

2020

## Gender and Millennial Support for Women Political Leaders

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Walden University  
2020

Abstract

Gender and Millennial Support for Women Political Leaders

by

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MEd, University of New Orleans

BA, Northeastern Oklahoma State University

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

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## Abstract

Despite comprising more than 50% of the population and voting in greater numbers than men, women are underrepresented in U.S. political leadership. Although research exists on the correlation between gender and politics, little literature addresses the influence of generation and gender on voting behavior. Using Jaggar's liberal feminist theory as a framework, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between female generational cohorts and their policy preferences and candidate support. Two research questions assessed the differences between female millennials and baby boomers regarding policy preferences in the areas of income equality, opportunity, representation, and candidate support. A quantitative cross-sectional study design was employed, using secondary data from the 2016 presidential election for millennial and baby boomer women voters aged 20 to 35 years and 52 to 70 years, respectively, totaling 1,111 respondents. Mann-Whitney  $U$  statistical test revealed significant generational policy preference differences in equal pay, income disparity, electing women, and experience of discrimination ( $p > .005$ ). Binomial logistic regression did not find generation to be a predictor of candidate support ( $p < .005$ ). These results suggest that policy is viewed differently between generations, but generation is not a predictor of vote choice. Implications for positive social change stemming from this study include recommendations to political campaigns and party platforms to design social policies to advance gender economic equality targeting wages and organizational workplace discrimination. Following this recommendation may increase opportunities for women in elected office.

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## Dedication

I honor my grandmothers who have gone before me, and my mother who has made the way easier with her strength and sacrifice. My daughter, who has shown me all her life the power of unconditional love and what feminism really is, I dedicate this dissertation to you.

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## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	v
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background.....	2
Problem Statement.....	4
Purpose of the Study .....	5
Research Questions and Hypotheses .....	5
Research Question 1 .....	6
Research Question 2 .....	7
Theoretical Foundation for the Study .....	7
Nature of the Study .....	9
Definition of Terms.....	11
Assumptions.....	11
Scope and Delimitations .....	12
Limitations .....	14
Significance.....	15
Implications for Social Change.....	16
Summary .....	18
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	19
Introduction.....	19
Literature Search Strategy.....	22
Theoretical Foundation .....	24



Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts.....	27
Rationale for the Choice of Liberal Feminist Theory.....	31
Gender, Millennials, and Policy.....	35
Gender Roles.....	36
Millennials and Gender.....	37
Feminist Identity .....	39
Political Leadership and Representation.....	40
Policy .....	41
Gender and Executive Political Leadership.....	44
Summary and Conclusions .....	44
Chapter 3: Research Methods .....	46
Introduction.....	46
Research Design and Rationale .....	47
Secondary Data .....	51
Research Methods.....	55
Research Questions and Hypotheses .....	55
Research Question 1 .....	55
Research Question 2 .....	57
Operationalization of Variables .....	57
Independent Variables for Research Questions 1 and 2 .....	59
Dependent Variables for Research Question 1 .....	59
Dependent Variables for Research Question 2 .....	60

Covariates for Research Question 2.....	60
Population and Sample .....	60
Data Collection Procedures.....	62
Data Analysis Plan.....	62
Threats to Validity .....	65
Ethical Procedures .....	66
Summary and Conclusion.....	66
Chapter 4: Results.....	68
Introduction.....	68
Data Collection .....	68
Descriptive Statistics.....	70
Assumption Testing for RQ 1 .....	73
Assumption Testing for RQ 2.....	74
Results for RQ 1.....	75
Hypothesis 1 (Equal Pay).....	76
Hypothesis 2 (Health Care).....	76
Hypothesis 3 (Income Disparity).....	76
Hypothesis 4 (Electing Women).....	77
Hypothesis 5 (Discrimination).....	77
Hypothesis 6 (Feminist Evaluation).....	78
Results for RQ 2.....	79
Hypothesis 7 (Vote Choice).....	80

Summary .....	81
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations .....	84
Introduction.....	84
Interpretation of the Findings.....	85
Limitations of the Study.....	92
Recommendations.....	93
Implications.....	95
Conclusion .....	99
References.....	101
Appendix A: ICPSR Terms of Use.....	119
Appendix: Study Number 36824 (ANES 2016 Time Series Study).....	121

## List of Tables

Table 1. Values and Categories of Variables and Covariates.....	62
Table 2. Subsample Sizes .....	72
Table 3. Descriptive Statistics RQ 1 Variables.....	73
Table 4. Descriptive Statistics RQ 2 Variables.....	74
Table 5. Mean Ranks Social Policy .....	76
Table 6. Mann-Whitney U and Significance of Results .....	81
Table 7. Binominal Logistic Regression Predicting Vote Choice .....	83

## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The 2016 presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton intersected traditional U.S. politics with gender. For many, the presidential bid by Clinton was the culmination of social and political advancements made by women, beginning with the right to vote. Women have consistently exercised this civic right in higher numbers than their male counterparts since 1964 (Dittmar, 2014). With 83.8 million women registered to vote in 2016 compared to 73.8 million men (Dittmar, 2014), this gender-specific trend of women participating in politics in greater numbers than men is likely to continue. Despite voting in larger numbers than men, American women are underrepresented by female political leaders, with the United States ranking 99th globally and approximately 23% of the seats in Congress occupied by women (Milligan, 2018).

Along with the influence of women, the millennial generation has the potential to impact future political directions. Population estimates project that millennials at 73 million will surpass the 74.9 million baby boomer generation by 2019, thus becoming America's largest electorate (Fry, 2017). Although millennials will soon represent a larger demographic, only 51% of millennials voted in the 2016 presidential election (Fry, 2017). The political opinions of these emerging groups shed light on women's experiences and possible advocacy for policies to benefit women. Yet, little is known about the differences between these two large generations of women voters and how those differences may be expressed through policy preferences and candidate support. In this study, I explored the opinions and perceptions held by millennial women during the 2016 presidential election and added to the body of knowledge about generational policy

preferences, which could potentially aid in voter behavioral predictions for this generation in future elections. The results of the study might aid in marking the trajectory of support for political platforms and institutions.

In this chapter, I provide a brief background of the research literature, a problem statement guiding the study, and describe the purpose of the study. I present the research questions, hypotheses, and a description of the nature of the study and research methods. The theoretical framework supporting the study is briefly introduced, with a more detailed presentation provided in Chapter 2. The remainder of this chapter contains definitions of terms, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations, which provide further structure for the study. Lastly, the social significance of the study is outlined.

### **Background**

Political studies have focused on the voting profile of specific demographic groups representing the U.S. electorate. Interest in the political participation of diverse groups stems from the benefit that marginalized groups such as women can realize by using politics to create status change (Markovits & Bickford, 2014). Although political gains have occurred, women continue to be underrepresented in U.S. political leadership (Bacchi, 2017; Brode, 2017), limiting understanding of women's experiences in a larger political context. Legislative and policy enactment reflective of citizens' life concerns is provided by descriptive leadership (Mansbridge, 1999). In politics, this type of leadership is significant because politics has been identified as an institutional means for gaining greater equality for women (Markovits & Bickford, 2014; Shames, 2014). Greater equality is realized, in part, upon the election of women because women are more likely

to pursue legislation and policy representing issues of concern to women (McPhail, 2003; Williams & Massaro, 2013). The social result of focused legislative actions and the enactment of policies can directly change the dynamics of unequal gender power (Bacchi, 2017).

