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Facilitating Executive Succession for Female Hospitality Managers

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Abstract

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Abstract

The lack of women in leadership roles continues to be a diversity concern, and a lack of knowledge regarding the male experience promoting female advancement when in a gatekeeper role is not well understood. The purpose of this study was to explore the male experience promoting women within the hospitality industry. Role congruity theory and leader member exchange are foundational concepts for understanding bias around gender diversity and the facilitators of succession; however, what is not known is the experience of male executives facilitating female advancement, what affects their support of female successors, and the perceptions they have when considering female successors. This study used a phenomenological research method to examine the lived experiences of eight male executives with female subordinates within the hospitality industry. Through in-depth one-on-one interviews, rich descriptions were created, and distinct themes were presented. The results indicate that when facilitating female succession, male executives experience fulfillment, are affected by organizational support, and perceived their approach and advocacy as positive contributors to leadership development. When male executives have support and a deep understanding of the value of gender diverse teams, succession activities are experienced positively and can lead to more gender diverse leadership teams resulting in positive social change.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The hospitality industry is defined as arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). Despite being one of the fastest growing industries globally (Surucu & Sesen, 2019) diversity and inclusion of female leadership remains low (Walsh et al., 2016) leading to increased turnover intentions of female management (Bullinaria, 2018). Turnover intentions in hospitality are strongly correlated with job dissatisfaction stemming from poor supervision, low status, and lack of job security (Ann & Blum, 2020). These factors can be balanced with improved recognition and challenging work achieved through appropriate talent management strategies (Ann & Blum, 2020). Talent management in the hospitality industry remains underdeveloped, leading to negative impacts on retention and leadership quality compared to other industries largely due to the lack of career development (Baharin & Hanafi, 2018).

The attraction to the hospitality industry is even less appealing for qualified women who are already under-earning at an average rate of 81% compared to men (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018), due to even lower earnings in hospitality management as compared to line workers (Dogru et al., 2019). Women face barriers to leadership positions and development (Santero-Sanchez et al., 2015), which is largely attributed to the concept of role congruity (Eagly & Karau, 2002). This is exacerbated when women anticipate discrimination, reducing leadership ambitions in general (Fisk & Overton, 2019). Opportunities to improve talent management heavily focus on the concept of mentorship relationships (Tonidandel et al., 2007) and the positive performance effects of

improved self-efficacy resulting from mentorship relationships (Kale, 2020). Recent developments challenge the applicability of the mentor-mentee dynamic for women and instead suggest sponsorship-protégé relationships to facilitate the advancement of women in leadership (Gilbert & Rossman, 1992).

Mentor and sponsorship relationships are both examples of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), which greatly benefits hospitality professionals by creating positive dichotomous relationships via the talent management strategy (Surucu & Sesen, 2019). When specifically addressing the issue of role congruity, gender bias can be greatly reduced by organizational practices that facilitate female leadership emergence such as increased representation, bias training, reshaping cultural values, equitable development opportunities, executive coaching (Lyness & Grotto, 2018), organizational culture, and empowerment (Roberts & Brown, 2019). It has also been encouraged for women to alter their own behaviors exhibited in the workplace and mediate their leadership styles (Hogue, 2016; Schock et al., 2019). However, what is not well understood is the male experience in facilitating executive succession as the gatekeepers of leadership roles. This is vital in taking the approach of creating positive social change by improving conditions for those experiencing discrimination and changing gender bias towards women in leadership roles, instead of promoting the idea of coping strategies for those facing disadvantages (Roberts & Brown, 2019).

The intention of the study was to increase the body of knowledge around the facilitation of female advancement in the hospitality industry, specific to the constructs of role congruity and through the lens of the male experience. To achieve this, the study

explored informal sponsorship activity, known as facilitation. This most closely

corresponds to the role of direct supervisors who provide performance feedback,

opportunities for development, stretch assignments, and make decisions about promotion

and advancement (Creta & Gross, 2020). This diverges from succession and mentoring

activities in specific and meaningful ways.

Background

Succession is a formal, human capital organizational strategy, which relies on the

organizational culture and processes as a system for effective execution (Mahmood et al.,

2019; McKee & Froelich, 2016). Succession is also mostly focused on executive

replacement, such as in the case of a departing CEO and is conducted at the board-level

(Berns & Klarner, 2017; Schepker et al., 2018). Mentoring is also a different relationship

from sponsorship as it is not typically a supervisor-subordinate relationship; instead, the

mentor acts as a role model, and may not have influence on targeted, interorganizational

advancement of a protégé (Creta & Gross, 2020). It is a growing concern that male

gatekeepers are assuming the role of mentor for female mentees as a reaction to perceived

risk (Hill et al., 2016). Finally, women have less access to these critical networks of

mentors and do not benefit from a demographic similarity, thus reducing the

effectiveness of mentoring relationships (Gilbert & Rossman, 1992; Schwiebert et al.,

1999). For these reasons, the dyadic relationship of male gatekeepers facilitating the

advancement of female direct reports is at the center of this study. This specific

distinction is vital to enhance knowledge around female advancement, as it is the most

tactical and effective method for leadership development opportunities that lead to advancement under the direct responsibilities of gatekeepers (Al Suwaidi et al., 2020).

Problem Statement

There is a lack of understanding regarding what men experience facilitating the advancement of women to executive leadership roles within the global hospitality industry (Lyness & Grotto, 2018; Walsh et al., 2016). The disparity between male and female leadership representation exists despite higher rates of college education among females in the United States, as well as research indicating diverse, inclusive teams are more effective for organizational performance and glean higher profits (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). In context of all U.S. organizations, women account for 56.8% of the workforce (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017); however, they only comprise 28% of all leadership positions (Johnson2008) and less than 5% of Fortune 500 company chief executive officers (Zarya, 2018).

Leadership opportunity from a gender-specific perspective is an area of study with room for further research (Lyness & Grotto, 2018), particularly around the role of male executives in facilitating opportunities for women (Dwivedi et al., 2018) and the male role in leadership emergence for women successors in the hospitality industry (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019). While research has been conducted to understand the organizational barriers for females in the hotel sector, an opportunity exists to explore the male perception of facilitating executive succession when female managers pursue leadership consideration in the hospitality industry (Segovia-Pérez et al., 2019).

Due to their primary representation at the executive level, men are the primary decision makers for the promotion of women into the higher echelons of organizations. Arguably, it is imperative to understand the male experience of facilitating the careers of women working to achieve executive status (Dwivedi et al., 2018). What is not well understood are the internal contextual factors men face in decision making at this critical point in the career path of women, where women are highly represented at the management level but fail to attain the next level of opportunity when compared to male counterparts (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). To provide an explanation of the phenomenon, the barriers and facilitators surrounding gender equality practices that affect men in supporting the succession of women must be examined, particularly in the hospitality industry where gendering patterns remain pervasive (Carvalho et al., 2019).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the lived experience of male hospitality executives regarding their role in facilitating female advancement to senior leadership roles. Current research focuses on the female experience of the gender gap but has not recognized the role of the gatekeeper in facilitating advancement (Dwivedi et al., 2018; Lyness & Grotto, 2018). The intention for the study was to gain a deep understanding of the decision making process of male executives when considering the advancement of female careers within the hospitality industry. The further intent of the study was to bring awareness to the male role in female advancement in hospitality leadership. This information may be useful for informing the leadership coaching practice

through insight into talent management process, leadership consideration, and decision making when facilitating executive succession.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the lived experiences of male hospitality executives regarding the facilitation for female advancement to senior leadership roles?

Research Question 2: What affects male hospitality executives in supporting the succession of women?

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions male hospitality executives have when considering a female successor?

Answers to these questions might lead to the development of gender specific coaching tools and improved organizational facilitators for succession planning across a greater span of the industry subcategories to include hotel, food and beverage, and tourism.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

Role congruity theory is a relatively new concept in organizational psychology and has significant application for understanding the gender gap in leadership positions. Role congruity theory is an explanation of prejudicial feelings that occur when one gender acts outside of their perceived gender role (Eagly & Karau, 2002). These feelings can affect group behavior and perpetuate the stereotype that males are inherently better leaders (Eagly & Karau). The impact feelings of incongruity have on others has been studied regarding effects to women in leadership, indicating (a) incongruity has significant impact on perception of female leadership ability (Johnson et al., 2008); (b)

greater incongruence leads to greater prejudice (Koburtay & Syed, 2019); (c) it can be internalized by females in the workplace creating internal barriers (Lyness & Grotto, 2018), ultimately resulting in loss of effectiveness when leadership positions are reached; or (d) limiting leadership attainment (Koburtay & Syed, 2019).

Role congruity theory (RCT) is a specific perspective regarding feelings and perceptions of fit within a role due to societal expectations that are incongruent with another held role, in this case between women and leadership (Eagly & Karau, 2002). RCT explains the underrepresentation of females in leadership roles in part due to societal expectations of women and perceptions that female traits are not aligned with desirable leadership traits (Johnson et al., 2008). These social constructs result in feelings of incongruity by both women and men, possibly limiting women's ability to attain and be effective in leadership roles (Koburtay & Syed, 2019). RCT asserts female characteristics are perceived as less favorable for leadership roles, and women who enact favorable leadership roles are perceived unfavorably due to the perception they are acting outside of their social role (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Gender-specific approaches to leadership development improve leadership effectiveness regarding organizational realities, including opportunities for positive contributions (O'Neil et al., 2015).

Research specific to the hospitality industry includes the "glass-ceiling" barrier under the conceptual framework of stereotypes, as it relates to work-life responsibilities; results indicate significant self-imposed barriers to leadership positions and lack of access to mentors (Boone et al., 2013). One study noted that in the hospitality industry, mentor relationships address gender inequalities including organizational barriers, social role

penalties, and help define what success can look like for female advancement (Dashper, 2019). Interviews with female hospitality employees determined middle-management retention would improve female advancement to leadership positions (Walsh et al., 2016). Incongruity applied to the hospitality industry using quantitative methodology suggested that greater incongruence leads to greater prejudice, and this prejudice prevents both promotion and effectiveness as a leader (Koburtay & Syed, 2019). Role incongruity occurs when women act in an agentic manner that is contrary to the perception that women are inherently communal (Eagly & Karau, 2002). This occurs when displaying leadership behaviors such as identifying opportunity, planning, and developing high-level direction (Baker, 2014).

Nature of the Study

This qualitative study employs phenomenology using in depth, one-on-one interviews to explore the lived experience of male executives with succession decision-making authority; the interview questions were developed to understand the perceptions and feelings of role incongruity around leadership consideration and gender equality practices. Phenomenological methods allow deep understanding of gender and leadership for researchers to conceptualize collective action (Gardiner, 2018), and to consider the importance of how perception affects experience in understanding the complexity of social dynamics (O'Neil et al., 2015). The data collected through one-on-one interaction reflects transparent and forthcoming discussion of experiences and could provide information for coaches and mentors to facilitate inclusive succession support. Particularly in the hospitality industry where the human element closely relates to service

quality (Kusluvan et al., 2010), it is important to consider the human experience and separate preconceived notions and biases (Kirillova, 2018).

Definitions

The following are important terms to define in this study:

Barriers: Limitations impeding goal achievement (Hogue & Lord, 2007).

Executive: An organizational status associated with leadership that exceeds the status of a manager (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Facilitators: Momentum and support for progress towards a goal (Cheung & Halpern, 2010).

Gender Roles: The beliefs about social expectations based on the attributes of men and women (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Hospitality: The combined industries of arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food service (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018).

Leader member exchange theory: An intensive, reciprocal relationship between a leader and subordinates (Zagenczyk et al., 2015).

Leadership: The manner in which one persuades individuals and manages business processes in organizational settings (Chi et al., 2012).

Leadership: Organizational status of overseeing others, often associates with agentic or masculine qualities (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Organizational effectiveness: The manner in which a company fulfills its short-term and long-term objectives (Chi et al., 2012).

Performance: The ability to apply attractable behaviors during times of strife to meet organizational needs (Walumbwa et al., 2011).

Prejudicial feelings: Bias towards a person based on misalignment between expectations and observations (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Protégé: Understudies of leaders who have achieved a desirable status (Ragins et al., 2000).

Role congruity: Theory of prejudice against women based on the social role expectations of women expressing communal traits, and men expressing agentic traits more closely associated with leadership ability (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Succession: The formal organizational practice of career advancement opportunities and selection (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2019).

Talent Management: Identifying and developing employees based on organizational priorities (Bagheri et al., 2020).

Assumptions

Assumptions of this study include the assumption the Virginia Beach Resort area was representative of other seasonal resort communities. An assumption about male experiences was that female managers are interested in being promoted into executive leadership positions. In addition, it was assumed that participants understand how to facilitate succession on a general level as part of their leadership competency. Furthermore, it was assumed that participants gave honest information in their interviews and answered to the best of their ability.

Scope and Delimitations

Data analysis is an examination of shared experiences by comparing experiences, meaning, and depth of information across interviews, field notes, and reflections to build thematic coding (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Using NVivo qualitative data analysis software, magnitude is identified in a secondary coding cycle to compliment or enhance the findings (Saldaña, 2016). Respondent validation, or member checking, on the summarized findings builds the credibility and validity of the study by confirming accuracy of the reflection and findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Findings can be generalized by taking a general perspective with the findings, but they can be more specifically applied to other similar models (Law et al., 2010) of independently owned or franchised hospitality networks in seasonally based, resort-style geography that may be unique compared to other demographics. The interpretation of this phenomenon could lead to future research for understanding leadership facilitation at the executive level in the hospitality industry at broader levels of application.

The study included hotels, restaurants, tourism, and entertainment located in one geographic area located in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Hospitality businesses were selected due to the prominence of these businesses and accessibility to leadership in the area. The delimitation impacted the research results that are not reflective or applicable to corporately managed or year-round hospitality environments. Participants were asked to participate in the research study only if they held active membership in a hospitality related organization (Virginia Beach Hotel Association, Virginia Beach Restaurant Association, National Restaurant Association, and related member services).

Limitations

This study had three limitations imposed upon participants. The first limitation was the participant must have decision making authority for succession planning at the executive level. The second limitation was the participant had to presently or recently (within the last two years) have been the direct supervisor of a female manager. The third limitation of the study sample was active employment and membership related to the hospitality industry.

