multiple approaches working in unison due to the complexity of the issue at hand, we can position ourselves to enact meaningful change that has not yet been undertaken.

The practices/policies regarding hostility - in all of its forms - and how that is handled can be seen as inadequate at best; if/when such hostile exchanges do occur, it is unclear as to whether individuals are reprimanded in any way when matters are handled internally. Across the country, some offenders appeared to be held accountable by supervisors while others received no such reprimands. Furthermore, many continued and perpetuated these acts for several years, and many continued until they departed the organization via retirement. Without a standardized system to air grievances, formally file complaints, and issue corrections across the country, it appears that addressing and correcting hostility-related complaints are not something held as a priority by Cooperative Extension and their respective land-grant institutions. The need to establish such a standardized system is far overdue and should be addressed immediately.

While some women spoke of Extension events - many of them social-based - where they were "kindly excluded" from participation, we implore that Extension step up as an organization to root out some of these exclusionary based activities/functions that are seeded in traditions of the past. As an organization, we draw a lot of strength from tradition, but in many regards, it will render us obsolete in many circles in the future if we do not correct our actions. Finally, many women acknowledged that there was a great fear of "making waves," and to persist in the organization, it was best to "not rock the boat." We know that Extension is capable of creating a culture of openness, safety, and respect for its clientele, so we ask for the same for the staff that serve it. Practices and policies need to be established. The organization must address misogyny in all forms; it cannot shy away from this. There should be real consequences for failing not to abide by basic organizational culture values of integrity, respect, and human decency.

We require focused effort to dismantle systems and traditions that inhibit women's advancement. We implore Cooperative Extension - through a joint effort of all land-grant universities - to employ equitable and supportive processes for reporting and resolving such allegations that are free from retaliation. Although each institution will vary somewhat in these procedures, some standardization needs to be implemented and advocated to Cooperative Extension staff members so they are fully aware of such procedures. In conjunction with each university's Title IX Coordinator, Affirmative Action Officer, or comparable entity, there should be explicit policies which define prohibited conduct and outline general provisions the university will follow in regards to handling allegations of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Title IX regulations require institutions of higher education to implement a Title IX Policy to address sexual harassment as specifically defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Cooperative Extension staff should be able to formally report misconduct that does not constitute sexual harassment as specifically defined by Title IX sexual harassment policies; those actions may still be prohibited and should not preclude that respective university from evaluating the reported misconduct. When filing a report/complaint, the

Cooperative Extension employee should be afforded a fair procedure with due process protections. Likewise, we require that each university take appropriate corrective measures for any violations of this policy, acting to prevent future violations within the organization as well; we recommend that the Extension Director in each state be involved with appropriate disciplinary procedures in conjunction with the Title IX Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer.

With regards to academia, whether this is an artifact of academia (as one participant put it) or otherwise, there is a great value on outputs in the form of scholarly work, prestige, national honors, numbers, etc., and this is evidenced across the country. Participants noted several issues with under-cutting and marginalization of women - by both male and female faculty members - that was both "painful and counterproductive" (Cline, Rosson, and Weeks, 2019, p.8). If not addressed, this implies that land-grant institutions and Cooperative Extension would value such hostile, counterproductive academic environments. As an organization as a whole, we need to value quality rather than quantity of work (programs, publications, etc.). With this value system, having objective metrics based on sound outcomes and impacts that show marked growth in target audiences will better help provide equitable evaluations to deem what is "quality." As Cooperative Extension adopts these principles as they relate to title promotion and advancement, we hope that AEE and academia in general will also see the value in quality versus quantity. With the focus moving to quality, it is hoped that individuals will be able to better address some of the issues related to work/life balance, which has plagued the women in our studies and many others (Cline, Rosson, and Weeks, 2019, 2020; SeEVERS and Foster, 2003, 2004).