Further insight into voter behavior can be realized through generational studies focused on cohort experiences and worldviews. Hancock (2014) compared recent millennial social movements of gun control and immigration policy reform to the political social movements in previous generations, addressing the Vietnam war and race relations. Economic events affecting the markets and limited job opportunities, despite high educational achievement, have been the reality for many millennials. The disappointing experience of institutions not delivering expected results may be reflected in studies that identified millennials' lack of identification with certain institutional establishments or political party ideology (Milkman, 2017; Twenge, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012). A lack of trust in the establishment may erode commitment to social solutions through political participation. Further evidence of millennials' lack of participation was reported by Luecke (2014), who noted that differences in generational participation in politics translated into voting blocs at the polls. However, the authors of these generational studies have not focused on women within specific generations nor on the ways in which lived experiences may have influenced policy preferences. Although much political research has identified the role of gender in voter behavior (Dolan & Lynch, 2014; Philpot, 2018; Sanbonmatsu & Dolan, 2012), little focus has been directed toward millennial women. A study of the voting behaviors of millennial women is

relevant to understanding what substantive political representation means to women, including their generational perspective of U.S. politics.

### **Problem Statement**

Despite social advancements with the constitutional right to vote, the feminist social movement, and women's demographic presence, women continue to be underrepresented in executive political leadership in the United States (Geiger & Kent, 2017). Gender inequality is a complex social phenomenon that continues to impact the equal status of women in the social institutions of education, economics, and politics. Political representation can be a mechanism of institutional equity for women (Markovits & Bickford, 2014; Shames, 2014). Differing views and interests of women in political leadership can change institutional dynamics. The political focus of women is more likely to be legislation and policy that address the life experiences of women (McPhail, 2003; Williams & Massaro, 2013) and is, therefore, substantive representation. Legislation focused on the concerns of women can directly change the dynamics of unequal social power and provide role models for additional women to participate in the political process (Latu, Mast, Lammers, & Bombari, 2013).

However, meaningful political responsiveness through legislation and policy development must be informed by the electorate. Social causes of justice and equality were championed by feminists of the baby boomer generation during the 1960s and 1970s (Evans, 2016). Awareness of social equity and political views by women of the millennial generation are not fully understood. Research into the political motivation of the millennial generation has produced conflicting information (Luecke, 2014; Milkman,



2017; Shea, 2015; Twenge et al., 2012). More specifically, political motivation for millennial women and their candidate evaluations are not known. Generational differences in gender attitudes, framed by social policy preferences and candidate support, was explored in this study by applying a quantitative method. Focusing on this demographic might close a gap in the literature regarding political opinions and perceptions of millennial women.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative cross-sectional study was to determine the influence of generation on the policy preferences and voter behavior of millennial and baby boomer women voters. To study generational policy preferences, the following variables were used: generation, as the independent variable; and, the dependent variables of (a) equal pay, (b) health care, (c) income disparity, (d) election of women, (e) discrimination, and (f) evaluation of feminism. To predict voter behavior, the following variables were used: generation, as the independent variable; and, candidate choice as the dependent variable. Covariates were education, race, and political party.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine if there was a difference between the policy preferences of millennial women and those of baby boomer women, which may predict voting behavior. Two research questions and seven hypotheses were used to guide the study.

**Research Question 1**

How are policy preferences of millennial women (aged 20–35 years) different from those of baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) who participated in the 2016 presidential election?

(H<sub>0</sub> 1A): There will be no difference in the policy views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women regarding equal pay for women.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1A): A difference exists in the policy views held by millennial women and those held baby boomer women regarding equal pay for women.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1B): There will be no difference in the policy views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women regarding accessibility to health care.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1B): A difference exists in the policy views held by millennial women and those held by baby boomer women regarding accessibility to health care.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1C): There will be no difference in the policy views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women with respect to how they judge income disparity policy.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1C): A difference exists in how millennial women and baby boomer women judge income disparity policy.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1D): There will be no difference in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify the need to elect women to political office.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1D): A difference exists in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify the need to elect women to political office.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1E): There will be no difference in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify discrimination against women in the United States.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1E): A difference exists in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify discrimination against women in the United States.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1F): There will be no difference in millennial women's and baby boomer women's evaluation of feminists.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1F): A difference exists in millennial women's and baby boomer women's evaluation of feminists.

## **Research Question 2**

How did millennial women (aged 20–35 years) and baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) differ in their presidential voter choice in 2016?

(H<sub>0</sub> 2G): There will be no difference in the likelihood that millennial women and baby boomer women voted for Hillary Clinton, when controlling for income, race, education, and political party.

(H<sub>a</sub> 2G): A difference exists in the likelihood that millennial women and baby boomer women voted for Hillary Clinton, when controlling for income, race, education, and political party.

## **Theoretical Foundation for the Study**

The theoretical foundation for the study was based on Jaggar's (1983) liberal feminist theory. The feminist approach seeks to understand institutionalized unequal gender power. Building upon concepts of feminism, which address oppression and marginalization of people (Asenbaum, 2019; Burns & Gallagher, 2010), liberal feminist theory acknowledges the function of social institutions in framing how women are represented and how cultural expectations result (Beran, 2012). The organization of

society by public institutions both influences and reinforces gender roles. Participatory democracy does not equally benefit women due to institutional design (Mansbridge, 1999; Phillips, 1992). The liberal feminist theory provides a systems approach to understanding the difference in the impact upon and experiences of women by “institutionalized” social systems and agencies.

The unique perspective of women in politics is ignored by political theory (Okin, 1979). However, through the application of liberal feminist theory in this study to research questions about policy preferences, voter behavior, and representation of women in the political institution, the unique perspectives of women were acknowledged. Power asymmetries along identity categories such as race, class, and gender differentiate democratic ideals of inclusion by marginalized groups (Asenbaum, 2019). The empowered space of political representation, or politics of presence (Mansbridge, 1999; Phillips, 1992), for women can be informed by researchers who explore women’s perceptions of equal rights and equal social status. Gender-based identity discrimination facilitated by institutional practices and policies (Boyle & Meyer, 2018) fail to consider the experience of the everyday-life dynamics of work, family, and politics of women. Liberal feminist theory offers insights into equal rights and social status with the deeper questioning of power and cultural sentiments of gender, shaped and perpetuated through institutions like politics.

Liberal feminist theory offers an understanding of politics through a gendered lens and allows for the exploration of the issue of equality for women within the institution. The theory enabled me to frame the research questions of social policy

preferences and political representation from a feminist standpoint. The perspective of liberal feminist theory acknowledges women's views as unique due to the awareness of a marginalized social status (Mansbridge, 1999; Okin, 1979; Phillips, 1992). Inclusion of opinions and perceptions of women's civic experience contributes knowledge toward working within the political system to effect change (York & Bell, 2014). The viewing of U.S. politics through a liberal feminist lens justified the focus of the study on women voters and the research approach of gendered questions about social policy preferences and perceptions of representation. Recognizing gender makes a difference in political representation (Anderson, Lewis, & Baird, 2011; Mendelberg, Karpowitz, & Oliphant, 2014; Wittmer & Bouché, 2013). This study builds upon previous studies by analyzing women's opinions and perceptions of social policy, addressing equal pay, health care concerns, issues of discrimination, and opinions on political representation. Liberal feminist theory provides a framework for evaluating questions of policy preferences of women as an indicator of the responsiveness of the political system, making political solutions viable and publicly recognizable (Lombardo, Meier, & Verloo, 2017).