My knowledge of the hospitality industry was based on several years in human resources leadership positions within the hospitality industry, employment as an instructor at the Culinary Institute of Virginia, and knowledge gained by organizational psychology literature as it pertained to hospitality. Aware of potential biases in the study, I did not personally solicit any participants, and I removed any current or former hospitality employer or colleague from consideration in the study. I only engaged with hospitality leadership participants who I did not have any prior professional or personal engagement with.

Significance

The foundation for leadership disparity in executive roles can be explained through RCT (Eagly & Karau, 2002). However, the experience of male executives facilitating the advancement of women has been largely unexplored in the body of research (Dwivedi et al., 2018; Lyness & Grotto, 2018). Because males are the current gatekeepers to executive positions and are the majority population for selecting predecessors, the perceptions and experiences of male executives are vital to increase

understanding around the phenomenon of highly gendered leadership representation. The hospitality industry is a sector of leadership that has been explored through the lens of RCT and has a significant pipeline of female managers and college graduates available to succeed current male executives. These factors create an ideal environment for exploring this phenomenon and contributing to the existing body of knowledge for RCT and the hospitality industry.

Summary

This study explored the lived experience of male hospitality executives for the purpose of better understanding the facilitation of female succession. The lens of interpretation was based on role congruity theory and the concept of leader-member exchange in the facilitation of succession. Participants were selected based on their experience within an industry of interest, as well as hands-on experience as a gatekeeper of leadership roles with direct responsibility of female managers as direct reports. These experiences were captured using open-ended interview questions. This study addressed the gap of understanding the experience of male gatekeepers, as opposed to the female experience of organizational and interpersonal barriers (Dwivedi et al., 2018). This study also sought to explain how these experiences affect supporting female succession and the perceptions of leaders with female direct reports.

The following chapters present the current literature on role congruity theory, the research design, data collection with results, and interpretation of the findings. In Chapter 2, I reviewed the most recent studies on role congruity within the last 5 years that focused on three major themes: organizational behavior, workplace barriers, and global

hospitality challenges. Chapter 3 includes the research design, targeted population,

procedures, data collection process, themes, and potential ethical concerns.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review was an examination and synthesis of the most current organizational psychology and leadership texts within the last two decades, with the most recent studies published in the last 5 years. Related studies include Western and Eastern cultural perspectives that addressed the relevance of role congruity on the emergence of female executives. The older research studies discussed in this chapter are the few studies referenced in organizational psychology and leadership texts that serve as foundational or seminal research and interpretation to guide the understanding of role congruity and the application of this theory in leadership context. The approach to the body of literature was a thorough analysis of the found studies. This chapter will address role congruity in conjunction with three major themes found in the literature: organizational behavior, workplace barriers, and global hospitality challenges.

Literature Search Strategy

In pursuit of thoroughly exhausting literature, scholarly peer-reviewed articles were retrieved from the following Walden University library databases: PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, Emerald Insight, and SAGE Journals. The following keyword phrases were used for a preliminary understanding of the literature: *role congruity theory, incongruity, leadership, leadership coaching, organizational effectiveness, hospitality, female, gender, promotion, facilitate*, and *succession*. Keywords used for the literature review search were *leadership, female, gender, women, hospitality, role congruity theory, congruity, incongruity, succession, mentor, sponsor, promotion,* and *coaching*. Over 650 articles were found using targeted Boolean phrases leading to applicable results. Phrases used for

the searches were: *leadership* AND *female* AND *hospitality*, *role congruity theory* AND

leadership AND *hospitality*, *role congruity* AND *leadership*, *congruity* AND *hospitality*

AND *gender*, *leadership coaching* AND *facilitate* NOT *athletics*, *talent management*

AND *hospitality*, *developing women leaders*, AND *global hospitality challenges*. The

relevant databases accessed were Emerald Management, PsycInfo, PsycArticles, and

ProQuest for relevance in business and psychology. The method used in establishing the

keywords was to begin with main topics derived from the research topic and incorporate

synonymous terms (Stadtlander, 2018).

The literature search resulted in finding over 100 studies regarding issues with

representation of female leadership in hospitality and barriers to succession and leader-

member exchange. Findings regarding barriers included understanding the impact of

gender on perceived effectiveness (Begum et al., 2018; Sanderson & Whitehead, 2016),

personality predictors of leadership performance (Bartone et al., 2002), leadership

character development (Byrne et al., 2018), and gender differences in leadership style

(Gardiner & Tiggemann, 1999). Other results included the effectiveness of female leaders

as a route for improved succession, such as the effects of gender stereotypes and

leadership prototypes on evaluating male and female leaders (Johnson et al., 2008);

evaluating men and women in high and low power positions (Bakina, 2013); gender and

perceptions of effectiveness (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014); and the concept of and

defining the alpha female in context of likeability, thus leading to opportunity for

advancement (Ward et al., 2009; Ward et al., 2010). Outside of the specific context of

hospitality organizations, emerging research included the concept of gatekeeping and the

male perspective of facilitating executive succession (Dwivedi et al., 2018). The extent of

the mismatch between female leadership stereotypes and gender practices within an

organization are still unknown (Koburtay et al., 2020).

Theoretical Foundation

Role Congruity Theory

A modern recurring theoretical underpinning in the explanation for

underrepresentation of women in leadership roles is Role Congruity Theory (RCT).

Developed by Eagly and Karau (2002), RCT is based on theories of prejudice and gender

role conformity. RCT explains the professional challenges women face by asserting that

when women act within the expectations of a leadership role, they are acting outside of

their gender role, and vice versa. Specifically, the theory posits that leadership is driven

by agency, and communion drives the female gender role. Agency and communion are

framed as opposing and mutually exclusive behaviors in the work setting. This creates a

double prejudice against female leaders in both displaying agentic and communal

qualities (Kubu, 2018).

RCT has aided in the explanation of organizational leadership with studies to

include a women's leadership group in Berlin regarding tempering agency through

leadership style (Schock et al., 2019), pronunciation of incongruity based on subordinate

gender in Germany (Van Gils et al., 2018), and applied to the hotel industry in Jordan to

understand prejudice when applied to evaluation, emergence, and effectiveness of female

leaders (Koburtay & Syed, 2019). These quantitative studies do not address the

experiences of congruity for hospitality managers or male executives regarding executive

leadership succession roles in the United States where cultural and contextual factors likely differ. Furthermore, the existing literature on hospitality has focused exclusively on hotel employees, disregarding the potential experiences in food and beverage, and the tourism and travel sectors of the hospitality industry. This limits the information that can be obtained to only one sector of one of the largest global industries. Existing research on female hospitality leadership largely explores the female perspective (Segovia-Pérez et al., 2019), addresses role congruity theory from a quantitative perspective (Koburtay & Syed, 2019), or focuses solely on the hotel sector of the hospitality industry when seeking coaching facilitation data under other theoretical and conceptual frameworks (Boone et al., 2013; Walsh et al., 2016; Zhong et al., 2013). Hospitality remains largely marginalized and would benefit from a deeper understanding of the impact of gender on practices and experiences (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019).

Stemming from the glass-ceiling concept, role congruity theory (RCT) is an explanation of the phenomenon of women's exclusion from executive leadership positions. RCT rebuts the idea that women's exclusion is not attributed to pipeline issues of succession, but due to the prejudicial attitude towards women who display agentic qualities and the consequences of violating social roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Agentic qualities include self-confidence, objective, aggressive, ambitious, competitiveness (Eagly & Karau, 2002) assertiveness and dominance (Hoyt & Burnette, 2013). This theory has been used as a lens for understanding women's leadership across many industries, demographic factors, and variables. The body of work surrounding modern

research using role congruity theory focuses on the overall influence of social processes

being influenced by gender in the work context (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019).

Hospitality is a unique industry for correcting the global economic inequities for

women due to the 55% to 70% employment rate of women in developing nations in the

hospitality sector (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019). In Hospitality, women hold lower status

positions, receive lower salaries, and have stereotypically gendered roles and these

gender inequalities are imbedded in the industry (Figueroa-Domecq, Pritchard, Segovia-

Pérez, Morgan, & Villacé-Molinero, 2015). This inequality is explained by RCT and

results in a disproportionate number of women at the bottom. Studies specific to women

in tourism, a sector of hospitality, is comparatively slow in the feminist investigation,

despite the economic contribution and empowerment resulting from female leaders

(Carvalho et al., 2019). In other contexts of females breaking barriers to executive

positions, it is proposed that those organizations particularly value communal traits for

leadership positions (Gupta, Han, Mortal, Silveri, & Turban, 2018). Barriers are then

attributed both to gender roles and to structural enablers and barriers within an

organization (Carvalho et al., 2019). This supports Boone et al. (2013) assertion that the

glass-ceiling phenomenon is not necessarily the primary contributor to career stagnation

for women, but role incongruity (Segovia-Pérez et al., 2019). It is recommended to better

understand the impact of gendered constructs in hospitality to improve the gaps in

leadership representation and promote organizational change (Morgan & Pritchard,

2019).

Role Congruity and Leadership Evaluation

Female underrepresentation in leadership has not improved despite efforts for encouraging increased levels of education in male-dominated fields. The translation of graduates to working professionals referred to as the leaky pipeline is a phenomenon of unrealized potential in the workforce (Luong et al., 2020). While it is known that feminine role models can improve this gap (Betz & Sekaquaptewa, 2012), the existence of role models must first exist within organizations, and therefore understanding leadership evaluation and appraisal is necessary for contextual knowledge. Gender social roles play a part in the expectation of males and females in the workplace and effect the perception of behavior, their personal qualities, and how we categorize people. Women are viewed as having communal behaviors and men are viewed as more agentic. Role congruity is more specific to leadership than other theories because RCT research determined that leader qualities are more consistent with agentic behaviors that is predominantly acceptable in males and considered dissimilar for women (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Additionally, women that display agentic behaviors which are more consistent with leader qualities, are at a disadvantage for being evaluated as not fulfilling their presumed social role of displaying more communal qualities and are thus socially penalized. This paradox results in a lack of female representation in executive leadership (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Over the years, the attitude towards women in leadership positions has shifted to more favorable from 1995 to 2011 showing a change from a 46% preference for a male boss to 44% no preference in gender (Hoyt & Burnette, 2013).

Regardless of firm size, hospitality organizations are resistant to engage in the discussion of gender imbalance (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019).

To better understand contextual factors of female succession, understanding discrimination in the form of implicit bias and moderating factors of performance evaluations have been explored to aid in the explanation of the shifting attitude towards women in leadership. Implicit biases result in dissimilar leadership evaluation between men and women, and increased confidence in performance had higher negative consequences from female leaders in self-evaluation (Braddy, Sturm, Atwater, Taylor, & McKee, 2020). One explanation to counteract this effect is implicit theory, which is the impact of those who hold entity theories about women in authority and those who hold more incremental theories, and that attitude about women in authority mediate biased evaluations. This explains the challenge for women achieving positive performance evaluations for leadership positions (Hoyt & Burnette, 2013). To counter the effect of social roles conflicting with gender bias, women displaying a blend of communal and agentic traits increased perceived leadership effectiveness, while males only need to display agentic traits for similar levels of perceived leadership effectiveness (Johnson et al., 2008).

Even organizations in hospitality that promote a more communal style of leadership through servant leadership, a gender bias still exists against women (Hogue, 2016). The disadvantage occurs through an expectation for women to display servant leadership, where men are not under the same degree of expectation. Despite the negative implications of authoritarian style, this is an acceptable style for male leaders. This would

indicate the opportunity for positive evaluation and opportunity to exist for women under this leadership style.

Role Congruity and Organizational Effectiveness

Investor perceptions are at odds with the actual performance of female executives (Jeong & Harrison, 2017). Women face a higher likelihood of promotion in struggling organizations referred to as the "glass cliff", which is both higher risk environments and face significantly more challenges after promotion like increased scrutiny, exaggerated stereotypes, exclusion, and isolation. This affects the perception of capability after achieving leadership status, provides a discouraging role model for other women, and reinforces role congruity mismatch between women and leadership (Glass & Cook, 2016). Female CEO's bring different behavioral qualities that enhance long-term financial performance through more cautious decision-making (Jeong & Harrison, 2017). Despite this, external stakeholders create short-term negative impact due to the mismatched perception of female abilities with agentic leadership traits (Jeong & Harrison, 2017)

Literature Related to Key Concepts

Women in Leadership

Recent findings in leadership indicate that within Fortune 500 companies, women in leadership positions produced greater financial performance for the organization, and women in board positions resulted in greater sales and overall profitability for the organization (Castrillon, 2019). Despite these clear business advantages, women represent only 6.4% of those organizations' top leadership positions and are only

promoted between 60% and 79% as often as men (Larsson et al., 2016). The reason for this disparity is attributed to a variety of societal, organizational, and interpersonal factors in patriarchal contexts. The broadest concern is the issue of gendered traits, where women are expected to behave in a communal manner, and men in an agentic manner (Eagly & Karau, 2002). In the context of leadership and organizational behavior, this perpetuates the structure and culture of organizations by affecting perceptions of women's ability to lead. Women are penalized within organizations, both for acting communally, which conflicts with perceptions of effective leadership, and for acting with agency, which is in violation with societal assumptions (Eagly & Karau, 2002). As a result, women face unique barriers and discrimination when pursuing leadership positions, and this difference is only made worse in male-dominated industries such as science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM; Campuzano, 2019).

Beyond these preliminary social challenges, women are also seen as less effective, and face even more challenging barriers once a leadership position has been achieved. This can take the form of a lack of support, undue criticism, and more severe circumstances to resolve while also earning about 77% of the salary of what men earn (Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018). The global issue of justice and equal opportunity, in part due to male dominance in leadership, results in an economic disadvantage for women (Koburtay et al., 2020). These injustices can impact a woman's ambitions to pursue leadership positions, as well as self-efficacy in their perceived ability to lead and anticipated discrimination (Fisk & Overton, 2019). This disparate and uneven treatment

of the talent pool is a global economic concern, as this untapped talent results in slower economic growth (Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018).