Many women spoke highly of mentors - formal and informal - and others who have supported them and their professional (and personal) efforts over the years. It appears that Cooperative Extension values this mentoring support system across the country, so we view this as yet another investment towards building that "social capital." We suggest that mentoring programs be expanded and given the needed resources to grow and serve staff. As Cooperative Extension dedicates time and resources to mentoring efforts through its Extension Organizational Development (or equivalent) office via each respective land-grant university, we recommend that specific resources be set aside for building mentor skill sets within women faculty/field faculty for new women faculty/field faculty. Ensuring that new women professionals are paired with a fellow woman professional within the first six months of their appointment could provide invaluable support structure to empower women in those positions in addition to helping to retain them in those jobs. As we are mindful not to overtax those resources that are so tremendously valuable and limited, we recommend that mentoring clusters be created rather than one-on-one pairings. With this approach, we will not be taxing the limited time of existing women mentors, and it is hoped that this will create an environment where learning and support is afforded to both mentor and mentee in a supportive group

setting. These efforts would support the call to add to the “social capital” notion that Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) spoke of where females invest in working to create learning opportunities for other females and would be willing to share what they knew with one another. This further supports work completed by Cline, Rosson, and Weeks (2019, 2020) showing the necessity of women supporting other women leaders within the agriculture industry.

Cooperative Extension actively recruits personnel who hold strong technical skills/credentials, furthering the image of the organization acting as a trusted community resource and extension of the land-grant institution. Employing staff who act in the capacity of community servants, understanding that they are tasked with uplifting and empowering community members for the betterment of society as a whole, is yet another asset to the organization. Staff who hold these characteristics of service and have a sincere interest in global matters, diversity, inclusion, etc. can and will allow the organization to respond more effectively throughout all communities. We recommend that Cooperative Extension actively seek out individuals with such characteristics for future hires. In coordination with university HR and the County Operations team, each Cooperative Extension should build specific selection checklists into interview questions in order to better discern the propensity in applicants to exhibit such characteristics/skills as future employees. The following should be at the forefront of each administrator’s mind:

It is imperative for a leader to recognize that conflicting values within a mixed culture are potential resources for change, and as such, instead of imposing external values on the existing culture, a leader may enlist values from within to facilitate change. It is recommended that the leaders of organizations “can and should employ those values, persons, and parties that promote the needed change” (Dwairy, 2019, p. 517).

Thus, leaders of a particular group or organization should give due consideration to the personal culture of the people in addition to their generalized cultural identity.

Just as inclusive, understanding, and community servant-oriented women have been hired, men with admirable attributes have been hired into the organization as well. Men who can act as allies to women are invaluable to combating misogyny; current research shows that working in misogynistic settings has dire negative effects on the well-being of both women and men (Tosone, 2009). Tosone (2009) notes that being a bystander to gender-based work incivility lends to decreased job satisfaction, productivity, and morale in all genders. It would be prudent of Cooperative Extension to provide educational resources and training to do more to teach and empower additional male allies within our field. Teach employees that it’s not just about “getting out of women’s way” to help them advance; it’s about walking the journey with them. As women receive invaluable training during their own onboarding sessions, it would be prudent for men to receive ally training during their onboarding

sessions in conjunction with required diversity, equity, and inclusion training in a “wraparound” approach. These trainings should be coordinated through each university’s Extension Organizational Development Office and/or Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity for oversight.

Inequalities related to pay, benefits, retention packages, promotion, etc. persist to this day. We acknowledge that over half a century after pay discrimination became illegal here in the United States, there is a distinct and persistent pay gap between women and men that continues to plague society; women in the United States are paid 82 cents to every dollar earned by men (AAUW, 2020). These gender pay gap consequences continue to afflict women throughout their lives in numerous ways: as women outpace men in higher education today, they also hold almost two-thirds of the outstanding student debt as well. Furthermore, because of the gender pay gap, these women also have a harder time repaying said loans. This affliction follows them well into retirement because due to a lifetime of lower wage earnings, these women also receive less funds from Social Security and retirement pensions; overall, retirement income for women is approximately only 70% of what men claim (AAUW, 2020). Distributive justice must be recognized by Cooperative Extension. The organization must address discrepancies in pay, benefits, retention packages, etc. Universities cannot afford to not be transparent in their hiring practices and how promotions, advancements, etc. are handled and assigned. The organization must act to support these employees in their careers.