### **Nature of the Study**

Studies on voter behavior in the social sciences, in which the opinions and perceptions of citizens are assessed, often uses cross-sectional designs to provide survey data (Brady, 2000). To answer the research questions in this study, a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design and the use of secondary data were chosen to test the hypotheses associated with Research Question 1 regarding differences in policy preferences between millennial women (aged 20–35 years) and baby boomer women

(aged 52–70 years). The independent variable *generation* represented these two age cohorts. The composite of gender and social-issues-related policy formed the dependent variables representing the following six categories: (a) gender equity in pay, (b) health care, (c) income disparity, (d) representative leadership, (e) discrimination, and (f) evaluation of feminism and candidate support. The goal of the statistical analysis was to find the best fitting model to describe the relationship between the variables. The question of differences between generations was best answered with a Mann-Whitney *U* statistical test (Laerd Statistics, 2015b).

Research Question 2 referred to how millennial women (aged 20–35 years) and baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) differed in their presidential vote choice in 2016. The independent variable *generation* and the outcome variable *candidate support* are binary or dichotomous, and the best fit was provided with a binominal logistic regression analysis (Hosmer, Lemeshaw, & Sturdivant, 2013). The covariates associated with Research Question 2 were education, race, and political party, which were controlled for because they were thought to impact candidate choice.

The most suitable accessible data from the 2016 presidential election was obtained from the American National Election Studies (ANES) 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix). The ANES database contained a large cross-sectional representative sample of voters. A snapshot in time of social occurrences was provided by a cross-sectional survey design (Frankfort-Nachmias, Nachmias, & DeWaard, 2015; Hall, 2009). These data were repurposed to conduct the analysis of the relationship between the generational cohorts of women voters (i.e., millennials and baby

boomers), policy preferences, and voter behavior. Repurposing of secondary data required a more robust statistical technique for answering the different research questions (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). Election outcomes provided with the use of secondary data sets was an acceptable use of data to answer questions of targeted group behavior, and to which statistical tests can be applied to measure differences between groups (Field, 2015). This approach is particularly well-suited for election response studies of voter attitudes (Blair, 2017; Shelley & Hitt, 2017).

### **Definition of Terms**

*Baby boomers:* The generational demographic cohort born between 1946 and 1964 and aged 52 to 70 years in 2016 (Fry, 2018).

*Millennials:* The generational demographic cohort born between 1981 and 1996 and aged 20 to 35 years in 2016 (Fry, 2018).

### **Assumptions**

In order for outcomes of the study to be objective and measurable, assumptions applied to the data as a consequence of the research design must be met (Kraska-Miller, 2014). The first assumption made in this study was that, due to the nature of secondary data, the data set is free of error, and is complete and accurate. The purpose of the ANES 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) was to collect data of citizen perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes surrounding the 2016 presidential election for research purposes. These citizen opinion surveys have been conducted by ANES since the 1940s (ANES, 2018). All interviews were conducted by paid interviewers who had gone through training conducted by ANES. Because the data set was secondary in

nature, its accuracy could not be verified. However, given the reputation of ANES, the number of years ANES has been conducting public opinion surveys for research purposes, and the scholarly reputation of ANES, it was assumed that the data were free of systemic and processing errors. The second assumption pertained to the survey responses. It was assumed that the respondents answered truthfully, understood the questions, and responded in a way that most accurately reflected their opinions and perceptions at that particular point in time. Going back to authenticate the participants' responses was not an option.

In order to overcome the constraints of time and expense and to provide access to a repeated cross-sectional data set collected at a specific point in time I used secondary data. The ANES 2016 Survey Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) was conducted with pre- and post-election surveys and with a specific focus on voter behavior. In addition, the detailed survey data on gender-related policy and voter behavior during the 2016 presidential election provided data specific to the research questions of female millennial and baby boomer policy preferences and candidate support during the 2016 presidential election.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The focus of this study on the 2016 presidential election was due to the significance of gender in this election with the first woman candidate from a major political party. The election provided an opportunity to investigate the opinions and perceptions of women who participated as voters in the election. Liberal feminist theory (Jaggar, 1983) provided the framework to explore political orientation and institutional



practices (see Hague, 2016; Hays, 2011) and to consider the dynamics of gender as it relates to policy (see Bacchi, 2017; Burns & Gallagher, 2010; Dickes & Crouch, 2015) and political representation (see Boyle & Meyer, 2018; Dolan & Lynch, 2014). The generational choice was predicated on the large numbers of both baby boomers and millennials represented in current U.S. political demographics. Women—particularly millennial women—have been underrepresented in research. A study of these two groups of women with respect to the 2016 presidential election might add to the body of knowledge on voter behavior and potential prediction of voter choice.

Liberal feminist theory was selected to guide the focus of the study toward political institutions and the voting experiences of women. Alternative theoretical approaches were considered early in the research process. Initially, questions of gender roles were explored by applying social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). Feminist theory (Phillips, 1992) was also considered. However, these theories did not align with the research question regarding policy and political representation within existing political institutions. The liberal feminist theory (Jaggar, 1983) provided a theoretical framework for aligning this research question with women's life experiences as a group. This gender perspective extended the investigation into elimination of institutional systems and processes that perpetuate gender inequality by intersecting the feminist goal of achieving gender equity through the liberal feminist approach of doing so through institutional change.

The scope of the study covers the post-2016 presidential election period, specifically January 7 and January 8, 2017, when the surveys from the ANES 2016

Survey Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) were completed. The time frame was appropriate because an historic election had just taken place and all participants had voted in the election and provided opinions on political representation through policy preferences and candidate support. The delimitation of the study design to the 2016 presidential election time frame limits generalizability of the findings. Although the findings of this study are not generalizable to public opinion on policy and voter choice of the general public, they might be generalizable to similar populations.

### **Limitations**

Limitations of the study design may impact the validity of the findings by limiting the generalizability of the results (Kraska-Miller, 2014). The results of this study are limited by the use of secondary data. Although I assumed that the original data were free of systemic and processing errors, its accuracy could not be verified. A further limitation to the generalizability of findings is due to the population of interest in the study. More specifically, the research questions limited the population to women. The research question regarding generational impact further limited the population to two generational cohorts: millennials (aged 20–35 years) and baby boomers (aged 52–70 years). I addressed threats to validity regarding selection of participants by randomly selecting participants from the original data source.

Researcher bias may have limited the study based upon social learning guided by my gender role and societal expectations. Individual experiences of voting and candidate support in political processes had the potential to bias my perceptions about the concepts

explored in the study. To eliminate personal bias, I used robust statistical techniques; namely, the Mann-Whitney *U* analysis and binomial logistic regression.

### **Significance**

The findings of this study contribute to the body of knowledge regarding voter behavior in three ways: (a) women's perceptions of their prescribed roles, (b) perceptions of their social positions, and (c) perceptions of social policy. Framed by liberal feminist theory, the foundation of this study was built upon the findings of previous studies that highlighted the significance of gender in voter behavior and outcomes in candidate selection (see Bell & Kaufmann, 2015; Boyle & Meyer, 2018). However, although researchers of previous studies focused on gender roles, they did not use a feminist perspective to explore prescribed roles. In this study, I analyzed women's perceptions of social position, framed by social policy, and their views of women as political representatives through voter choice in the 2016 presidential election. I also addressed women's preferences regarding social policy (see Philpot, 2018), particularly policy of social equality and gender discrimination from a gender perspective. In addition, by addressing conflicting research on millennials' political and civic attitudes and perceptions (see Matto & Martin, 2011; Milkman, 2017; Shea, 2015; Twenge et al., 2012), gender and generational cohorts were intersected in this study. The findings of my study highlight the dynamics of gender in understanding millennials and their potential voting behavior in the future.