Improving women's leadership attainment is challenging because of how imbedded these beliefs are within societal structures and expectations. One highly disputed attempt for leadership facilitation is the introduction of quotas. The argument against quotas is the threat to competition and the concept of meritocracy (Mölders et al., 2018). While the solution of quotas shows value for decreasing disparity for women in male dominated industries, it also introduces additional bias in the hiring and promotion process. Research has shown that 87% of women report barriers to leadership; however 56% of men disagree with the reported experiences of women (Roberts & Brown, 2019). This would indicate that there is a lack of support from men in understanding and partnering to eliminate barriers to leadership because of gender bias, thus perpetuating the "old boys club" (Roberts & Brown, 2019). There is some indication that predecessor influence is vital to the career paths of women seeking the highest levels of leadership, coupled with an environment focused on inclusion and diversity, such is the case with former Pepsi Co. CEO Indra Nooyi (Dwivedi et al., 2018).

The Hospitality Industry

Human resources management (HRM) is underdeveloped in the hospitality industry (Radojevic et al., 2019) and has a direct impact on the leadership pipeline due to inadequate training and retention of internal talent (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2019). Training and retention are two of the major issues impacting success in the customer service culture of hospitality and guest satisfaction (Radojevic et al., 2019).

Without better training and retention in hospitality, quality talent management is challenging and reduces an organization's ability to promote the skills and behaviors necessary to the business. Commitment for improved retention is based on an employee's cognitive identity and discretionary effort, which are often characterized by entrepreneurial behaviors (Bagheri et al., 2020). Understanding the link between behaviors, identity, and turnover intention is important to HRM practices, because HR can positively affect and enhance aspects of these desirable factors. For example, leader-member exchange (LMX) is a mediating variable for entrepreneurial behaviors and begins the necessary chain for increased retention (Surucu & Sesen, 2019). HRM also impacts programs that adequately maintain positive job satisfaction like recognition programs. Low job satisfaction because of low recognition was significantly correlated with turnover intentions in the hospitality industry (Ann & Blum, 2020). Employee turnover in hospitality is estimated to exceed 56%, a statistic that has more success of being reduced by intrinsic motivators, such as satisfaction directly created by the direct supervisor (Mejia et al., 2020). This is an important challenge to recognize because of the scarcity of talent in the hospitality industry (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2019).

The negative implications of women's leadership barriers particularly influence the hospitality industry, an ideal industry for marked improvement because a customer service culture is required for successful operations and the diversity of global travel. Being a non-male-dominated industry with a diverse pipeline also means there is a healthy candidate pool for women's leadership. A subset of HRM referred to as talent management (TM) is the use of career development, competency mapping, engagement,

and performance management that is also underdeveloped in hospitality (Baharin &

Hanafi, 2018). TM is what creates an organization's strategic direction, and a lack of TM

in hospitality impacts turnover, development programs, and inclusive succession

management (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2019). An additional factor potentially

leading to low attraction for female leadership is that compensation is generally lower

than comparable roles in other industries (Dogru et al., 2019). Coupled with the pre-

existing wage gap, leadership roles in hospitality are less attractive to women and

continue to perpetuate economic disadvantage.

The most challenging issues with improving leadership in the hospitality industry

center around organizational resources. Because of the low resources for trained talent

and the lack of retention, the pool for future leaders is limited (Baum, 2019). This is

partially influenced by the culture of hospitality, which is not currently meeting the

ethical values of dignity and respect for all roles, and opportunity for growth and reward

for effort irrespective of gender (Bagheri et al., 2020). Employment in tourism is

unsustainable because of the quality of work, hours, and lack of opportunity for reward

and development (Robinson et al., 2019). There is also wide-spread market competition,

and the hospitality industry fails to connect the attributes that are associated with talent in

the hiring and promotion process (Baum, 2019). Retention is highly dependent on

inclusion in a talent pool and developmental support; the lack of these opportunities leads

to dissatisfaction and negatively impacts retention (Kichuk et al., 2019). Opportunities for

improved leadership begin with improved HRM and TM practices of compensation,

teamwork, mentoring, succession planning, and training and development (Marinakou &
Giousmpasoglou, 2019).

Global Hospitality Challenges

In the hospitality industry, which encompasses hotel, food service, tourism, and
other adjoining services, competition for talent is increasing due to the high demands of
the work environment. Industry problems include work-family conflict, high turnover,
and underdeveloped human resources management practices (Arasli et al., 2020). These
issues disproportionately affect women, who also hold lower tier positions due to the
perception of skill-based jobs being more feminine (Lyness & Heilman, 2006). The
reason for the general segregation of roles, regardless of individual characteristics, is due
in part to gender stereotyping; institutional requirements at odds with commonly held
beliefs about gender roles, such as long working hours interfering with childcare are also
a factor, and the industry is resistant to changing (Carvalho et al., 2019). This industry
also experiences incompetent human resources compared to other industries (Arasli et al.,
2020). Because of these challenges, women are underrepresented in top hospitality
management positions. Those who have achieved top management roles attribute their
success to pursuit of education in hospitality, displays of agency among other
characteristics, and intrinsic desires for success, ultimately downplaying the impact of
gender barriers (Carvalho et al., 2018). Hospitality students experience negative
stereotyping in business programs as their education is deemed less legitimate and less
rigorous compared to finance and other mainstream business programs (Tung & King,
2016), adding an additional layer of adversity to rising to the top as a business

professional. The need for reflection regarding opportunity and resources in the hospitality industry for leadership development is necessary for greater equality and advancement (Boone et al., 2013).

There is some indication that top management can be achieved in hospitality by women, but what facilitates that succession is unclear. In some contexts, organizational culture, networking, and formal practices are influential (Jauhar & Lau, 2018), while other findings show informal mentoring to provide opportunity and support necessary for advancement (Lester et al., 2011). Findings also infer that that Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) quality is linked to organizational commitment (Kim et al., 2017). This is vital to understand because gender has a moderating effect on LMX and organizational justice (Wang et al., 2017). This means women are more likely to endure negative behavior within an organization. Because self-efficacy is key to leader development (Lester et al., 2011), this creates yet another disadvantage coupled with unsociable hours, stress, and exhaustion (Kichuk et al., 2019) by eroding women's self-efficacy in the workplace.

Hospitality and Succession

Senior leaders set the tone of standard behaviors within an organization, including what is rewarded, how decisions should be made, and how the organizational culture is shaped through socialized norms and reinforced values (Campuzano, 2019). Service industries are ideal for female inclusion in leadership because work domains that are socially a better fit with female expectations have fewer negative effects on female leadership emergence at the highest levels (Fjærli et al., 2015). In hospitality, an equal number of women occupy middle management positions, there is the least amount of

disapproval, and women experience the most congruity within their roles (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). Addressing middle manager stall out within hospitality then becomes the focus of succession planning for female inclusion (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). Based on a research sample of over 30,000 firms in emerging markets, independent variables with the most strength in correlation with female advancement are country wealth, gender egalitarianism, and humane orientation (Elango, 2019).

Despite general role incongruity of female leadership, it was found in the hotel sector of the Arab market that leadership development plans for emerging female leaders increase the perceived effectiveness of female leaders by mitigating prejudice (Koburtay & Syed, 2019). Lack of mentorship, conversely, is highly correlated with the lack of careful career planning and not being offered good opportunities; social exclusion from networking and counterproductive male coworker behavior was highly correlated with stereotyping (Boone et al., 2013). In terms of global application, nations with high institutionalism do not afford more opportunities to women than those less institutionalized. Female rates of employment and firm size also did not have a relationship with female leadership opportunity (Elango, 2019). A major finding in succession of female leadership in Fortune 500 companies outside of the hospitality sector was the higher likelihood of female leaders promoting to executive roles during periods of crisis; many of these new executives lacked necessary support and authority within their role post-promotion as a result (Glass & Cook, 2016).

There is a clear need for the predominantly male gatekeepers to take on the responsibility of preparing females for leadership roles in their legacy planning (Dwivedi

et al., 2018) and intentional inclusion in networking and board appointments (Glass &

Cook, 2016). Prior themes in succession research include work/life balance and

stereotyping (Saadin et al., 2016), differences in the speed of career progression for males

and females (Bullinaria, 2018), and dispositional leadership characteristics of character

and emergence through relationship building (Gardiner, 2018). Closing the gender gap

will require identification of more facilitators for advancement (Lyness & Grotto, 2018).

Emerging themes in the hospitality industry for female leadership succession are

facilitation practices for advancement, the presence of female role models (Luong et al.,

2020), mid-tier organizational support (Walsh et al., 2016), leadership coaching (O'Neil

et al., 2015), mentoring and greater discussion of barriers females will face in pursuit of

leadership positions (Zhong et al., 2013).

Qualifications

Hospitality education is an important phase in the career path to prepare female

professionals with the soft skills required to advance in the industry (Guillet, et al., 2019).

One study in Hong Kong includes interviews from female hospitality and tourism

executives that indicate professional communication, nonverbal communication,

confidence, and leadership are necessary for advancement (Zhao, et al., 2016). However,

in the business management sector, specializing in tourism management may not be

viewed as mainstream, and may be viewed as less legitimate than other business

disciplines (Tung & King, 2016). Students in alternative business paths such as finance

hold negative stereotypes about career progression in tourism characterized by the belief

that the career path in tourism is short, does not pay well, lacks leadership opportunity to

other business degrees like consulting or executive leadership positions, and does not

have a straightforward professional designation equivalent to other business tracks like

accounting.

Leadership Appraisal

Style of leadership is often pointed to as an opportunity for women to improve

leadership appraisal. Because of the female gender role mismatch with the leadership role

stereotypes, evaluation and effectiveness of female leaders is perceived as lower than

male counterparts (Koburtay, et al., 2020). Despite these recommendations, style is not

represented as a key tenant of effective leadership; Effective leadership also does not lean

towards either agentic or communal traits, but is actually based on strategic ability,

defining purpose, integrity, implementing policy, and allocation of resources (Notar,

Uline, & Eady, 2008). Role mismatch between female stereotypes and leader stereotypes

may lead to prejudicial evaluation of leadership ability. Inspirational leadership style is

reported as the primary trait for CEO's, however leadership style is being challenged as

less impactful on organizational performance as previously thought (What makes leaders

more effective?: It's all down to strategy, 2016).

Organizations that embrace diversity practices increase female leadership

emergence (Koburtay & Syed, 2019). Transformation leadership is recommended to

allow for greater inclusion and equity within an organization, and this style is

disproportionality practiced by female leaders (Turesky & Warner, 2020). Style can also

influence perceptions of effectiveness during instances of gender dissimilarity; use of

respectful leadership is shown to help neutralize negative performance views for women

in positions of leadership with male followers (Van Gils, at al., 2018). The forefront of

respectful leadership is a unidimensional aspect of treating others with dignity and value.

A proposed style of leadership specific to this market is referred to as seasonal employee

leadership, focusing on dimensions of influence. The hospitality industry may be unique

in terms of leadership style and appraisal, due to the high communal value in the industry

and seasonality of employment in many markets (Arasli, et al., 2020).

Growth Opportunities

The foundation of career advancement comes from Schein's (1973) model of five

career anchors that include autonomy, general management, technical competencies,

security, and entrepreneurial creativity. Since the inception of this model, Schein has

added communal traits necessary for advancement in leadership as well to include service

and dedication to a cause, but also defined an important factor of succession as lifestyle

(Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018). Although work-life balance based on social roles and the

demands of hospitality continue to be at odds, the addition of a mentor has proven in TM

to be a systemic solution to improved growth and progress (Marinakou &

Giousmpasoglou, 2019). The lack of female advancement can be attributed to a

disproportionate advantage for men to access mentorship opportunities (Boone et al.,

2013).

The purpose of mentorships is the development of a protégé and the creation of

career advancement opportunities (Wright & Wright, 1987). An important benefit of

mentoring as it relates to leadership is the effect on self-image. Protégé performance

increases with an increase in contact hours between a mentor and protégé (Holt, et al.,

2016). An important part of leader development through mentoring is self-efficacy, particularly efficacy for action which is taking on a challenge and seeing themselves as capable of generating a solution. The empowerment that is derived from a mentoring relationship encourages overcoming challenges and increases the necessary support of sharing struggles and solutions and is shown to increase the speed of career advancement and self-efficacy through improved confidence and support (Turner-Moffatt, 2019). Formal mentoring programs through organizations are largely ineffective compared to organic mentoring relationships that develop leaders (Lester et al., 2011).

Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is the dyadic compatibility between a leader and subordinate (Graen & Cashman, 1975). This compatibility is the foundation for trust, support, communication, and role engagement (Vidyarthi, et al., 2014). LMX is linked to increased perceptions of fairness, increased organizational citizenship behavior, and reduced turnover intentions (Wang et al., 2017). Additionally, LMX can reduce counterproductive work behaviors that can harm individuals and organizations such as unethical behavior to include harassment and discrimination (Oktavio, 2020). High LMX can be a motivating factor for individuals to seek out informal mentorship relationships, and conversely when LMX is low; it is possible that an individual will not maximize their potential within their organization or career (Holt et al., 2016).

Mentorship has been regarded as an effective vehicle for higher LMX, specifically for the hospitality industry due to the entrenched gender roles and lack of female representation in leadership positions (Dashper, 2019). This is done by directly

challenging implicit gender barriers within structures and practices common in the

hospitality industry through involvement and inclusion at the individual level (Dashper,

2019). The benefits of high LMX in context of mentorship and succession planning is

that supervisory mentoring is more effective than non-supervisory mentoring for career

performance (Scandura & Williams, 2004). High LMX is also associated with less work

stress and increased job satisfaction, self-confidence, self-image, status, and career

growth (Oktavio, 2020). Additionally, mentor-subordinate similarity increases the

leadership effectiveness of the subordinate in future leadership roles (Tonidandel et al.,

2007). This indicates that female representation in the leadership ranks will increase

effectiveness of female managers when LMX is high. LMX and mentorship is therefore a

necessary component of understanding organizational succession planning and the

progress for females surpassing middle management roles within an organization and

achieving top leadership positions.

The effect of a supervisor's role on a subordinate could greatly benefit the

hospitality industry (Eşitti & Kasap, 2020). Finding suggest it is a basic requirement in

the hospitality industry for engagement to have a positive supervisor-subordinate

relationship (Arasli et al., 2020). It is particularly useful to understand in hospitality

because of how labor intensive this industry is for employees, requiring significant

supervisor support for satisfaction (Chang, et al., 2020). Within the hospitality industry,

LMX is a powerful tool for increasing performance (Wang et al., 2017). This occurs by

increasing overall job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation (Eşitti & Kasap, 2020) and

when gender is a moderating variable, LMX is further reinforced by female leaders

characterized by employees exhibiting a higher rate of Organizational Citizenship

Behavior (OCB) when LMX is high (Wang et al., 2017). OCB is characterized by

constructive participation, teamwork, engaging in extra work, avoiding conflict, and

respect for rules (Estiri, et al., 2018).