Cooperative Extension must adopt practices and policies to support these women as both individuals and professionals. Today, non-tenure track positions (akin to field faculty CED/CEC positions) account for greater than 70% of appointments for professionals in higher ed; women are much less likely to achieve a tenure-track position than their male counterparts (AAUW, 2020). Federal law provides protection against discrimination by Title VII (unlawful to discriminate against an employee or applicant for employment based on sex) and Title IX (unlawful to discriminate on the basis of sex in educational programs that receive federal funding) and applies to land-grant universities. Both Title VII and Title IX protect faculty/field faculty members from sex discrimination during the hiring process, promotion considerations, job training, termination proceedings, or any other condition or privilege of employment (AAUW, 2020). Cooperative Extension should work with each university’s Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity to correct current policies/procedures to build transparency and equity in the process. As a conclusion of doing so, Extension should then act to set a standard across the nation for finally addressing this societal plight in their organizational culture practices.

Based on the aforementioned recommendations for practice - to assist this work in carrying out its aim to identify and remedy social harms and injustices as the political, socially-just, and socially-conscious research act it is - we leave you with these concluding thoughts. Due to the mission of Cooperative Extension to advance agriculture, the environment, human health

and well-being, and communities, Extension programming impacts each community - and all of those within it - in a multitude of ways. From a cultural standpoint, a challenge of this caliber taps into an organizational pipeline that feeds from our local communities to the federal government. How many other organizations can truly do that? This unique position sets Cooperative Extension apart from numerous other entities. Cooperative Extension can set a standard for government entities and employ best practices that can be passed along to other sectors.

When we acknowledge that culture and leadership are inextricably connected, we are able to make an assessment of the organizational viability and effectiveness of Cooperative Extension. Unspoken behaviors, social patterns, and culture can perpetuate values, beliefs, and assumptions that persist for decades within our organization. It is necessary and prudent - and timely - of us to ensure that what is being valued, and thereby espoused and enacted by our organization, is what will advance us - for the better - in the coming years, not only in terms of organizational health, but for overall societal wellness and empowerment as aware global partners. These words continue to weigh heavy on our hearts:

Tondl (1991) explained that “Extension sends a message when it resists or accepts change, either actively or passively. The organization reveals itself: its internal norms, values, and its attitude toward change [...]” We implore this organization to act now to rectify these social injustices and shake itself from the protective cloak of patriarchal culture that it has so shamelessly upheld for generations.