The results of this study may be significant for policy writers because they offer gender-based empirical findings to inform social policy. Policy acquainted with life

experiences of women is reflective of a world organized around gender (McPhail, 2003). Socialization of women into gender roles contributes to inequality in numerous institutions. Economic role limitations and marginalization of labor (Donnelly et al., 2016; Evans, 2016; Littleton, 1987; Markovits & Bickford, 2014) impact monetary status and social power. Political perceptions of female roles and traits bias institutional processes (Lawless, 2011; Loke, Bachmann, & Harp, 2017) and impact political participation and leadership opportunities (Dolan & Lynch, 2014; Lawless, 2015). Gender-informed policy can challenge social powers (Dicke & Crouch, 2015; Karpowitz & Mendelberg, 2014; Lombardo et al., 2017) and provide an institutional pathway to greater equality for women and other marginalized groups. Understanding the nature of women's experiences of social institutions and their specific concerns can lead to tangible improvements in politically responsive policies.

### **Implications for Social Change**

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of generation on the policy preferences and voter behavior of millennial and baby boomer women voters with the hope that findings will be applied to existing political institutions in a meaningful way. The value of the findings will be determined at the institutional and organizational level where existing structures and processes are influenced and informed in ways that result in changed policies (see Kraska-Miller, 2014). The results of this study provide information about women's experiences of politics from a gender perspective, which may inform political leaders, policymakers, political party platform design, and organizations that recruit women to run for office. The findings of this study might lead to further

understanding of the preference for gender-equity policy and its potential influence on support for female political representatives, whose leadership may be seen as more descriptive of women.

The findings of my study of millennial women's political behaviors help to bridge the gap in understanding where generational social ideals and gender intersect and influence voter outcomes. The inclusion of women's perspectives in the policy-making process helps to eliminate practices that produce inequality (Lombardo et al., 2017) and institutional processes that perpetuate inequality (Markovits & Bickford, 2014). Therefore, the findings of this study might help in the conceptualization of multidimensional political consciousness in relation to citizens who experience the political institution differently due to social inequalities.

Responding to different voter preferences with corresponding legislative and policy development provides greater political representation at the institutional level and can help address gender inequality in other social systems such as education and economics (Keremidchieva, 2012). Through inclusion of diverse populations engaged in the political process, gender-informed policy can eliminate practices that contribute to large-scale social problems (Matto & Martin, 2011; Shames, 2014). Increased understanding of the political consciousness of women, expressed through policy preferences and candidate support, informs inclusive policy as a mechanism that contributes to positive social change at the institutional level and impacts the social positioning of women.

## Summary

The 2016 presidential election with the first woman running as a major-party candidate introduced to the U.S. the notion of women as political leaders. In combination with the voting block of women, the emerging millennial cohort points to potential continued trends in voting outcomes influenced by the vote of women in general and millennial women in particular. Millennials had underperformed in voter participation in the past, and the influence of policy on millennial women was not fully understood. The liberal feminist theory provided a lens through which to study the unique experiences of women as voters in the political institution by analyzing their opinions and perceptions of policy and preferences in candidate support, thus adding to the body of information on this emerging voting demographic.

Chapter 2 contains a review of pertinent literature related to this study. The theoretical components of liberal feminist theory are discussed, as well as literature related to the key variables of gender, generational cohort, political representation, social equality, and feminism. Examples of previous studies of a similar nature and interest are presented, and justification is provided for the variables selected.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

Gender equality in positions of power and decision making has yet to occur in the United States. Despite social advancements with the constitutional right to vote, the feminist social movement, and women's demographic presence, women continue to be underrepresented in executive political leadership (Dittmar, 2014). The political underrepresentation of women has continued to affect a new generation of American women, the millennials, with the United States falling behind other democratic countries in the number of women in political leadership positions (Brechenmacher, 2018). The lack of women in executive positions with legislative or decision-making power impacts the status of women in other social institutions such as education, economics, and labor markets, due to the laws that continue to govern these institutions.

Policy developed through meaningful engagement by political leaders can provide representation for women. When policy is targeted toward women's issues, institutions provide greater equality for women (Markovits & Bickford, 2014). When the legislative body creates policy that is focused on actual concerns of women, a certain political climate is created, as identified by Shame (2014), in which politics have personal meaning for women. A cultural climate more inclusive of women occurs when an institution's policies and procedures are responsive to women's needs. Societal inequities can be addressed through the creation of laws and the implementation of policy. Female leaders more often develop policy and change laws to address social inequalities that impact women disproportionately negatively (McPhail, 2003; Schmid, 2013; Williams &

Massaro, 2013). Awareness of continued social inequalities and the role of policy in creating institutional equity for women may attract a new generation of women, the millennials. The level of female support within this emerging demographic for women political leaders may be influenced through identification of gender equity policy. Policy reflective of the life experiences of women and initiated by female political candidates provides representation for women.

Increased political leadership by women impacts policy, but policy effectiveness is tied to the articulation of the issue addressed by the policy (Burns & Gallagher, 2010; Lombardo et al., 2017). Framing issues as a social community problem instead of a gender-specific issue can expand legislative resource support (Wittmer & Bouché, 2013). Regardless of political party affiliation, female legislatures are more likely to pursue legislation and policy pursuit of women's concerns (Dickes & Crouch, 2015; Kousser & Phillips, 2012). Policy can change the dynamics of unequal gender power through institutional mandates.

Millennials were projected to surpass the baby boomer population by 2019 (Fry, 2018). The voting behavior of this large cohort will impact politics in the United States. The social movement by activists of the baby boomer generation of the 1960s and 1970s motivated feminist social causes of justice and equality (Evans, 2016). Millennials' attitudes toward civic engagement and community service do not equal the social-change focus of the baby boomers of the 1960s and 1970s. A focus on extrinsic values of status and outward individual achievement have been identified as values of the millennials (Twenge, Campbell, Huffman, & Lance, 2010). This focus on individual success, away



from civic engagement, was also supported by trends of political institutional distrust by millennials (Twenge et al., 2012). Millennials have expressed a political ideology that is more independent or conservative than democratic (Twenge, Honeycutt, Prislin, & Sherman, 2016), indicating further movement away from participation in politics to address social issues through government institutions (Shea, 2015). These results may be more reflective of the generational experience of digital communication rather than less community participation (Bode, 2017). The extent and motivation for future participation of millennial women in politics is not fully known. Research into the political motivation of the millennial generation can provide insight into future participation.

The political views of millennials are a byproduct of their culture. Like previous generations' world views, those of the millennial cohort are molded by experiencing the cultural events of their time (Coomes, 2004; Milkman, 2017). Trends of conservative ideology of millennials may be the acceptance of a more traditional view of women's roles in their private lives in the home (Donnelly et al., 2016) and in the world of work (Worth, 2016). These gendered attitudes may impact acceptance of women in new positions of power in the public sphere and explain the lack of millennial support for a female candidate in the 2016 presidential election (Blair, 2017; Shelley & Hitt, 2016). Opinions of what effective political representation looks like will evolve as social constructs for women change. Exposure to gender inequality and women participating in executive leadership roles may change millennial women's expectations of acceptable gender roles in society. Policy making by women, articulating these social issues, may provide millennial women with political solutions (Lombardo et al., 2017) that are

perceived as a more meaningful, genuine response to their unique lived experiences (Keremidchieva, 2012; Lewis & Marine, 2015; Mansbridge, 1999). The purpose of this study was to explore millennial women's voting behaviors and social policy preferences compared to those of baby boomer women voters.