Turnover intention is particularly negatively affected by low LMX in supervisory

employees, and is exacerbated with greater tenure (Kim, Lee, & Carlson, 2010); this is

possibly the most important findings of LMX and hospitality for leadership emergence.

This indicates that gatekeeper relationships strongly influence subordinate retention,

effort, career progression, and overall potential and work outcomes within hospitality

organizations. The impact of relationships in the hospitality industry greatly effects

satisfaction and retention through organizational commitment and LMX is considered

critical to the industry (Mejia et al., 2020). LMX creates greater OCB and improves

overall ethical behavior and has an indirect result of improved organizational

identification for employees (Chih-Ching Teng, et al., 2020). It is clear a deeper

knowledge of the gatekeeper perception in these relationships is vital to the facilitation of

female leadership succession from middle management positions to executive leadership

roles.

Mentorship

Mentor relationships are traditionally an influential networking opportunity where

the dyadic relationship exists to create a legacy from one experienced executive through a

more junior professional (Altinay et al., 2019). Mentors serve as role models that give

guidance, feedback, and direction (Creta & Gross, 2020). These relationships are most

effective when the mentor and mentee are of similar demographics such as male to male or female to female (Schwiebert et al., 1999). Effective mentor relationships are between people with the same ethnic or cultural background and face similar work life integration challenges; These are particularly useful between women because the experience of men outside of work is less likely to be similar to the experience of women (Hill et al., 2016). This further reinforces the concept of role congruity and gender roles in connection to the advancement of women.

Mentor relationships therefore are most effective for women when the mentor is a woman in a position of leadership. This poses a challenge to facilitate female advancement because there is a relatively smaller number of women in leadership positions compared to men (Joseph-Obi, 2011). With only 25% of executives being female, female role models suited for mentor relationships are minimal if present at all within many organizations (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). Because of this lack of overall availability of female to female mentorship relationships within organizations, most women are left to have less effective mentorship relationships with male superiors (Said, 2017). Additionally, in the recent social climate, men are more reluctant that previously thought to mentor women due to perceived risk (Bricker, 2019). In recent years, there has been an increase in attention to the sexual harassment women experience in the workplace (Brown, 2019). As a result of this negative dynamic which typically occurs between a male superior and female subordinate in these cases, male leaders have expressed concern that the perception of mentoring women will be viewed as unprofessional or unwelcomed (Hill & Laguado, 2019). This places women in a distinct

disadvantage compared to the white male demographic, which have the most access to the same demographic as a mentorship resource.

A proposed solution to this concern of absent suitable mentors for women has been a redirection towards that of a facilitator, known formally as a sponsor, who shares resources and may hold the position of gatekeeper for promotions and advancement opportunities (Hill et al., 2016). A sponsor is an interorganizational advocate, whereas a mentor is unrelated to organizational affiliation and advises a mentee on a broader scale. While mentors are concerned about leaving a legacy of their own through passing down knowledge, sponsors are concerned with championing the careers of proteges as a primary goal of the relationship. Sponsors may also be direct supervisors responsible for performance feedback, stretch assignments, and recognition in the workplace. This reduces the social stigma and concerns in mentoring and the less effective advice from a non-similar influence as the purpose of the relationship is not centered around advice but championing a protege within an organization with whom you have direct influence. This shift in the field of mentorship within organizations emphasizes the need to understand the male gatekeeper role experience facilitating female leadership advancement.

Succession Management

Succession Management is a strategic organizational program originally developed to replace CEO's and address concerns of CEO turnover rising and the negative implications on organization (Berke, 2005). Succession planning are the organizational practices put in place to identify, develop, and promote leadership from internal management. Common practices required for succession is CEO support,

tailoring development to the needs of the organization, linking the plan to the overall

business strategy, intersecting the HR review process, assessment of competencies, and

support of a larger effort to develop internal talent (Eastman, 1995). Succession planning

is more robust than replacement planning, and requires individual coaching and targeted

training; by also incorporating the value of communal and agentic traits, supporting the

achievements of women, and appraising the social competencies of women, succession

planning and overall succession management can be enhanced for greater inclusion of

women (Schock et al., 2019).

Succession and Role Congruity

Leadership requires social influence to enlist support of others to accomplish a

common goal, and leadership emergence is the process of a group identifying a capable

leader (Schock et al., 2019). For these reasons, social perception is at the forefront of

understanding the succession process. Role congruity suggests that women are equally

effective in leadership positions but at a disadvantage to receive consideration for

succession planning because leadership positions requires females to behave outside of

their social role, implicitly influencing leadership opportunities in a negatively biased

fashion (Kubu, 2018). Conversely, acting within the social role is not aligned with

perceived leadership traits and prevents succession consideration. This results in an

overall disadvantage for leadership succession consideration regardless of behavioral

traits.

Male predecessors are vital to understanding the achievement of top leadership

positions by women both in succession planning and in overall performance as leaders,

and often have a unique legacy dyad between a male predecessor- female successor relationship (Dwivedi et al., 2018). Despite the benefits of RCT in explaining the barriers to leadership women face, women face additional challenges beyond role fit, which may be influenced by the predecessor relationship via leader-member exchange, to include exclusion in networking, increased scrutiny within the role, perceived effectiveness, reduced empowerment, and lack of support (Glass & Cook, 2016). RCT also does not fully explain the disparity in leadership in industries where agency holds lower value and facilitators for women likely to occupy roles such as CEO are not well explained by RCT (Dwivedi et al., 2018).

Succession and Workplace Barriers

Succession in women's careers can be limited due to factors outside of the workplace, such as through the limitations of work-life balance, stereotypes, gender roles (Saadin et al., 2016), and disproportionate domestic responsibilities and perceptions of belonginess and resistance (Brescoll, 2012; Coffman, 2014; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Schein, 2001). However, succession is facilitated within organizations and understanding organizational barriers that prevent promotion and increase the likelihood of threats in leadership roles is important context for the liability of gender in executive roles (Gupta et al., 2018). Workplace barriers to succession are a collection of limitations that explain the stall-out or dropout rates women face when achieving higher levels of career success. Women who have achieved the highest levels of success in the hospitality industry, career patterns are less traditional and often include fewer stable paths (Carvalho et al., 2018).

Within the largest global organizations, female middle managers represent 36% of the workforce, but drops to 25% at the executive leadership level, and less than 6% at CEO (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). This indicates a significant drop off beginning at the middle management tier of leadership. Barriers include systemic issues related to leadership perceptions and gender roles, lack of role models, limited family support for women to pursue leadership positions. Women also face longer waiting periods for promotion in leadership roles compared to men, explaining the difference between internal succession and women's turnover intentions when pursuing leadership positions (Bullinaria, 2018). Finally, Human Resources Management tends to be underdeveloped in the hospitality industry that negatively affects recruitment, development, and promotion and places a premium on availability and flexibility often not afforded to women (Carvalho et al., 2018).

Succession and Proactive Behavior

Despite barriers, women in leadership positions exist but are infrequently examined in hospitality (Carvalho et al., 2018). This breakthrough of leadership emergence is a process of experience and environmental factors that can be most strongly associated with leadership development (Lester et al., 2011). Examples of leadership development associated with emergence is role modeling and mentorship (Dashper, 2019), but also gender equality practices and proactive approaches of leadership evaluation that mitigate prejudice regarding perceptions of effectiveness (Koburtay & Syed, 2019). Communication standards can also influence perception of performance orientation differently between men and women. While men are perceived as having

effective performance in face-to-face communications, written communications such as email increases this orientation for women (O'Neil et al., 2015).

An individual-level factor affecting leadership emergence is leadership style. Although in organizations leadership is often also associated with a position, it is a dispositional status (Byrne et al., 2018). Opportunity for emergence is a self-awareness of key traits and temperament that create a balanced, or androgynous, approach by women through a display of equal amounts of both agentic and communal traits. In a field study, this was the greatest predictor of female leadership emergence (Schock et al., 2019). Even when controlling for other proposed factors such as group size, experience, popularity, and attractiveness, there was no indication of influence. Based on these results, behaviors are more influential than static and environmental attributes for succession. In tourism, structural enablers and barriers are downplayed and the influence of intrinsic satisfaction from leadership positions is a main factor credited with career progression (Carvalho et al., 2018). Characteristics can also be linked to leadership emergence, used to balance agency and communion and increase social influence (Schock et al., 2019).

Indicators of succession and leadership emergence are positive factors for improving leadership disparity; however, the current research fails to represent the male perspective of mentoring, developing, and facilitating succession of female leaders. This is critical for understanding and social change because males occupy most leadership positions and therefore are the decision-makers, or gatekeepers, for executive promotion. There is significant research attributing lack of female leadership to concepts presented in

RCT, stereotypes, leader-member exchange, and empowerment, and predictors of emergence from the individual and environmental perspective. The opportunity exists to explore the experiences of those in power to change the landscape of leadership equality.

Summary

The peer-reviewed, scholarly articles showed a consistent application of role congruity on the opportunities and barriers to female leadership in hospitality (Boone et al., 2013; Koburtay & Syed, 2019; Segovia-Pérez et al., 2019; Walsh et al., 2016; Zhong et al., 2013). Major themes in the literature emerged as leader-member exchange, succession planning, and leadership qualifications and appraisal (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017). The research also showed that leadership style is a mediating factor for leadership congruity for women (Schock et al., 2019), and mentorship and representation positively affect attitudes towards growth opportunities (Dashper, 2019; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2019). Although the literature presents explanations for the barriers to female leadership opportunities, the findings suggest no studies have reviewed the male perspective in facilitating female leadership emergence. This is important as the gatekeeper role is primarily held by males, has significant influence on all three major themes, and ultimately has the authority and influence to increase female representation and leadership equality practices.

The literature includes a preponderance of information regarding the female experience as well as barriers to leadership positions (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). In addition, while a substantial amount of research focused on role congruity theory, the qualitative approach was not explored enough to propose new directions in research to

include facilitation of female leadership, nor was the male experience in the process explored for a more in-depth understanding of the systemic issue of the "glass-ceiling". To better understand facilitating female succession, the current gatekeepers are a vital population of interest, and will also provide a holistic view of systemic inequity. This research adds to the body of scientific knowledge by providing exploratory detail on the phenomenon of gender inequality by uncovering opportunities for deeper understanding and future research around emerging themes. Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of the research design and methodology to fill the gap in the field of leadership development and organizational psychology (Dwivedi et al., 2018) while also addressing a social problem of inequality based on gender within the hospitality industry.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of the study is to explore the lived experiences of male hospitality executives regarding the facilitation of female advancement to senior leadership roles. Males are predominantly the current holders and gatekeepers of executive roles (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). These leadership positions afford male executives the unique opportunity to create programs for female leadership inclusion, mentoring, and fostering a culture of gender-specific support for the challenges women face in this industry (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). Support is an imperative part of the solution for greater leadership equality, because of the inherent bias that exists against women pursuing leadership roles. The foundation for this study is role congruity theory, which describes the double penalty women face in leadership positions for acting either within their social role and counter to the leadership expectation or within the leadership expectation of agency and against social expectations (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

What is not well understood about this concept is the how male executives perceive this double penalty and what experiences these male leaders face in the selection process regarding the advancement of women, especially given the possibility of supporting women through ancillary activities like sponsorship. Some factors to consider when determining the male perspective in female advancement in the hospitality industry include performance, behavior, culture, shareholder support, board of director influence and power, and legacy planning. To better understand male executive lived experiences, I will detail the research design and rationale of this qualitative, phenomenological study, the role of the researcher as an observer, and the potential for bias in this chapter. I have

also included participant selection, data collection methods, considerations for saturation and validity, and outlined the plan for data analysis. Finally, ethical considerations and safeguards are outlined for protection of participants and data.

Research Design and Rationale

Research Question 1: What are the experiences of male hospitality executives regarding the facilitation for female advancement to senior leadership roles?

Research Question 2: What affects male hospitality executives in supporting the succession of women?

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions male hospitality executives have when considering a female successor?

There have been quantitative studies conducted using RCT as the central conceptual theory; most of these studies use survey methodology to collect data from larger sample populations testing variables for gender differences (Koburtay & Syed, 2019; Morgan & Pritchard, 2019; Segovia-Pérez et al., 2019). Some hospitality research has used qualitative methods to better understand experiences and to get to a deeper interpretation of events around gendered concepts (Dashper, 2019; Dwivedi et al., 2018). However, the key difference between prior research and the study at hand is the population. While previous studies have addressed male and female leaders, this study focuses specifically on male gatekeepers, adding to the deep conceptual understanding of the experiences that intersect with female succession and role incongruity in the hospitality industry. The purpose is to understand the experiences and shared meaning around those experiences that so greatly influences the existence of the phenomenon.

Because the purpose of this study is to explore lived experience, a qualitative method that provides in depth understanding of the research problem is a more suitable approach to create a rich narrative (Moser & Korstjens, 2017a). This is also an appropriate methodology due to the limited existing information regarding the male perspective as it relates to role congruity and succession planning (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b). Because men occupy most current leadership positions, the male "gatekeeper" experience in facilitating succession perspective that could help shape greater inclusion practices and understanding of the factors creating the gender gap in leadership. It is pivotal to explore these experiences within the hospitality industry because it is a highly gendered industry, and qualified female professionals are well represented at the mid manager level to fill the leadership pipeline. This study also provides the opportunity for future quantitative research in leadership and organizational psychology based on the findings.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in this study is that of an observer through semi-structured interviews with the participant group. I did not have any participatory interaction in interview responses for the purposes of data and maintained this singular role. Because I belong to a demographic outside of the population of interest, the role of observer was the only possible role. Participants in the research study did have the potential to be professional acquaintances, as I had a professional network and employment history in the sample's geographic region working in the hospitality industry. Personal relationships might have included former colleagues and other industry professionals in my professional network due to my membership with the Virginia Beach

Hotel Association and second tier network contacts of the Virginia Beach Restaurant

Association, as well as the travel and tourism sector of the area.