References

- AAUW. (2020). *The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap. 2020 Update. The Impact of COVID-19 on Women’s Economic Security*. The American Association of University Women.
<https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/simple-truth/>
- Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities. (2020). *History of the land-grant university*.
<https://www.aplu.org/about-us/history-of-aplu>
- Bandura, A. (2002). Social Cognitive Theory in Cultural Context. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 51(2), 269-290.
- Bartel, S. (2018, December 19). *Leadership barriers for women in higher education*.
<https://bized.aacsb.edu/articles/2018/12/leadership-barriers-for-women-in-higher-education>
- Bussey, K., & Bandura, A. (1999). Social cognitive theory of gender development and differentiation. *Psychological review*, 106(4), 676-713.
- Buys, D. R., & Rennekamp, R. (2020). Cooperative Extension as a force for healthy, rural communities: Historical perspectives and future directions. *American Journal of Public Health*, 110(9), 1300-1303.
- Carlson, J. and Ray, R. (2011). *Feminist theory*. Oxford Bibliographies. DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780199756384-0020
- Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as method*. Left Coast Press, Inc.
- Cline, L., Rosson, H., & Weeks, P. (2019). Women faculty in postsecondary agricultural and extension education: A fifteen-year update. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 60(2), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2019.02001>
- Cline, L., Rosson, H., & Weeks, P. (2020). A critical study of women graduate student experiences in Agricultural and Extension Education. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 61(4), 46-60. <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae2020.04046>
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N.K. (1989). *Interpretive biography*. Sage.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.) (1998). *The landscape of qualitative research, theories, and issues*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Dooley, K. E. (2007). Viewing Agricultural Education Research through a Qualitative Lens. *ERIC*, 48(4).
- Dwairy, M. (2019). Culture and leadership: personal and alternating values within inconsistent cultures. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 22(4), 510-518.
- Eagleton, T. (2016). *Culture*. Yale University Press.
- Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. AltaMira Press.
- Falk, I. & Kilpatrick, S. (2000). What is Social Capital? A study of interaction in a rural community. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 40(1), 87-110.
- Fals-Borda, O. (1996). In Peter Reason, Reflections on the purposes of human inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 2(1), 15-28.
- Foster, B. (2001). Choices: A dilemma of women agricultural education teachers, *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 42(3), 1-10. DOI: 10.5032/jae.201.03001
- Foster, B. (2001, December). Women in agricultural education: Who are you. In Proceedings of The 28th Annual National Agricultural Education Research Conference.01. New Orleans, LA. Retrieved from <http://www.aaaeonline.org/>
- Foster, K., McAllister, M., & O’Brien, L. (2005). Coming to Autoethnography: A Mental Health Nurse’s Experience. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690500400401>
- Griffeth, L. (2013). *Growing into leadership: A study of the informal and incidental learning of women agricultural deans and vice presidents* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia]. https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/griffeth_lauren_1_201312_phd.pdf
- Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>
- Holman Jones, S. L., Adams, T. E., & Ellis, C. (2013). *Handbook of autoethnography*. Left Coast Press, Inc.

- Khajehpour, M., Ghazvini, S. D., Memari, E., & Rhamani, M. (2011). Social cognitive theory of gender development and differentiation. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 1188-1198.
- Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Nagoshi, C. & Nagoshi, J. (2017). Feminist theoretical framework. In A. Wenzel (Ed.), *The sage encyclopedia of abnormal and clinical psychology*, 1, 1467-1470. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781483365817.n590
- National Science Foundation, Science & Engineering Indicators. (2018). Chapter 5: Academic Research and Development (NSB-2018-1). Retrieved from <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2018/nsb20181/report/sections/academic-research-and-development/doctoral-scientists-and-engineers-in-academia>
- NCSU Extension Personnel (2019). County Extension Directors in NC. <https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/directory/>
- Richardson, L. (1994). Writing as inquiry. In Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research* (p. 516-527). Sage.
- Rogers, T. L. (2016). Examining the effect of feminist self-labeling and feminist perspectives on young adults' self-efficacy (Order No. 10127071). Available from ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global; Social Science Premium Collection. (1809111036). Retrieved from <https://proxying.lib.ncsu.edu/index.php/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.prox.lib.ncsu.edu/docview/1809111036?accountid=12725>
- Sachs, C. E., Barbercheck, M., Braiser, K., Kierman, N. E., & Terman, A. R. (2016). *The rise of women farmers and sustainable agriculture*. University of Iowa Press.
- Seevers, B.S., and Foster, B.B. (2003). Women in Agricultural and Extension Education...a minority report. *North American Association of Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) Journal*, 47(1), 32-37.
- Seevers, B. S., & Foster, B. B. (2004). A profile of female county agricultural agents in today's CES. *The Journal of Extension*, 42(6), 6.
- Smith, D. (1987). *The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology*. Northeastern University Press.
- Szymanski, D., Gupta, A., Carr, E., & Stewart, D. (2009). Internalized Misogyny as a Moderator of the Link between Sexist Events and Women's Psychological Distress. *Sex Roles*, 61, 101-109. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-009-9611-y>
- Tondl, R. M. (1991). Climate for change in Extension. *Journal of Extension*, 29(3), 14-16.
- Tosone, C. (2009). Sotto Voce: Internalized misogyny and the politics of gender in corporate America. *Psychoanalytic Social Work*, 16(1), 1-11.
- Vagle, M.D. (2014). *Crafting Phenomenological Research*. Left Coast Press, Inc.