This chapter is organized into major sections that provide a background for the study and concludes with a review of key variables used in the study. A review of the theoretical foundation begins with a general discussion of feminist theory and is followed by a detailed analysis of liberal feminist theory as applied to U.S. political processes and institutions. A brief history of the feminist social movement in response to gender inequality is outlined, leading to the current response by a new cohort, millennial women. The reviewed literature is based on research associated with gender, women in political leadership, millennials' voting behaviors, and policy. This section also includes previous research in which surveys were used to identify policy opinions and the impact of gender and gender experience on voting behavior.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

Multiple areas of study contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the political behavior of millennial women. I searched several electronic databases available through Walden University in the areas of social science research, psychology, education, and business. Some of the early theoretical work was purchased due to its unavailability online. Databases included Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost, Dissertations and Theses, Political Science Complete, ProQuest, Science Direct, and Taylor and Francis

Online. I also used Google Scholar to provide initial findings to use for searching the databases.

Most of the literature search took place between October 2017 and January 2018.

I used the following search terms individually and in combination:

*gender/politics/millennials, women/leadership, executive leadership/women, social power, feminism, liberal feminist theory, feminism/ millennial, gender/equality, social issues/millennials, civic participation of millennials, citizenship, social institutions, gender differences/equality, representative government, policy and representation, generational/cohort, voter/gender, and voter/choice/gender* Known political theorists

were researched, as well as recognized pioneers who had studied this topic. Relevant researchers included Jaggar (1983), Okin (1979), and Mansbridge (1999). Earlier works were cited if they were foundational in nature, but the bulk of the reviewed literature had been published since 2011.

To address the lack of research on millennial women's voting behaviors and policy orientation, research was included on the work experiences of millennial women to identify social issues of concern. Research on millennials' political-participation trends and 2016 presidential election voting statistics were used to gather cohort political characteristics. Lastly, feminist theory and liberal feminist theory (see Jaggar, 1983) were applied to the study to frame the institutional characteristics of power distribution based on gender themes across generations.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

I applied the liberal feminist theory (see Jaggar, 1983) to explore the voting behaviors of millennial women. Feminism was originally identified as a social movement with the goal of achieving equality and inclusion of women (Loke et al., 2017) and has been expanded into a formal theoretical study to understand gender disparity and unequal treatment. Feminism and the numerous theories branching from feminist thought do not predict women's voting behavior; instead, feminist theory attempts to explain the impact of social norms built upon binary notions of gender on women as citizens.

Liberal feminist theory draws upon early liberal theory, which challenged the authority of the state and religious institutions to dictate the will and personal identity of the individual. The social dominance of the state, not of men, was challenged by liberal thought. Due to their perceived lack of character and intellect, women were considered by Aristotle to be a separate class and, according to Plato, incapable of equal relationships with men (Okin, 1979). Physical differences between men and women were used to justify labeling women as inferior to men. Because women were not allowed to participate in decision making and governmental processes, the perception of women's intellectual inferiority and lack of problem-solving skills was reinforced (Unger, 2014).

This early understanding of individual rights and characteristics continues to influence modern ideologies of political, educational, religious, and economic institutions and, consequently, women's roles within them. Social roles of gender are perpetuated by these social institutions within a male-dominated culture (Littleton, 1987) and reinforced through laws, systems, and processes that add to gender subordination (Lorber, 1997),

resulting in everyday struggles for women. Behavior expectations and acceptable social roles become normalized through social institutions. Liberal feminist theory questions the validity of these gender stereotypes and the larger gender system of binary division of culture (Jaggar, 1983), resulting in disadvantaged groups (Lorber, 1997). Social institutions provide the framework for this division and maintain what is considered gender appropriate.

Liberal feminist theory focuses on social structure and policy practices that translate gender appropriateness, as determined by social norms, into discriminatory practices (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011). Informed by women's struggles for equality, liberal feminist theory embraces feminist values and beliefs of equality and the meaning women give to their world. In particular, liberal feminist theory works within existing social institutions to modify processes for equal treatment of women through legal and policy reforms (Beran, 2012), resulting in social institutions that are representative of all citizens.

The research focus in all branches of feminist study is women and their experiences of the world. Liberal feminist theory builds upon this notion by applying women's experiences of social institutions (Hoffman, 2001). Through the study of such real-life experiences, liberal feminist theory can alter institutional processes and promote change in existing power relations and inequalities. Liberal feminist theory, like other feminist theories and approaches, asks questions of populations that were not previously studied (Marrow, Hawking, & Kern, 2013) and approaches the data analysis with a gendered lens to achieve new conceptualizations.

Liberal feminist theory, formalized by Jaggar (1983), focuses primarily on the experience of socially constructed concepts of gender to understand the impact of gender and power as they intersect with other categories of social differences such as class, ethnicity and sexuality. Equality, in terms of a liberal theoretical approach, pertains to government and politics in addition to other institutions and represents change through policy to distribute social power to those who are underrepresented (Markovits & Bickford, 2014).

To consider acceptance of a gendered social order and working within existing social systems and institutions was criticized by radical feminists, who considered all social systems as male dominated and oppressive to women (Hoffman, 1997; Lorber, 1997). Gender, in their view, was an invented social category. This criticism revealed a valid limitation of liberal feminist theory, which presumes the current social structure to be capable of providing equally for all to form a just society and encouraged the idea of working on structured change within the social world (Beran, 2012; Littleton, 1987; Lorber, 1997). Liberal feminist theory focused on policy addressing gender bias, which can obstruct the progress and participation of women. Institutional practices or exclusionary policy can perpetuate gender bias in both the public and private sphere (Hague, 2016). Liberal feminist theory provides the framework to question practices in social institutions that use gender to treat citizens differently, thus distorting social power. Politics as an institution creates legislative actions that are interpreted and implemented through policy. How the political leaders who enact laws and develop policy get elected is of interest to liberal feminist study. The interdisciplinary characteristics of liberal

feminist theory provide an intersection of gender and generational cohort for framing this study of the political attitudes of millennial women and the institutions that shaped those attitudes and inform evolving policy development.

### **Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts**

Following is a review of the literature regarding liberal feminist theory (see Jaggar, 1983) and a description of the concepts used in the current study. I outline previous applications of liberal feminist theory to provide an understanding of how political institutions impact individuals based on their gender. More specifically, I review literature about the political representation of women and what remains unknown about the perceptions of millennial women regarding their candidate evaluations. Variables were chosen to identify motivational factors influencing the voter behaviors of millennial women. The variables included (a) opinions on gender roles, (b) social issues and equality, (c) identification of policy in political representation, and (d) identification of feminist characteristics.

To establish a foundation for the current study, I reviewed literature about the concepts of gender, social roles, representation, policy, and feminism. These concepts were framed in the constructs of liberal feminist theory and were selected to determine their influence on the opinions and voting behaviors of women leading to their candidate selections in the 2016 presidential election. I review from the literature what is known about the voting behaviors of women, methods of study, and what remains unknown about female millennials.

The focus of the study was on the population of millennial women as distinct from women of the baby boomer demographic, born between 1946 and 1964. The Pew Research Center (cited in Geiger & Kent, 2017) identified millennials as those aged 20 to 35 years and born between 1980 and 1996. Millennial women were chosen as the focus for this study in response to a gap in the literature regarding this emerging demographic and their voting behavior.