Despite these possible relationships, there were not any power dynamics involved

as I was not actively employed in the hospitality industry during the data collection

process. There were not supervisory, subordinate, or instructor relationships. Research

bias may have existed in one area of the study design, as I have been impacted by the

male gatekeeper experience as a female hospitality leader. This required careful

consideration in the tone and delivery of open-ended questions, seeking additional

details, analyzing data, and formulating a conclusion based on themes. This was managed

through open dialogue with trusted advisors who can serve as both a sounding board and

a guide in recognizing biased thinking. Another way to manage these biases was

thorough member-checking.

The study was conducted in a neutral location outside of both the researcher and

the participant's work environments and was conducted virtually at the location and

convenience of the participants. No incentives were provided beyond the contribution of

information for the betterment of the industry's need for well-developed talent systems,

including succession planning and leadership development.

Methodology

The population of interest was male executives or leaders in the hospitality

industry that currently have at least one female direct or indirect reporting relationship or

have had a leadership position with a female direct report within the previous 12 months.

Sampling was purposeful, in line with most phenomenological cases due to the demand

to understand a specific set of experiences. The sampling was from networking groups within the hospitality industry including the hotel association, restaurant association, and the travel and tourism association.

Feminist and gendered social order research aligns with qualitative methodology, and specifically phenomenology focusing on the lived experience of humans and the interpretation of those experiences (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b). The in-depth analysis of lived experience provides deep understanding of a social problem (Moser & Korstjens, 2017a). The population of interest was male hospitality executives with at least one female direct report. The data was collected through one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Data was transcribed through a combination of audio recordings and manual transcription, as well as field notes taken during the interview for additional context such as tone, body language, and other non-verbal communication cues. I analyzed the data for thematic coding. To validate themes, I conducted member-checking after data saturation was achieved. Participants received a copy of their transcripts for review to confirm their comfort level with the information that had been captured. Participants were given an opportunity for a secondary interview to further clarify the information.

Participant Selection

The sampling approach was purposive sampling, which allowed for a broad definition of inclusion criteria to obtain rich data (Moser & Korstjens, 2017a). The conceptual requirements of the sampling used for inclusion criteria in this study were male hospitality executives who currently have a female direct report. Exclusion criteria would be if the male executive does not have influence over succession of their own or

peer-level positions, or if the female direct report does not hold a manager title or higher. Hospitality, for the purposes of the study, included the subcategories of hotels, restaurants, and tourism.

Recruitment

For participants to be selected for the study, they must have been currently working in the hospitality industry within the City of Virginia Beach. Participants were asked to confirm understanding and alignment with the inclusion and exclusion criteria as follows: (a) they were a current executive—chief executive, president, vice president or equivalent—in the hospitality industry; (b) they had a current female direct report who held a title such as manager, senior manager, director, regional director or equivalent; and (c) they formally influenced succession decisions for their own or equivalent positions through participation in organizational activities such as mentoring, performance management, employee reviews, disciplinary action, formal succession planning, and/or networking activities. Other phenomenological studies with intersecting topics such as leadership and gender constructs range in the number of participants from approximately six to fourteen (Bovin, 2019; Hirudayaraj & McLean, 2018; Joy et al., 2019; Speranza, 2017; Zeb et al., 2020). I targeted 10-15 interviews with the aim of achieving sufficient data and completed a total of eight interviews with executives when data saturation was achieved (Fusch et al., 2018). Executives were recruited through membership channels of the Virginia Beach Hotel Association, Virginia Beach Restaurant Association, and the member services branches of each association related to travel and tourism services. Contact with these associations and participants was done through email communications

with a recruitment flyer. Additional recruitment options were available for use if there were not enough volunteers for data saturation, such as passive recruitment via social media on the professional networking site, LinkedIn, and through participant referrals. These alternatives did not need to be used.

Instrumentation

Leadership emergence is based on behavioral and social expectations and beliefs as outlined in RCT (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Paunova, 2015). To understand female leadership facilitation from the male perspective, semi-structured interview questions targeted the specific experiences, affect, and perceptions of male executives to further explore the RCT framework of expectations and beliefs around female leadership facilitation. Open-ended descriptive questions allowed participants to share their own experiences and achieved depth in the search for the essential structure of the phenomenon (Giorgi, 2009). The purpose of these questions was to explore the participants' experiences and perceptions when participating in executive succession planning as males with female managers in the available pool of direct successors. Open-ended questions were used to further explore aligned subjects that emerged during the interview to achieve depth. The semi-structured and open-ended interview techniques were used to achieve depth and saturation with the participants and uncover the essence of the lived experience by giving minimal direction about the subject matter.

The goal of using a semi structured approach was to uncover answers in alignment with the research questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Questions for the interviews were derived from the descriptive phenomenological method (Giorgi, 2009).

The question's structure first began with an open-ended question that aligned with a specific research question as depicted in Table 1. A second follow-up question was also presented to be used after engaging in active listening during the participant's answer to further explore either the subject-subject relationship or the subject-phenomenon relationship (Giorgi, 2009). This approach was semi-structured, as it was not fully defined in terms of what subjects and what phenomenon may arise from this exploration. Questions were designed to remain neutral as to not lead the participant in giving a specific answer or impose a bias or socially desirable response (Lewis, 2015). Each question was also designed to align directly with a specific research question by mirroring the language and intention of the research question in a direct and clear manner.

Table 1

Phenomenological Interview Questions

Interview Questions	Subject-Phenomenon Exploration Questions
What has been your experience as a mentor in the workplace?	
What differences have you experienced mentoring men compared to women?	
How has supporting women in succession planning affected you?	Can you tell me more about X affect?
	What other things have been affected?
In what ways have you been affected by succession planning with women?	
What is it like facilitating advancement with female direct reports?	Can you tell me more about what X is like? What other things come to mind?
What thoughts come to mind when you imagine considering a female successor?	

Open-ended questions are interview questions that avoid "yes" and "no"

responses and instead, elicit detailed responses by asking how, why, what, and for the

participant to describe or further explain a scenario (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994).

The first research question was designed to uncover experience. Therefore, the questions

and exploration prompts aligned with the same language of experience using open-ended

language. The second research questions were designed to reveal how supporting female

succession affects male executives. Questions were designed to explore affects by asking

how and in what way to elicit specific examples of affect. The third research question

was designed to explore perception. The questions around perception were designed to be

addressed by asking, "what is it like" (Giorgi, 2009). This was extended in the question

regarding what thoughts come to mind in the scenario of female succession planning.

In-depth, recorded virtual interviews using the semi-structured approach with

open-ended questions were conducted in a one-on-one format for data collection. I

recorded the interviews using the technology provided for video recording by the Zoom

platform and captured audio backup using a Sony IC recorder. Participants were asked in

both scenarios to participate in the interview at a location where they were able to speak

freely and privately without interruption to maintain confidentiality and avoid

distractions. The first part of the interview we discussed informed consent detailing the

potential risks, benefits, and volunteer nature of the study with an opportunity to

withdrawal at any time.

In addition to questioning, field notes were used to capture textural and structural

data. Synthesizing multiple perspectives of raw data is a key step in the Stevick-Colaizzi-

Keen approach which includes reducing the importance of any answer to equal value across all answers in order to highlight answers which do not overlap and stand out as meaningful; This creates both clusters and themes of data, as well as outliers which may add meaning and value to the analysis (Moustakas, 1994). Multiple perspectives can be achieved by noting non-verbal data in addition to the participant answers such as tone, body language, pause, and other verbal and non-verbal information. To collect this data, field notes were collected using a notebook and pen and recorded in conjunction with actively listening to the participants answers.

Data Collection

The participants for this study were asked to participate via email utilizing a recruitment flyer located in Appendix B. Recruitment fliers did not use any means of unethical solicitation and provided clear instruction in written English how individuals can elect to participate and the basic qualifying factors for participation. Contact with participants was done via email or phone calls to discuss the study, commitment, and informed consent procedures. If a participant would not have been eligible for participation, they would have received a written email explaining the reason for non-selection to participate in the study.

One-on-one interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the participant to be conducted virtually using Zoom. The location was requested to be private, at the convenience of the research participant. The interviews were conducted in a neutral location that is convenient to each participant and is private. Each participant was asked to complete an informed consent form prior to the interview, which was reviewed via

video conference at the start of the interview. Each interview was recorded visually and with audio for transcription purposes.

Transcripts were shared with participants. This step was vital for clarification of any shared information, elaboration of details, and confirmation of data used to create themes. At the end of the study, I will share results with participants who may wish to better understand the impact of their position and opportunities for diverse succession planning within the hospitality industry. To clearly define the goals of the study with each participant, I explicitly defined and explained the constructs of role congruity, leader-member exchange, succession, and mentorship with participants. Additionally, the concepts of perception and experience were defined to accurately explore the phenomenon in alignment with the research questions. Lastly, I defined the concepts of leadership, executive titles, and hospitality as an industry for increased clarity around the intentions of this study and desired context.

Data Analysis Plan

The analysis is based in descriptive phenomenology to both describe and interpret the data (Giorgi, 2009). This created the basis for themes and findings. For this study, the phenomenological reduction followed a descriptive approach (Giorgi, 2009) aligned with the Moustakas (1994) modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen approach was used for description and interpretation, which consists of a highly structured series of steps: (a) describe personal experiences, (b) develop a list of significant statements, (c) group themes, (d) create textural descriptions, (e) create structural descriptions, (f) write a composite description. Describing personal experiences was completed prior to the coding and

analysis of the data. The remaining steps of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen approach encompass the coding and analysis as described below. I completed the transcription document and refrained from using transcription services, so I could gain in-depth knowledge of the data and an understanding of emerging themes through familiarizing myself with the units.

Describing Personal Experiences

Describing personal experiences is an important precursor to data analysis because it allows the researcher to divulge any intersecting experiences and potential for bias in the analysis process in advance (Moustakas, 1994). For the purposes of this study, I disclosed my own experiences with role incongruity and leadership development within hospitality organizations to provide an outlet for this information prior to thematic coding and to separate my own personal experiences from the data. This section includes my personal knowledge as it relates to the study and any interaction or knowledge of the organizations, leadership, and formal succession processes that I have been made aware through my professional social network.

Coding and Analysis

The remaining steps of phenomenological reduction are (b) develop a list of significant statements, (c) group themes, (d) create textural descriptions, (e) create structural descriptions, (f) write a composite description following the phases of the modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen approach. Developing a list of significant statements begins with an acknowledgement and analysis of the statements of greatest meaning, or significant statements through reading and re-reading the transcriptions and field notes

(Giorgi, 2009). This step of acknowledgement is an interpretation of interview statements as being the most meaningful to the participants and important for the research questions. NVivo software was used to identify and structure words or phrases for frequency. The next phase of analysis is grouping themes using the NVivo software. In this phase, short phrases and statements are assigned as valuable to the phenomenological structure (Giorgi, 2009). Grouping themes is the process of finding the common thread among participant statements that creates a phenomenon of experience that is applicable to the group of interest (Moustakas, 1994). The third phase of analysis is a variety of perspective interpretation and involved manual coding. Textural, structural, and composite descriptions of statements provide for in-depth interpretation of the data. Textural description is an interpretation for what is the phenomenon. Structural description is an interpretation for how the phenomenon is experienced. The composite description is a synthesis of textural and structural interpretation that describes the essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Steps were repeated for each participant interview and further synthesized as a group.

These steps provide the clarity and essence required of phenomenology (Giorgi, 2009). These steps of coding and analysis most closely align with a lived experience phenomenological method by separating initial interpretation and structured iterations for digging deeper into the data, an important aspect of lived experience and alignment with the research questions. This method also provides an opportunity to disclose personal experiences within the analysis framework that is related to the study, which is an important factor to consider because of my professional background in the hospitality

industry and as a female manager. This step aided in reducing potential bias in analysis of the data.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Issues of trustworthiness in qualitative data address validity and reliability through the alternative terms of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The design of the data collection and analysis is grounded in explaining and reducing potentials for bias, triangulating results, and providing rich description for those being studied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The goal of the design is not to provide generalizable and replicable results, but the accuracy and trustworthiness of the design to provide unbiased analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach to qualitative methodology lends credibility and trustworthiness to regarding the interpretation of data (Wellington, 1991). In addition to the following information, I kept a journal for self-reflection to aid in separating potentially biased thinking and increase objectivity in analysis.

Credibility

Triangulation and member checking are both rigorous approaches for research credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation adds depth and inherent meaning in the data analysis. This was completed using Denzin's approach to data triangulation which is a variety of time, space, and persons (Fusch et al., 2018). I collected responses to the research question from all study participants from different organizations as well as documenting contextual data such as tone, body language, and other nonverbal forms of communication that is a form of observation in the field (Kawulich, 2005). Member

checking was completed by sharing individual transcripts from each interview with the

participant involved in that interview to verify statements and fill in any missing gaps.

The final step was to share interpretation of the data with participants to verify the

synthesized understanding and validate the interpretation of the meaning derived from the

interviews.

Transferability

Generalizing results is not a goal of phenomenology, because the essential

purpose of studying a phenomenon is the unique experience to the group of interest

(Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Transferability instead aims to create steps in the data collection

and analysis process to reduce bias influencing results. Instead of results transferring

from the study to a more general population, the intent for this information is to translate

from the researcher to the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To reduce bias and

influence, I only asked neutral, open-ended questions related to the three research

questions. I also maintained a self-reflection journal to isolate personal feelings

throughout the process. The first iteration of analysis was a description of personal

experiences to further isolate potentially biased interpretation from the coding process

and enhance transferability through full disclosure of my own experience interacting with

the phenomenon of interest.

Dependability

Dependability in qualitative methodology is a reasoning for the approach used in

the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen

approach most closely aligns with a phenomenological method through layers of deep

interpretation in the coding process (Moustakas, 1994). This approach also includes opportunity for disclosure and separation of potential bias, and triangulation of data by synthesizing patterns, context, and structure of the data in the interpretation process. This coding and analysis process aligns with the study in terms of aiming to accurately answer the research question and increase trustworthiness.

Confirmability

Confirmability was established through an auditing process with participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Biases were mitigated through triangulation and member checking, and potential for biases are fully disclosed through the section reserved for describing personal experiences in the analysis. To increase confirmability, I provided the steps I completed to mitigate these biases during the research process.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical procedures for psychological studies are based on the general principals of the American Psychological Association's (APA) code of ethics, including the ethical concepts of Principle A: beneficence, Principle C: integrity, and Principle E: respect for people's rights and dignity. It is also the responsibility of psychologists to promote accuracy of facts as described in APA sections 8.07 and 8.12 (American Psychological Association, 2017). The intention of the study is to benefit participants, avoid personal or organizational conflicts, and remain aware of potential negative effects. Privacy is an important aspect of dignity and respect and important to build trust with participants. I maintained privacy and confidentiality by only using closed and secured systems for interview recordings, transcripts, and analysis. An electronic cloud-based system backup

was not be used for saving data due to potential vulnerabilities. I ensured all audio

recordings were stored on a laptop, saved on a local hard drive. Further, I created backups

using a physical backup hard drive for storage.

The names and contact information of participants are locally stored on a laptop

hard drive. Names are concealed in the transcripts with associated numbers to protect the

identity of participants and promote accurate responses. The analysis does not include

indication of individual responses and instead focuses on synthesized findings. By using

the modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen approach, my own views are reported separately in

the analysis. Conflict of interest was not be a concern in this study. I no longer am

employed within the Virginia Beach hospitality market, nor do I have any professional

membership with the hospitality associations at this time. There are no perceived risks or

burdens to the population by participating in this study. Participants will receive benefits

equal to my own by participating by receiving the information obtained in this study,

which has the potential to benefit their leadership and succession planning activity.

Recruitment was not coercive and was only be done through passive email

solicitation. I asked all participants to volunteer if they are interested and meet the

general requirements. For those volunteers who do not meet the general requirements, I

respectfully declined their participation and notified them of the reason for non-selection

in a written email. Selected participants were asked to sign a letter of cooperation and

acknowledge the timeline and commitment for the study in understandable language.

Safeguards may be necessary considering the focus of the study including gender factors.

In the event a participant or employee of question identifies as transgender or outside of

their assigned gender at birth, participation may be denied due to the differing experiences of these gendered experiences and an effort to promote the rights and experiences of people with transgendered identity (Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018).

Summary

In the research design and ethical procedures, I outlined the qualitative method for this phenomenological study, exploring the lived experience of male executives in the hospitality industry in facilitating female executive succession. The rationale for this design is to create a structured yet open-ended framework to guide the interviews and collect the necessary information to explore the phenomenon. The role of the researcher, collection strategy, coding and analysis method of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen approach and ethical procedures allow for appropriate exploration and analysis of the data while also protecting confidential information and the wellbeing of participants. Potential issues of trustworthiness are addressed in this chapter through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability through the lens of qualitative design.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this data collection was to conduct one-on-one, in-depth interviews with male hospitality leaders who had female direct reports. The interview questions were designed to be open-ended and allow participants to share their leadership experiences related to the facilitation and advancement of female managers, describe what has affected their ability to support leadership emergence for women, and share their perception of working with emerging female leaders for their own succession planning. Questions were designed to reflect these specific aspects of the lived experience for participants, based on the three foundational research questions:

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of male hospitality executives regarding the facilitation for female advancement to senior leadership roles?

RQ2: What affects male hospitality executives in supporting the succession of women?

RQ3: What are the perceptions male hospitality executives have when considering a female successor?

This chapter includes details about the data collection setting, participant demographics, the process of collecting qualitative data, and the analysis of the data. Interviews were coded and analyzed using thematic analysis. An in-depth review of the themes regarding the lived experience of male hospitality executives is presented based on the frequency, meaning, and connection of the shared experiences. The chapter concludes with the results of the study and summarized findings.

Setting

Each of the participants was a former colleague of mine; however, they have never been in positions of power either over or reporting to me, nor were any of the participants my current colleagues at the time of data collection. I conducted the interviews in a private office utilizing Zoom to capture visual and audio data, along with a back-up voice recorder, to create transcripts. Observational field notes were also taken regarding tone, body language, expression, and sentiment during the interviews. The interview setting was relaxed, and time restrictions were not imposed.

I was closely connected to the subject matter of the interviews as the topic was the experience of working with female hospitality managers in emerging leadership roles. For this reason, there was some inherent bias for both me and the participants as this was a known dynamic to all parties. The organizational conditions for participants were similar for all participants regardless of the varying organization they represented. At the time these interviews were conducted, the hospitality industry had suffered a loss of talent and a simultaneous increase in demand due to industry growth, which put pressure on existing leadership to attract and retain management roles. This may have created conditions for increased hyper-focus on people-centric development and greater need for diversity and inclusion within the hospitality sector.

Demographics

Minimal demographics were collected for this study. Demographics that alluded to race or gender were omitted from any interview questions; however, before each interview began, each participant agreed that they met the following study requirements:

(a) they were all male, (b) they lived in the Virginia Beach area, (c) they currently

worked in a hospitality organization, (d) they were tenured in their leadership position for

at least 1 year, and (e) they had at least one female direct report within the preceding

year. All of the participants indicated that they met the survey demographic requirements.

Detailed demographics related to the study are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2

Participant Demographics

Participant Number	Position	Experience Range	Age Range	Size of Business	Degree
1	Manager	10-15	30-39	Medium	High School Diploma
2	Director	5-10	30-39	Large	Degree
3	Director	25+	60-69	Medium	Degree
4	Director	15-20	40-49	Large	High School Diploma
5	Director	5-10	40-49	Large	Degree
6	Director	10-15	40-49	Large	Degree
7	Director	15-20	50-59	Large	Degree
8	Director	10-15	40-49	Large	Degree

Data Collection

Out of 22 people contacted, eight participants agreed to be interviewed and

completed the interview. A small number of participants can be sufficient in providing

complete and accurate information within a particular context if the participants have

expertise about the domain of inquiry (Romney et al., 1986). Additionally, relatively all

codes are established between eight and 12 qualitative interviews (Guest et al., 2006), and

a smaller number of participants aids the researcher by facilitating in-depth inquiry

(Crouch & Mackenzie, 2006). Each interview lasted, on average, approximately 47

minutes. Guidelines for the length of a phenomenological interview are not prescriptive

but rather seek to achieve depth and saturation through detail and clarity (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Lived-experience interviews may range in duration, with studies reporting interviews as short as 25 minutes (Odzakovic et al., 2020), and requirements of the audience for longer conversation arguably overlooks the possibility of tacit cooperation (Randall & Koppenhaver, 2004). The average interview was 47.25 minutes long and resulted in 13.63 transcribed pages. The totals for all participants were 378 minutes of interviews and 109 transcribed pages. Additional data is detailed in Table 3.

Table 3

Data Collection by Participant

Participant Number	Interview Duration	Number of Transcribed Pages
1	47 Minutes	14
2	48 minutes	14
3	45 minutes	13
4	42 minutes	12
5	58 minutes	17
6	43 minutes	12
7	41 minutes	11
8	54 minutes	16

All interviews were conducted and recorded virtually using Zoom and a back-up voice recorder for the purpose of creating interview transcripts. Each interview was held in a private room selected by the participant. Interviews were conducted over a period of two months, on some days multiple interviews were conducted. The process did not vary between participants or deviate from the intended data collection process.

Data Analysis

The inductive coding process was based on Giorgi's (2009) method for phenomenology. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and compiled along with field

notes. The information was then uploaded into a qualitative analysis tool, NVivo, to delineate meaningful units based on NVivo coding of short phrases of information into units. The units were then grouped together to create sentiments and meaning and synthesized to describe the lived experience utilizing the secondary coding of pattern coding. The process was iterative and began with an initial interpretation before evolving throughout the analysis process. The codes that emerged from the data included expectations, mentorship, feel, team, role, experience, organization, level, promoted, clear, desire, coaching, leadership, and perfect. The initial themes from these early codes were the importance of leadership, the level of role, and the career plan. These initial themes were immature data points with little depth and meaning to the experience.

As the interviews progressed, however, the codes evolved to broader categories and were grouped by connected meaning units, theme variations, and supporting factors. The second cycle of coding was comprehensive and systematic, which led to final themes and subthemes. These themes provided greater depth and understanding for the phenomenon and add to the scientific body of knowledge regarding the gender gap in leadership. The overall sentiment regarding the experience of facilitating executive succession for female hospitality managers was largely positive, with some neutral sentiment and very little negative sentiment. The thematic analysis resulted in the following core themes: (a) advocacy, (b) organizational support, (c) fulfillment, and (d) approach. The data for each theme were accompanied by a set of meaning units related to the overall theme that add specific support to the core findings. These meaning units

evolved from the code as broader meaningful groupings of individual experiences that shared similarities.

Although most existing research focuses on barriers to succession, this study's findings are supported by theories of role congruity and leadership facilitation. All participants shared experiences of addressing stigma, the importance of their own personal development to support succession and role exposure for women, intrinsic benefits of being inclusive of women in succession planning, and having both gendered and non-gendered approaches. All but one participant shared the experience of promoting the unique benefits of women in leadership roles, and the team benefits of gender diversity in leadership. All but two participants shared the experience of being in an organization with gender diversity goals. Half of the participants shared experiences facilitating female succession successfully. Table 4 depicts the themes and supporting factors generated from the analysis.

Table 4

Core Themes and Meaning Units

Themes	Meaning Units	Initial Code
Advocacy	Addressing stigma	Coaching
	Promoting communal leadership	Leadership
		Promoted
Organizational support	Development of male leaders	Role
	Organizational goals	Experience
	Role exposure	Organization
		Level
Fulfillment	Intrinsic benefits	Feel
	Team benefits	Team
Approach	Equal selection	Expectations
	Individualized development	Mentorship
	Mentorship	Clear
		Desire
		Perfect

Discrepant Cases

No discrepant cases were present after reviewing the transcribed interviews, audio recording, field notes, and coding. There was an overwhelming positive sentiment in the language, tone, and answer given during interviews. There was one interview that presented very negative sentiment in a portion of one answer in which the participant indicated gender acknowledgement was preferential treatment, and women have a lack of desire and short-sightedness in pursuing leadership positions. This was the only indication of a discrepant data point that was not consistent with other data.

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Evidence of Trustworthiness

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The trustworthiness of the data is critical in research to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Trustworthiness was established in this study through member checking, thick descriptions of the data, creating an audit trail, and consideration of any conflicting findings and negative cases (Ravitch & Carl 2016). Participants were provided with an overview of the emerging themes and meaning units to confirm their interview was interpreted accurately (Creswell, 2013). This step of member checking establishes trustworthiness and integrity in the data collection process. Feedback was also taken into consideration prior to the analysis and interpretation. Participants did not share any information that varied from the themes provided. The steps of data collection, analysis, and interpretation also followed a defined structure, which gave future researchers the ability to audit and replicate the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Audio and text files were stored in accordance with the defined plan, using

a local hard drive and a backup physical hard drive containing interviews, transcripts, and coding documents.

Credibility

Establishing the credibility of the findings begins with securely conducting interviews and storing the data from the video and audio recordings. The video recordings were stored on the computer hard drive and an external backup drive, and the backup audio recording was saved to a voice recorder. Credibility was established in the analysis process by supporting all thematic groupings with direct quotes from multiple participants, thorough descriptions, and confirmation of emergent themes with participants. Finally, I conducted a member check to ensure the findings and interpretations were adequately operationalized from the participants' perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participants reviewed themes and interpretations to help validate the accuracy of the findings. No adjustments were made to the plan for data collection and analysis.

Transferability

Transferability was not a primary concern in establishing the trustworthiness because of the nature of phenomenology existing within a specific lived experience. The lived experience of this population was intended for application to similar demographics. To maintain transferability and assist future research, the demographics and thick descriptions were provided to familiarize the reader with in-depth experience (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Dependability

Dependability of the research in the data collection process was initially established through a thorough audit trail and reflective experience, which work to create a logical and traceable analysis process when combined with field notes that document impression, tone, and body language. No more than two interviews were conducted in one day to allow for processing and reflection of any impressions due to inherent bias. Records of the raw data, field notes, original transcripts, and reflective journaling were auditable and created a clear decision trail for understanding the rationale of the analysis (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

Confirmability

Confirmability was achieved through the consistent presentation of findings in accordance with research questions derived from the review of the literature and gap in existing research (Tobin & Begley, 2004). The results are presented with clear markers for the analytical decisions and theoretical underpinnings of the results (Koch, 1994). The conclusions and interpretations have achieved confirmability because of the credibility, transferability, and dependability in the research plan and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

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Results

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Research Question 1

The first research question is: what are the lived experiences of male hospitality executives regarding the facilitation for female advancement to senior leadership roles? The theme that emerged in the findings was the experience of being an advocate, and

how their ability to address stigma and promote communal leadership equipped them to be successful as an advocate and share positive sentiments of the experience. To advocate is to support, recommend, and to speak on the behalf of another. The theme of advocacy formed from the experiences of highlighting positive attributes of women to promote their ability to lead; two additional subthemes of addressing stigmas associated with women in leadership, and the act of promoting the value of communal leadership behaviors when advocating also emerged.

Theme 1: Advocacy

Although the participants discussed the many specific ways the women they have promoted were uniquely qualified for a position, a theme emerged around the mindset of the male leader that is a distinguishing characteristic of this experience. In assessing the responses, it is clear male leaders within the sample experienced successful leadership facilitation with women by advocating for women, through identifying and praising their leadership traits and behaviors, and even attribute these traits to women in general and comparatively to male counterparts. This was exemplified by the following participant statements: "women are more organized in how they write down the notes for mentorship, how they follow up and so there is a difference in how they process the information by staying and keeping organized;" "women in my area are more organized and structured and that allows them to not only absorb the information better but follow up on it better;" and "females in my subregion engage in that kind of conversation more than the males do." Participants largely discussed the intersection of the role of mother and professional, and the need to acknowledge, as an advocate, the effect one has on the

other. The coding of mom, home, helping people, seeing people, equal rights, supporting women, and future leaders are connected to the idea of addressing stigma and supports the theme of advocacy. Addressing stigma emerged from the interviews based on the idea that women in leadership roles is an overdue shift, women have complex roles in society that intersect with having a career, and perceptions of women as leaders is due to a stigma or belief that the workload and required capabilities inherently clash with the social role of women as mothers and spouses. This is articulated in a meaningful quote from a participant.

> Some of the challenges of that work life balance of being able to feel like they're delivering not only at a high level and maintaining the performance of their male counterparts in the professional environment while also achieving what they believe or what society has set the expectation around being a mother and a provider from kind of just the societal expectation of being a mother.