As a heterogeneous group, women are diverse on many levels. They belong to different races and have varied social, religious, and class backgrounds. Because of this diversity, women may not be viewed as a special group with unique shared issues or life experiences (Ferguson, 2010). Group identity studies of women counter this notion with findings of identity through shared life experiences based on gender. These in-group perceptions appear to transcend differences of social, economic, and racial groups (Brown & Rohlinger, 2016; Stout, Kretschmer, & Ruppner, 2017). The concept of a collective identity provides a world based upon experiences of gender that can be voiced by political representatives who have a diverse group view (Brown & Rohlinger, 2016). Mansbridge (1999) identified this type of group leadership as being “descriptive.” With marginalized population groups like women, political institutional design does not provide proportional legislative descriptive representation of women (Mansbridge, 1999). The argument for the requirement to have numerical representation is supported by research findings that political representation benefits women by providing social legitimacy through institutional policy and mandates addressing barriers to equal access for women (Markovits & Bickford, 2014; Shames, 2014). Descriptive representation



alone was found not to be a guarantee for effective representation (Mansbridge, 1999; Mendelberg et al., 2014; Rudy, 1999). Substantive representation, however, can be realized through meaningful policy development.

The dynamics of unequal social power and political representation may be countered with the election of women as political leaders. Studies have shown that women representatives pursue legislation and policy representative of issues and concerns of women more often than men do (McPhail, 2003; Schmid, 2013; Williams & Massaro, 2013). This type of representation is attending to differences in marginalized populations (Williams & Massaro, 2013) and provides governance that more accurately matches the realities of everyday concerns of differently situated citizens (Dicke & Crouch, 2015) and provides what Mansbridge (1999) identified as substantive representation to address issues that disproportionately affect women as a group.

To further understand women as a body politic, correlations between their social positioning and their political interests can be studied to predict voting behavior. The approach to voter decision research has taken different avenues to uncover correlations. Although previous researchers have not found a direct impact of gender on voter choice (Dolan & Lynch, 2014; Hays, 2011; Sanbonmatsu & Dolan, 2012), gender is complex and holds the societal meaning of what “feminine” and “masculine” look like. Gender role is the assignment of these trait expectations (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011; Fulton, 2014) to socially prescribed compatible occupations. Gender is multidimensional and, although found not to influence voter behavior directly, violation of traits associated with gender may be another area that influences voter decisions.

Voter judgment can be an unexamined criterion for voter support. Bell and Kaufmann (2015) found in their quantitative survey that voter evaluations of candidates were influenced by gender traits. Female candidates were disadvantaged if childless, compared to those who were mothers and, thus, fit cultural and socially ascribed roles associated with women. Even though liberal voters viewed traditional women's roles of being mothers as less compelling, the general election bipartisan process may limit support for female candidates. The political electoral process may still have a negative influence on future legislative representation.

Additional gender factors appear to influence voter decision-making processes. Gender stereotyping was the focus of experimental research on voter choice by Anderson et al. (2011). Results indicated that, without additional candidate or issue information, women will vote for women, which is referred to as the "gender affinity effect." Positions on social issue considered feminine were viewed more positively by men if they were associated with a female candidate, and negatively if associated with a male candidate. These results indicated an impact of gender roles and traits associated with candidates upon social issues and policy interests (Anderson et al., 2011). The current study built upon previous research and analyzed factors of gender equity, gender roles, policy, feminist identity, and political representation and their correlation with candidate evaluations. Insights into attitudes held by millennial women in these areas may help predict future voting choices by this emerging and underresearched cohort.

### **Rationale for the Choice of Liberal Feminist Theory**

Gender is the binary division of humans from which all other differences follow. For the most part, much of the information about the world around us is framed by the notion of gender (Buss, 2015). Liberal feminist theory expands this accepted knowledge of gender by focusing on imposed restrictions delivered through social institutions (Hoffman, 2001; Lorber, 1997). Institutional restrictions imposed based on social meaning subordinate women as a group. According to Jaggar (1983), a presupposition of liberal feminist theory is that the state should pursue social reforms to ensure equal opportunities for women. The study of these social institutions is the focus of research aiming at equal status of women. To identify the interaction of these social institutions, liberal feminist theory frames as the topic of analysis studies of women and their experiences resulting from their treatment by those institutional systems and processes. This adds nuisance to the complexity of gender by considering new information taken from the history, culture, and language intersection that shape the reality of women. Liberal feminist theory can work in conjunction with different methods and concepts, providing a backdrop to accommodate new experiences by focusing on populations that have previously not been considered (Marrow et al., 2013). Liberal feminist theory challenges the notion of gender determining life chances and quality (Jaggar, 1983; Okin, 1979; Unger, 2014) and seeks to create meaningful social power change.

Liberal feminist theory holds the scope of state responsibilities to citizens to include the active protection of individual freedoms by ensuring that government institutions, laws, and conventions provide equal protection (Jaggar, 1983; Okin, 1979).

Studies examining gender bias in social institutions such as politics apply the foundations of liberal philosophy of individual autonomy to pursue social reforms in state institutions of government for equal opportunities for women.

Liberal feminist theory questions how women participate in these institutions, considering the convoluted nature of gender and how it enters into all aspects of life. A more complete understanding of women's voting behavior is informed by a liberal feminist theoretical approach to gender issues. In particular, the research questions of this study with respect to women's participation in political institutions can provide information and lead to a better understanding of future legislative and policy reforms. Gender makes a difference in political representation of interests and issues (Anderson et al., 2011; Mendelberg et al., 2014; Wittmer & Bouché, 2013). Because lived experiences are different for men and women, a theoretical approach focused on the experiences of women will help to guide research questions that aim at exploring the impact gender has on the relationship between women and the social institutions that continue their unequal treatment (Baer, 2010; Jaggar, 1983; Littleton, 1987). Liberal feminist theory also challenges institutional hierarchies by questioning the distribution of social power. Social power is considered the norm by those who hold it, and only when viewed through a gendered lens is the question of equality considered (Anker, 2012; Baer, 2010; Hoffman, 2001). Through an analysis that questions the gender disparity of political systems, liberal feminist theory can help frame concepts of representative government and analyze gender-role impacts and generational considerations of political leadership.

This study is framed by liberal feminist theory to allow for a gendered perspective of voter participation, based on social positioning experiences, political processes, and institutions. A quantitative method has been used to analyze attitudes, political participation, and identification with equality issues. Findings were expected to provide insights into gender influence and generational differences between millennials and baby boomers and their voting behavior. Answering the research question regarding the political perceptions of millennial women required exploring the social power distribution through representative government and the role of substantive politics made possible through policy. The liberal feminist theoretical tenet of inclusiveness was applied in the selection of women for this study with a focus on their perceptions, opinions, and behaviors. Analyzing women's survey responses and their candidate evaluations as voters during the 2016 presidential election focuses the attention on an underrepresented population in professional research. Despite amounting to more than 50% of the electorate, women constitute only 18.5% of elected representatives (Dittmar, 2014). Previous surveys of voter choice focused on gender traits as an influence on candidate evaluation (Bell & Kaufmann, 2015), but not on millennial women's perceptions of gender as an influence on candidate evaluation.

Political representation by women has shown to influence meaningful policy, inclusive of women's interest and social reality (Bacchi, 2017; Dickes & Crouch, 2015; Mansbridge, 1999). Liberal feminist theory challenges institutional structures that perpetuate unequal representation (Jaggar, 1983) and questions the social power

distribution by examining the phenomena of gender norms and gender traits that may disadvantage women.

Previous research on voting attitudes has identified the correlation between gender role expectations, traits, and voting behaviors (Anderson et al., 2011; Bell & Kaufman, 2015; Burns & Gallagher, 2010). Voter judgment could be an unexamined criterion for voter support. Bell and Kaufmann (2015) found, in their quantitative survey, that voter evaluation of candidates was influenced by gender traits. Female candidates were disadvantaged if they were childless, compared to candidates who were mothers and, thus, fit traditional roles associated with females of the species. Even though liberal voters viewed traditional women's roles of being mothers as less compelling, the general bipartisan election process may limit support for female candidates and, thus, predict future legislative representation outcomes.

Additional gender factors have been shown to influence the decision-making processes of voters. Gender stereotyping was the focus of experimental research on voter choice by Anderson et al. (2011). Results indicated that, without additional candidate or issue information, women will vote for women, or follow the gender affinity effect. Positions on social issues that are considered feminine were viewed more positively by men if associated with a female candidate and negatively if associated with a male candidate.

This kind of research has not been applied to millennial women's voting attitudes and the translation of gender role experiences to political interests and choice of political representation. The Pew Research Center (as cited by Fry, 2018) had predicted

millennials would constitute a larger demographic in 2018 than baby boomers. It now appears this has happened and the ability to shape the political landscape of the future is a reality. Greater understanding of the voter choice of millennial women can help inform the growing body of research on gender, politics, and emerging social demographics.

Including the experiences of third-wave activism of millennial women allows evolving feminist responses to shift political and social environments (Cullen & Fischer, 2014; Dean, 2010; Eschle & Maiguashca, 2014) and maintain the tenets of liberal feminist theory of constant evolution. Information framed by a liberal feminist theoretical perspective may counter criticism of millennial women's feminist activism (Lewis & Marine, 2015) and provide insight into the causes for political motivation and future expression. Comparisons with previous generations often rely on narrow media definitions, pitting one generation against another (Loke et al., 2017). A focus on issues such as the ones experienced by millennial women expands the research toward exploring the collective identity (Phipps, 2014). millennial women may have experienced shared challenges of existing institutional barriers.

### **Gender, Millennials, and Policy**

In the following sections I provide a background for the discussion of gender as a binary social feature of distinction, prescribing roles and associated traits when applied to positions of social power such as political leadership. Research literature was reviewed with respect to characteristics of millennials as a cohort that is influenced by culture and the experience of gender, politics, and leadership. Policy is furthermore discussed because research has identified the important role played by policy in the implementation

of laws and the potential impact policy may exercise on voter behavior of millennial women.

### **Gender Roles**

Women are not a solid voting block with shared political views and change agendas. Not supporting a female candidate because she is female just as they are themselves is not explained by descriptive representation (Mansbridge, 1999), but it may be explained by some women's identifying themselves with traditionally protected positions and their acceptance of prescribed gender roles. Current and past divisions of women never supported gender-egalitarian or feminist politics (McCall & Orloff, 2017). This type of gender-based social behavior cannot be fully understood without liberal feminist theory to frame additional questions of gender and political representation of women. The feminist perspective looks through a gendered lens to research and analyze the life experiences of a specific group of citizens who may have been marginalized by their lack of social power (Marrow et al., 2013); they may also not have been represented in previous studies of social institutions.

Evidence of gender identity is found in social roles ascribed to women. The acceptance of more traditional roles for women may impact people's ability to recognize women as potential leaders in nontraditional fields due to gender role expectations. Blair (2017) found instances of ambivalent sexism, meaning that some roles for women were considered acceptable or tolerated because they were nonthreatening to the traditional view of women; they were, therefore, seen in a benevolent way. This was reflected in survey analysis that supported women working outside the home but not in the role of



authority figures (Twenge et al., 2010). Women do break traditional views of gender or prescribed gender roles by asking for political power (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011; Brescoli, 2016; Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Glick & Fiske, 2001). Within the political institution, women seeking leadership and, thus, social power can be the target of hostility (Blair, 2017; Bock, Byrd-Craven, & Burkley, 2017; Mutz, 2018; Ratliff, Redord, Conway, & Smith, 2017). Hostile sexism was found to be the predictor of support for Donald Trump (Ratliff et al., 2017), and one type of prejudice was associated with another, reflective of the value of social dominance, namely, power over other groups such as women.

### **Millennials and Gender**

The voting actions and candidate evaluations of millennials can have an impact on U.S. political outcomes from now on into the future. Earlier qualitative research by O'Toole, Lister, Marsh, Jones, and McDonagh (2003) predicted a lack of participation by millennials in organized politics due to feelings of nonrepresentation and exclusion from mainstream political institutions. Follow-on studies of generations and age cohorts of millennials (those born between 1980 and 1999), conducted by Twenge et al. (2016) identified similar cultural trends of social liberalism and feelings of isolation from mainstream political institutions. Coomes (2004) posited that generations are molded by historical events of economics, social conflict, and politics and in time will shape the dominant culture. The political impact of the millennial generation will become even more influential as its members age and represent a larger portion of the voting population.

As predicted by the Pew Research Center (2018), millennials now represent a larger segment of the population than baby boomers, comprising 73 million compared to 72 million baby boomers. The growing trend toward liberal social thought, yet more conservative political ideology and a distrust of organized politics, may be a response to economic uncertainty (Fry, 2017; Twenge et al., 2010; Twenge et al., 2016). Whatever the causal factor or factors, this liberal ideology has been translated into leanings toward democratic socialism and a distrust for the “establishment” political leaders (Shelley & Hitt, 2017). Results identifying a more nuanced gender theme were extended by Twenge, Carter, and Campbell (2015) and Yu and Lee (2013) by identifying egalitarian views regarding workplace roles but traditional views of gender roles in marriage. These results indicated a gendered socialization influence on millennial women, supporting possible reasons for expressing a different social activism from that of baby boomer feminists.

Some studies have identified a growing lack of political identity with established political parties (Fry, 2017; Twenge et al., 2010; Twenge et al., 2016) but not the correlation to continued gender stereotypes of prescriptive and descriptive roles (Brescoli, 2016; Burgess & Borgida, 1999). Recent studies of millennial women have concentrated on work and career, providing a focus on experiences of continued sexism and a growing awareness of barriers (Ely, Stone, & Ammerman, 2014; Worth, 2016).

These findings of traditional views of women’s social roles in studies of millennials were replicated in research of millennial women and their work experiences. Worth (2016) found that millennial women reported coping and using strategies of traditional stereotypical female behaviors such as downplaying their skills, ignoring

sexist behavior, and taking themselves out of the competition for promotions. Worth surmised that these findings supported the desire to fit in and be liked, or to please. Young women's choice of deferential acceptance of less than equal treatment signals a choice of approval over career. Additional workplace behavior included changing appearances in order to fit the organization's gender stereotypes (Carless & Mizzi, 2015; Epinosa, 2013). These findings suggested adaptive behaviors that ran counter to leadership development in young women. These types of organizational practices perpetuate prescribed gender behavior, previously identified by Burgess and Borgida (1999) as nonconfrontational, warm, and supportive actions that were overall compliant and permissive. These kinds of behaviors become the normative expectation for women and are adopted as desirable traits, to be rewarded with social approval and support. This type of reinforcement runs counter to decision making and authoritative behaviors, required for leadership roles, and further keeps women from political leadership and group-identity awareness.