Participants acknowledged this stigma as an initial barrier to leadership and expressed the need to openly address these stigmas in an organizational setting to advocate for female succession. Meaningful quotes from the interview related to this theme are: "we have to kill that stigma that you cannot do all the things and still be a mom and still be a good wife or do these things. And I think in the food industry that stigma is real;" "there's minimal directors that are females because of this narrative of what we believe it should be or some of us have painted of 'oh you have to do this and this and oh by the way you still got to be a mom;'" and "being able to fulfill multiple roles and feeling like they are meeting those expectations of personal and professional."

The participants also used key words to describe this barrier as a "stigma" or "narrative," indicating that the barrier is based on a negative bias.

Advocacy also includes acknowledgement of the positive traits of feminine leadership, as well as communal leadership traits as opposed to male agentic traits. Participants discussed the importance of "soft skills," the speed in which women adapt in leadership assignments, and the experience women create from driving results that is unique to the communal style. The perspective and experience of women leadership holding value for male executives was key to initiating the experience of facilitating succession for women. Participants shared, "I think the women that I have promoted by large have been successful more quickly in role;" and "there's usually less confrontation, it's more business." These quotes highlight the positive attributes in female leadership, further noting that focusing on these traits is a key to overcoming negative misconceptions. Participants had the common experience of using the communal traits of women to successfully advocate for female succession in leadership roles.

Research Question 2

The second research question is: what affects male hospitality executives in supporting the succession of women? The theme to emerge is support, specifically through the executive's organization. This support is enables through the organization developing male leaders to support diversity, having clear diversity goals, and the mechanisms to expose successors to different roles for their development. In answering this question, executives felt they needed to have structured support within their organization to promote women into higher level leadership positions. This theme is vital

to understanding what affects male leadership's support in improving the social problem of the drastic decline in female leadership population from middle management to upper management.

Theme 2: Organizational Support

The experience of organizational support was shared in stating "as we go higher up in the responsibility chain in this organization, the ratio of females starts to dwindle." The responsibility to support more diversity in leadership advancement not only falls on the existing leader but is affected by the mechanisms within the organization to facilitate female succession that are critical to achieving gender diversity. Participants shared the experience of relying on processes, procedures, formalized mentorship, and being part of organizations with diversity goals. A defining statement regarding the desire for organizational support was "processes and procedures that align with our company and our regional expectations." One participant shared that organizational support comes from diversity being a part of the core values of the organization, stating "one of the things [I focus on] is about our core values." The coding of career planning, career pathing, reward, closed doors, mid-level, next position, core values, diverse teams, diverse leaders, gender diversity, organizational experiences, female successor, internal promotion, role model, support, and upward mobility are also connected to the theme of organizational support. Male leaders expressed that in their experience, supporting gender diversity happens through organizational support in three ways: development of male leaders, organizational goals, and role exposure.

The experience of being developed to intentionally promote women or desiring the specific development to support female advancement reinforces the core theme of organizational support. This aspect of organizational support is the development of male leaders for diversity beyond diversity goals in the form of headcount targets. This is described in the statements "who supports me or what education or development [do] I get about how to bring women along?" and "But I think companies are challenged by that. I think we are challenged with how we approach those things." One participant shared they felt enabled to facilitate succession when an organization has "a very clear roadmap between points A and point B." Male leaders felt equipped to promote women into leadership roles when an organization provides resources to educate leaders on the value of gender diversity. This was characterized in the statement "who supports me or what education or development I get about how to bring women along" and "before [there] was not [support] is any of my positions...of how to develop women."

The experiences shared were similar in being centered around organizational goals such as diversity targets based on recruiting or hiring a percentage of females for leadership positions, and the pitfalls of organizations that provide support in this way. Male leaders experience frustrations with these diversity initiatives for a variety of reasons. First, male leaders did not feel they were being educated in how to bring women along as described in the subtheme of development. Organizations they have been a part of have announced a goal of achieving a percentage of diversity without delivering the processes and procedures to achieve the goal. This perception was depicted by the following excerpt from an interview:

But I think companies are challenged by that, right? I think we're challenged with

how we approach those things and I think sometimes we go into we're just like

hey we're going to get to 20% or 30% but we're not doing it in a long-term stable

way, we're doing it to hit a number on a cue really to be like hey we've 40%

diversity or we've 30% women in executive roles.

Second, diversity population targets created a misconception among male

candidates of the qualifications of women pursuing the same promotions. Third, it is not a

sustainable system to only create diversity population targets and does not create a long-

term plan for greater gender diversity in leadership. The overall sentiment around

organizational goals is that diversity targets are not sufficient for fighting stigma around

women in leadership. One participant shared: "I think we're challenged with how we

approach those things and I think sometimes we go into we're just like hey we're going

to get to 20% or 30% but we're not doing it in a long-term stable way". One way this is

not sustainable is the organization failing to maintain a strong population of female

candidates. One participant shared "just calling it out and saying you know we have to

bring others to the table here, we have to have diversity in the selection pool otherwise

you'll only select the same thing over and over if the pool is small." Male leaders felt

equipped to promote women into leadership position when the organization attracts a

pool of internal and external talent that is gender diverse. The third way male leaders felt

equipped to promote women into leadership roles is when the organization has strong

core values so that all potential leaders can align with performance and behavioral

expectations.

The last experience that affects men's ability to promote women within the theme of organizational support is their ability to give temporary assignments for leadership role exposure. Role exposure was a common opportunity that men felt enabled them to gain insights into women's leadership ability, fit, and give necessary experience and skill development to promote women into higher levels of leadership. Meaningful statements from the participants include "exposing her to roles and positions within the organization where she'll grow from", "knowledge and experience they gained with me allowed them to take another job with another company in a higher role and position", "you get to take on leadership and supervisory roles and now you've got to lead people, you've got to oversee people, you're doing performance reviews, you're doing stuff that is above and beyond" and "breadth of knowledge to be able to do the technical as well as handle the managerial side". The participant also had the shared experience that when confident in the promotion, it was easier to decide to promote female successors. The common sentiment was the desire for women to be successful in role once promoted, which addresses a major concern of female succession called the "glass cliff" (Glass & Cook, 2016). This concern is centered around the idea that if women reach an executive leadership role, they are more likely than men to be unsuccessful in the role. Participants shared that this affects them in that they are only as successful as their successors, sharing "putting them in situations that stretch them beyond their own boundaries so that they could be successful; if I do that successfully as a leader, they will learn the things that they need to learn, they will execute the things that are being asked of them"

Research Question 3

The third research question is: what are the perceptions male hospitality

executives have when considering a female successor? The first theme to emerge is the

perception that promoting a woman will be fulfilling, both intrinsically and for the team

dynamics. The second theme to emerge is that the approach is unique. Respondents felt

the selection process must remain equal regardless of demographics, but the development

must be individualized for the needs of the specific person which may be unique for

women, and their role as a mentor is pivotal for succession. These perceptions indicate

that their own intrinsic desire, team dynamics, and ability to individualize an approach to

succession initiatives are important factors in the consideration process of female

successors.

Theme 3: Fulfillment

All participants shared a common perception in considering female successors,

that promoting a female successor would be exciting to them personally and be a valuable

feature of the team. The idea that considering a female successor is exciting and

beneficial is key to understanding the experience of male leaders when successfully

promoting female managers. The responses are supported by two key concepts: intrinsic

benefits and team benefits. Intrinsic benefits are the altruistic feelings that are

accompanied by facilitating gender diversity, while team benefits are an appraisal of the

business value derived from a gender diverse group within an organization.

All participants shared the perception that selecting a female successor would be

exciting and personally rewarding on an intrinsic level. In their past experiences

developing and promoting women, they had a positive experience and the responses

focused solely on the positive attributes the participants gained for themselves through

the process. One participant shared "it made me come out of my hardened outer shell"

and another shared "I've really taken it to the next level of being a mentor and

understanding the meaning of what that is and that I can also learn from the individuals

that I'm mentoring." These statements characterize an aspect of personal development

and self-improvement through the process of engaging with female leadership

facilitation.

In recalling examples of when the male participants were involved in the

promotion of women, the experiences were described as fulfilling, satisfying, rewarding,

and doing something right. These experiences are characteristic of having intrinsic,

altruistic value, regardless of personal gain. Male leaders shared the experience of feeling

they had contributed to something worthy. Meaningful statements regarding this

experience are "It was definitely fulfilling to see those two, transfer to other hotels in

better positions to know that we were able to get them there as a result of the hard work

they put in", "satisfaction of seeing them able to advance", "the most rewarding aspect of

what I do" and "I love seeing people get promoted, I mean it's, you know, there's so

much joy in the individual who is officially being promoted that makes me feel great

when I see [that] … it makes me feel great, it makes me feel like I'm doing something

right"

The second supporting factor around the core theme of fulfillment are the benefits

experienced by the team reporting to the male leader. This is distinct from intrinsic

benefits as it pertains to business value external to the leader, but still benefiting the

leader. The first commonality regarding team benefits was the sentiment that diversity

and inclusion was important to the male leader. Meaningful statements regarding the

awareness of team diversity and inclusion were "I'm hyper aware that I am imbalanced,

and I have fewer females than males," "when you think about team building, being

diverse builds effective teams," and "I want everybody to feel included on my team.".

One participant shared a detailed account of the unique benefits of a diverse team,

stating:

> I think creating diverse teams possibly affects me as a leader. So, bringing
>
> perspective, bringing experience and really being able to show different ways to
>
> drive results. Bringing the experience to the team and to me as a leader has
>
> benefited our team in making better decisions and creating motivation and
>
> inspiration at ranks within my team, giving me perspectives that I may not
>
> otherwise have.

Additionally, participants shared there are team benefits to promoting women to

leadership promotions. One participant shared "talk about, teach and develop our teams

on the benefits of having gender diverse teams." These benefits include the team

perception of an internal promotion and the value of different perspectives. One male

leader shared that its "important to celebrate any success we have as a team and for me an

internal promotion is a team." A meaningful quote regarding the business value

experienced by the team is "We want to try to see what we can do to round up our team

and make sure that we include all the different perspectives that we can have."

Theme 4: Approach

The core theme of approach emerged from the participant responses regarding how they initiate and deal with the experience of facilitating female succession and development. The most frequent and meaningful word used to describe approaching women in succession planning was "individualized." The theme emerged through the combination of three subthemes, equal selection, individualized development, and mentorship. Participants shared that gender does not affect their perception in selection but does affect how they develop and how they perceive the leadership facilitation process with female successors, and the use of fact-based performance reviews in decision-making. These responses provide depth of information regarding the perception of male leaders during the consideration and facilitation process. One participant shared:

As a mentor in the workplace, I have kind of a responsibility to make sure that teams are provided access to information, developmental opportunities, and to challenge people to see where they fall when faced with different levels of adversity in various situations and scenarios and then try to gauge their reaction, their participation and their outcomes against their peers to hopefully create and select the best future candidates for development.

Participants unanimously experienced the perception that the selection process for leadership roles are demographic agnostic. In describing their perception of the selection experience, participants shared "you aren't looking at a person's gender or a person's race or their background, it's all about what they know and what they can bring to the table" and "it is not a gender specific role so there are no additional steps no additional

treatments they either got to be able to perform the task or they can't." This can be described in whole as a sentiment of equal selection, where the experience male leaders have in succession planning is based on a candidate's competencies, such as knowledge and performance. This reinforces the idea that succession is based on an individualize approach.

Participants also described their beliefs in equal treatment in assessing competencies regardless of gender. Reponses were descriptive of the shared perception that selecting a female successor was no different than if selecting a male successor. Meaningful quotes from the interview were "I don't feel like there's a disparity between genders in their levels of leadership," "I don't know that there's a difference between the genders," and "I come from a place where I'm looking at every single individual from a competency standpoint and a desire standpoint and whether you're male/female." These statements describe a lack of gender differences, while acknowledging individual differences in people and a focus on competency in selection. The second factor that supports the theme of individualized approach is individualized development. In approaching succession, development is a stage in preparing a selected candidate for the next level of responsibility and skill. In the development stage of selection, participants shared the perception that all candidates being considered for leadership succession needed individualization. A meaningful quote from an interview is "I think that stretches to all sorts of different people, there isn't a cookie cutter way to mentor somebody or to lead somebody depending on what they're going through personally inside of work or

outside of work." This also presents in the idea that personal are considered in leadership development.

Additionally, in individualizing the development, male leaders shared the perception that women have different attributes than male candidates, and development included an acknowledgement of their differences. When participants shared their perception of gender differences as it relates to their perception when considering a female successor. Meaningful statement were pervasive in the data, including "female associates are a little bit more hesitant to initiate conversations", "with our female leaders there's a little bit more compassion and a little bit more grey area", "I feel like…the women will broach a subject that bothers them and they'll bring to the forefront, make sure that you've heard them", and "I also feel the sense that sometimes when you promote a female that they almost work harder because they feel like they've something to prove within the workplace and the environment and they will stretch themselves just a little bit further sometimes than their male counterparts". Participants also shared differences that highlight their perceived deficiencies when developing women. Examples from the interviews are "when she's provided feedback, she's really hard on herself because she wants to be perfect," "She really struggles to separate sometimes her own performance from her team's performance," "she puts too much pressure on herself to overcome adversity instead of leveraging some of the strengths of the team." Participant also shared the perception that developing a woman might be uncomfortable for male leaders that are not prepared, sharing "there's probably some men out there that I'd have to say that don't feel comfortable or don't know how to engage or lead or

influence women" and "That may be why some leaders don't bring people along because they're uncomfortable and they don't understand the methodology of how to individualize for that person." These responses provide insight into the male gatekeeper experience specific to the perception of developing women in succession planning.

The third supporting factor of individualized approach is the shared experience of mentorship in selection. This factor emerged from the interview responses regarding the role of a mentor in leadership succession. When it came to describing selecting a female successor, many participants shared their role as a mentor, ownership of the process, and the sentiment that mentorship is important. Meaningful quotes from the interviews are "when the next position comes available in the chain of command, you are not going to be able to have anybody that's naturally as part of a succession plan to go into that role because you didn't take the ownership to teach or mentor", "They want to work, they want to learn, but they need a little bit extra teaching and guidance", "[I see] the importance of mentoring the up-and-coming generation in this industry", "[mentorship] is giving them the knowledge because they didn't have the background coming in", and "I'm standing behind them for a role in advancement". This is a valuable insight because it relates to the research regarding mentorship in leadership development (Dashper, 2019) and reinforces the role and responsibilities of the male gatekeeper (Hill et al., 2016).

Summary

The phenomenological exploration of the lived experience of male hospitality executives facilitating succession for female managers centers around the questions of the support and considerations required of gatekeepers to leadership positions. The lived

experiences of male hospitality executives regarding the facilitation for female advancement to senior leadership is the role of an advocate with a positive attitude towards gender diversity. Organizational support and the organization's ability to develop practices and standards in the structure of the company is at the core of what affects male hospitality executives in supporting the succession of women. The perceptions male hospitality executives have when considering a female successor is that people have individual needs, and the needs of women are socially influenced by the demands outside of the workplace. Patterns and emerging themes from the interviews were presented to depict the experiences of the respondents. The final themes, subthemes, and sentiments of respondents was analyzed through the lens of existing research to answer the research questions. In Chapter 5, the interpretation and implications of these results is presented.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to explore the lived experience of male hospitality executives regarding the facilitation of female advancement to senior leadership roles. These male leaders had direct succession planning responsibility as it related to the facilitation of female advancement in the hospitality industry. This study was conducted to contribute to the holistic understanding of the gender gap in executive positions by exploring the experiences of those facilitating succession activities. The key findings of the study are the positive attitude towards gender diversity in leadership, the experience of advocacy through sponsorship, the need for organizational support to facilitate female succession, the feelings of personal and professional fulfillment when promoting female managers, and the mindset of an individualized approach to succession planning.

Interpretation of the Findings

RCT and LMX were foundational for the study as the supporting theoretical underpinnings in the gender gap within leadership. The components of both theories intersect to explain the preponderance of male leadership above middle management (Koburtay & Syed, 2019), despite the existence of an equal gender pipeline (Dashper, 2019). RCT illuminates the social intersection working as a double negative against women pursuing leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002), while LMX can add an additional layer of disadvantage due to gatekeepers being predominately male. Researchers have conducted studies to address these barriers without considering the male gatekeepers successfully facilitating leadership succession with female managers (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). The findings of this study clarified the gap by providing an

extension to both RCT and LMX, as well as emerging research around sponsorship and leadership appraisal (Kale, 2020).

Research Question 1

The experiences of male hospitality executives regarding the facilitation for female advancement to senior leadership roles are those of being an advocate, characterized by a positive attitude toward issues of gender diversity. These advocacy and succession experiences are personally self-fulfilling through intrinsic value and professionally self-fulfilling by contributing to the landscape of the leadership competencies within their organization. Male executives that have facilitated female succession experienced support through organizational mechanisms allowing them to promote and advance women in the workplace. Finally, despite the acknowledgement of differing needs for women, male executives were also required to provide an individual approach for all potential successors regardless of gender, but still consider the needs specific to women in these individual approaches. This is an extension of the literature on RCT, describing an evolved perspective of communal traits that is not seen as contrary to leadership competencies, but as a different type of leadership competency set.

Role congruity is a helpful construct from which to understand the gender gap in leadership through the classification of communal traits associated with women, as well as the agentic traits associated with men that are perceived as mutually exclusive and opposing behaviors (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Because of the alignment between perceived leadership quality and agentic traits, the perception that women are naturally less capable leaders is prevalent. Participants did not share an experience of perceiving women as less

capable leaders, and they acknowledged that women, in general, have different leadership abilities, noting that those traits must be leveraged and promoted during leadership development and succession planning. Participants also shared their experience that communal traits displayed by women are strengths in a leadership position and compliment leadership teams as a whole. This is a specific acknowledgement that confirms the influence of role congruity on leadership perception and selection but extends the literature with a perspective that values gender differences.

Research Question 2

Contributing factors that affect male hospitality executives in supporting the succession of women were centered around an organization's ability to provide support by aligning inclusive practices and standards within the company's structure. Two specific factors noted that support female succession were selection procedures and performance appraisals. Leadership selection procedures that value a wide range of traits and their contributing merit within an organization better support female selection; whether these traits are valued at an organizational level impacts male leaders when considering a female successor. The shift from mentoring to sponsorship is n emerging concept in Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) designed to promote better leadership development and selection, also known as succession planning, (Dashper, 2019). Sponsorship specifically requires that an advocate be a decision maker with influence to have a meaningful impact in the consideration and selection process for female leadership candidates. The theme of advocacy that emerged from the participants' experience confirms the connection between sponsorship and improved facilitation practices.

Participants detailed their experiences as advocates as an important role during promotion of female leaders and successors.

The second way organizational support influences selection is through performance reviews that are designed as an equitable experience to provide an adequate selection pool of managers. Men are also better equipped to impact succession when they are in a position for facilitation. They feel it is important for organizations to encourage potential female successors through development activities such as stretch assignments and exposure to cross-functional subjects that provide alternative career paths for advancement.

The findings of the study provide an extension to the literature on the systemic impact within organizational processes. The inclusion of the male experience provides detailed insights to the ways in which organizations can directly support improved gender representation for male gatekeepers. The theme of organizational support is connected to the theory of LMX due to the concept of the glass ceiling. Leadership representation for women drastically shifts between middle management and executive leadership, referred to as the "glass ceiling," or the limited upper trajectory for women in the workplace (Jauhar & Lau, 2018). Due to the lack of similarity between leader and member (Tonidandel et al., 2007), male executives need a mechanism to engage with female managers. These organizational support mechanisms extend the literature by specifically defining a facilitator for more inclusive succession.

This is also an extension of the connection between RCT and organizational effectiveness. Organizational support is connected to role congruity in terms of leadership

appraisal processes, which is structured, defined, and executed in the context of an organization's own framework. A perceived mismatch between communal traits and leadership behavior imbedded into the appraisal process would be a systemic disadvantage for female leaders. This is connected to the concept of the glass cliff, which is the idea that once a woman achieves a leadership position, she is more harshly appraised and likely to be seen as failing in the leadership role (Glass & Cook, 2016; Jeong & Harrison, 2017). The theme of organizational support extends the research by making a case for the additional connection of alignment between organizational support mechanisms and communal traits.

Research Question 3

The perceptions of male hospitality executives have when considering a female successor is the goal of achieving diversity is viewed negatively if it is the primary purpose for selecting a female leader. There is also a perception that all potential successors have individual needs that should be supported to aid in their success, and the needs of women are socially influenced such as the demands outside of the workplace. This may mean that support activities are different for women than for men inside the workplace, while still being equal in nature. Another perception is that traits of female leaders are different than male leaders, and those differing traits hold value and contribute equally but uniquely to an organization's overall leadership team. There is also the perception that male leaders can be sponsors of female successors, and their role as an advocate is intrinsically fulfilling. The perception that risk is attached to this relationship is not a finding of this study.

The themes of fulfillment and approach are key in disconfirming ideas that male to female mentorship relationships carry an amount of risk that causes aversion to the relationship, as well as the idea that leadership appraisal should carry a gendered approach to be more effective. A modern explanation of the gender gap includes the idea that men are not comfortable developing female successors due discomfort and risk aversion surrounding a male to female power dynamic or unprofessional perceptions. Participants did not share any experiences indicating that discomfort or risk aversion was a factor or perception in their development or succession planning decisions. In opposing findings, male leaders felt a sense of intrinsic satisfaction when participating in inclusive practices.

Diversity practices were met with criticism in the experiences of male leaders, specifically around the use of diversity targets and gendered approaches to leadership appraisal. A counterargument was presented in the experiences of participants that was based on the idea of an individualized approach to all development activities regardless of gender. While this confirms participants acknowledge the different needs women have in the workplace, it also is an acknowledgement that people in general have different needs that should be considered for effective development to take place.

Overall, the findings of this study are consistent with existing literature around the gender gap in leadership. This study presents tangible ways in which male gatekeepers can support the advancement of women in leadership roles within the hospitality industry by better understanding what factors contribute to the selection of female successors. Additionally, the findings of this study present concepts around organizational

development that can be considered for enterprise-level systemic practices. This study addresses the intended gap in both the leadership and hospitality literature to better understand the experiences of men, an unexplored perspective, as the decision makers that have the power and authority to affect real social change.

Limitations of the Study

Foreseen limitations introduced in Chapter 1 was the participants' current experience in the hospitality industry, succession planning authority, and experience of direct supervision of a female manager within the Virginia Beach, Virginia geography. The geography was a hindrance in the study that resulted in a smaller sample size than originally intended, though still within a range of acceptable data collection for a phenomenological study. Widening the geography to be inclusive of other similar demographics such as seasonal resort towns or hospitality-dependent communities may have provided a larger sample size. For future search, widening the population may provide additional information.

Unforeseen limitations of the study are tied to the method of phenomenological research. Because the population of interest and limitations, male executives that participated in interviews are experts in facilitating female advancement. Because of this expertise, they may not be representative of what most executives experience who, for example, have limited female candidate pools, are a part of organizations with limited diversity resources. By conducting in-depth interviews with experts, the results are limited in their application to similar populations and less transferrable. Another limitation is obtaining a large population for interviews. It is a challenge to engage

executives in long interviews around sensitive organizational topics. This resulted in less interviews than originally intended.

The limitation of personal bias was accounted for in the design of the study; however, personal bias can never be fully eliminated. During the research and analysis, I set aside my personal lens of experience, with the awareness that not all biases can be eliminated. I understand and disclose that the topic of interest has and continues to directly impact my own experiences as a female hospitality leader. My own personal experiences vary from the themes presented in this study, and it was important as the researcher to acknowledge the gap in my own experiences and set them aside when analyzing and interpreting the interviews. Regardless, bias in my interpretation and analysis of the information is a limitation of the study.

Recommendations

To further the results and application, recommendations for future research are around the limitations and context of this study. Leveraging a method such as grounded theory or case study design would match shared experience with organizational data and compare results of female succession planning with experiences in historical context (Bansal et al., 2018). These recommendations are made to provide greater rigor in the research by comparing experiences that are shared by participants with confirmed organizational activities and outcomes. Quantitative studies such as anonymous survey can reach a broader demographic, larger sample size, mask identity for less socially desirable answers, and target perception of communal traits related to positive attitudes towards leadership (Koburtay et al., 2020). There is also a gap in understanding the

connection between leadership styles and corporate responsibility perceptions from a gender perspective (Vieira, et al., 2022). This would be an extension of the current study by understanding the theme of organizational support and approach as it relates to style and gender. Additionally, application to other industries outside of hospitality and other demographics outside of the United States that may have a different perspective on the perception of communal traits as it relates to leadership competency (Koburtay & Syed, 2019) would enhance the transferability of the results.

Implications

Implications for positive social change are the opportunities for greater gender equity and inclusion in leadership development practices. This is achieved through improving the conditions for female managers experiencing discrimination disadvantages (Roberts & Brown, 2019) at a critical point in their career path (Lyness & Grotto, 2018) and compensates for the lack of access to mentorship relationships (Boone et al., 2013). For organizations, leadership development practices could be improved from the deeper knowledge of the gatekeeper experience when developing the framework and identifying resources for diversity initiatives (Dwivedi et al., 2018; Lyness & Grotto, 2018; Koburtay & Syed, 2019), internal selection procedures (Mahmood et al., 2019; McKee & Froelich, 2016), performance appraisal (Koburtay et al., 2020), and sponsorship opportunities (Dashper, 2019). This could also improve the diversity in succession planning and outcomes, and better equip gatekeepers to meet organizational objectives.

Research Findings from the study expand the existing literature by examining an untold perspective in the diversity landscape and exposes the need for more in-depth

analysis for future research. While the female experience has been deeply researched and examined, this focus of the literature continued to perpetuate the idea that the advancement of women is still the responsibility of women. By including the experience of men with the positioning to support female leadership, the burden of development becomes an opportunity for all members of an organization. This study is an example of the value of deeply understanding the complexities of social issues through a qualitative lens.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to address the social problem of the gender gap in leadership within the hospitality industry, by examining the gap in the existing literature surrounding the male gate keeper experience in succession planning with female managers. Existing research provides organizations the opportunity to understand the female experience and barriers to achieving leadership positions but did not provide the added perspective of male gatekeepers, who are in positions to make leadership selection, as a consideration in better understanding the social issue of the gender gap in leadership. Because the hospitality industry has a diverse pipeline of talent due to the gender diversity in hospitality degrees and middle management roles, and the alignment between communal attributes and the expectations of working in hospitality, there is an opportunity to impact social change in this setting.

This study found the male gatekeeper experience in facilitating executive succession for female hospitality managers to be positive. Leaders who develop female managers create leadership development plans not tailored to a gender but approach

development individually regardless of gender. The experience for male leaders is fulfilling professionally for achieving goals and creating a high performing team. Male leaders perceive communal traits as effective attributes of leaders and perceive traits that traditionally align with female leaders as adding value and perspective to a leadership team. Male leaders experience personal fulfillment for their contribution to gender inclusion and their own self development in the process of better understanding diverse perspectives in the workplace. A male leader's experience is heavily affected by the support system provided by their organization in terms of resources and diversity practices. This dependency is important for the organizational practices surrounding diversity initiatives.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview Questions	Subject-Phenomenon Exploration Questions
What has been your experience as a mentor in the workplace?	
What differences have you experienced mentoring men compared to women	
Describe your experiences facilitating female advancement in the workplace	Can you tell me more about X experience (the experience of X)?
What is your experience promoting women that work for you?	
What are the ways that you have facilitated female advancement?	
How has supporting women in succession planning affected you?	Can you tell me more about X affect?
	What other things have been affected?
In what ways have you been affected by succession planning with women?	
What is it like facilitating advancement with female direct reports?	Can you tell me more about what X is like?
What thoughts come to mind when you imagine considering a female successor?	What other things come to mind?

Appendix B: Volunteer for a Research Study

My name is Ryann Hanna. I am currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in

Industrial Organizational Psychology (Ph.D.) through Walden University in Minneapolis.

My dissertation is to explore the experience of male hospitality executives in facilitating

succession planning for female direct reports. This study may help organizations improve

diversity and inclusion within leadership.

The study will involve:

- The interview will be conducted using a virtual platform such as Skype.

- The interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes during a time and date

  that is convenient with you.

- Participants will receive a copy of interview transcripts for review.

Who is eligible to participate?

- Your organization within Virginia Beach, Virginia, United States is a

  hospitality organization.

- You are a current executive within your organization, such as a General

  Manager, Director, Vice President, or C-Suite.

- You have had at least one female direct report within the previous 12 months