### **Feminist Identity**

The term *feminist* as a social and collective identity has led to mixed results in studies of women. Millennial women may be resultant to identify personally as feminists (Ogletree, Diaz, & Padila, 2017) and to recognize their experiences as a need for continued political feminist activism (Hancock, 2014; Lewis & Marine, 2015). Other research on social media and political activism found that millennial women were not as politically engaged or informed as their male counterparts (Bode, 2017; Brandzaeg, 2017), but they were more civic minded in response to humanitarian causes (Bode, 2017).

However, as more women run for political office and use social media to communicate policy issues of concern to women (Evans & Clark, 2016), the label *feminist* may become more synonymous with societal values and a progressive political attitude.

### **Political Leadership and Representation**

Although women in leadership positions are believed to help the status of women and increase women's opportunities (Sanberg, 2013), this does not appear to be reflected in some analyses of Secretary Clinton's 2016 presidential election gender-support results. Some women may have seen future opportunities for women to be president and, therefore, not felt compelled to support the first female candidate. Survey results show support of Bernie Sanders over Secretary Clinton in the primary (Shelley & Hitt, 2017). These results are supported by previous research on traditional gender roles. Donnelly et al. (2015) reported findings of gender norms that indicated individual and collective behavior expectations, which supported women working outside the home but not being given greater authority in the household or a more important job. Gender role identity conflicts were echoed in the survey results of Cohn and Caumont (2016) through views of women as capable leaders but held to a higher standard of performance than men and with cultural exclusion from greater leadership roles.

Minorities and socially disadvantaged groups such as women can benefit from effective representation in government systems by addressing institutional disparities. Political representation continues to be based on gender stereotypes that disenfranchise women and limit descriptive representation (Kark, Waismel-Manor, & Shamir, 2012; Lawless, 2011; Mansbridge, 1999). This lack of female representation in political

institutions helps to maintain the subordinate status of women (Bacchi, 2017; Isaac, 2014) and limits the future leadership potential of young girls who aspire to participate in the political process but have no political role models of women (Zaslow & Schoenberg, 2012). Congress is viewed as having a more collaborative leadership style and, therefore, as being more appropriate for female participation, whereas executive positions such as governorships or the presidency are seen as definitely more masculine (Meeks, 2013; Turcotte & Newly, 2015). These executive leadership positions have limited female representation.

The United States has yet to elect a woman to the highest executive political office, or a female president. The office of president holds substantive leadership power and social authority to influence legislative action and national representation (Issac, 2014). Political institutional gender bias (Turcotte & Newly, 2015) measures female leaders by a masculine model of politics and representation (Bacchi, 2017). This model perpetuates gender stereotypes of masculine-preferred characteristics that favor a political system of male dominance and aggression (Ferguson, 2010; Goss, 2012). Meaningful representation requires candidate evaluation by voters that moves beyond current political models.

### **Policy**

Public institutions function as a means to deliver and represent government, laws, and mandates to citizens. Policy functions as an interpretation of administrative laws, which govern the role and function of public institutions (Harrington & Carter, 2015). The writing of effective policy can function to integrate and include different citizen

groups and further the efforts of democracy in governing (Dickes & Crouch, 2015). Organizational policy also reflects those administrative laws and policy interrelations. Studies previously cited have uncovered forgotten sexism in the culture and work policies of organizations (Evans, 2016). Workplace inequities of wage and opportunity identify life struggles, which may connect millennial women to policy identity previously held by young women of the 1960s and 1970s. This life experience of institutional discrimination and policy gaps may help create narratives shared by both younger and older feminists. This shared perspective of needed institutional change may increase political participation and impact millennial trends (Hancock, 2014; Lewis & Marine, 2015). The experience of gender intersecting with institutions and systems adds the narrative of gender role identity as an area of consideration in understanding everyday-life experiences of millennial women and what role policy can play in addressing these shared experiences unique to women.

Policy addressing women's participation in the labor market may help focus millennial women on gendered institutional barriers to their earning potential. Awareness of income disparity and unequal individual pay can evolve attitudes about wealth redistribution (Hendrickson, 2008). Identification with governmental solutions through representation and policy may countermand predictions of millennial nonparticipation (O'Toole et al., 2003; Twenge et al., 2016). Awareness of economic policy focused on correcting an unequal labor market can motivate political engagement and influence candidate selection. Millennial women may turn to politicians seen as more responsive due to their policy identity and issue platform (Campbell, 2016), who offer the means for

correcting issues of organizational practices of described and prescribed gender stereotypes (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011; Glick & Fiske, 2001). These women may vote for political candidates who are frequently seen as pursuing resolution of those issues. Changes to political systems due to social awareness of equity as a desired value can be brought about through policy. Social systems evolve through administrative processes carried in institutions guided by public policy (Harrington & Carter, 2015).

Even if millennials reject the feminist identity label attributed to previous activists, they may identify with issues such as access to health care, abortion, equal pay, and opportunity as salient social issues, resolvable through policy changes as the bridge to their political participation as women. Bacchi (2017) identified the concept of gender use as a “differencing” dynamic regarding policy. Mansbridge (1999) identified this as the “uncrystallized interest” of groups that the right representative leader can understand and reflect through appropriate policy. Gender was determined to be the predictor of effective policy development by governors, reflecting greater concerns for specific issues and policy agendas addressing those gender-related issues (Dickes & Crouch, 2015; Kousser & Phillips, 2012). Expanded insight into millennial voter behavior can be gained by factoring in gender and related socioeconomic issues, which can also further the understanding of millennials as a cohort. Policy was identified by Hill and Tausanovitch (2015) as an area of politics where different groups can come together. Meaningful social change can take place at the institutional level when groups come together to frame multiple concerns in an action for social change (Lombardo et al., 2017).

## **Gender and Executive Political Leadership**

Expectations of what executive leadership should be can be changed by the participation of women in those leadership roles. Executive leadership can change the focus of institutional powers through policy and concentrate on the social injustice of gender disparity (Htun & Weldon, 2010; Lewis & Marine, 2015). Women come to leadership motivated by the desire to make things better, rather than by thirst for power (Schoenberg, Salmond, & Fleshman, 2008). This motivation aids women when facing challenges to descriptive and prescriptive role assignments. The personal impact of making a difference encourages women to participate in existing political processes and overcome institutional barriers (Goss, 2013; Sandberg, 2013; Smith & Huntoon, 2014), as evidenced by the 2016 presidential election. Hillary Clinton was the first female candidate endorsed by a major political party, which drew attention to gender differences in the political process and provided the first real role model of female executive political leadership. The frame of feminist theory allows for analysis through a gendered lens and a discussion of factors of evaluation of a female candidate by women voters.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

A focus on gender highlights the unique experiences of women in leadership, and in the political system in particular, given the culture of male dominance. Clinton is a strong female role model, and her achievement as the first woman to represent a major political party in U.S. politics has already impacted the participation of women in politics by normalizing the idea of women in executive roles. Increased participation of women in response to the election of 2016, starting with worldwide protests on January 21, 2017,



saw more women advocating for legislative and policy issues of human rights and reproductive health. The snowball effect of Clinton's run for the presidency is inspiring other women to run for office and supports research findings that strong female leaders encourage others to emulate them (Latu et al., 2013). Women are more likely to overcome institutional barriers when they have effective role models to imitate.

Liberal feminist theory, focused on institutional inequality, provides the foundation to question factors that contribute to underrepresentation of women in executive political leadership. Gender and related societal expectations of traits and behaviors of role occupancy characteristics explain known social organizations' positioning around the binary category of gender. This aids in understanding the current organizational structure of political institutions with mostly male models of leadership. Studies have identified gender as a factor in voter behavior and how socially prescribed and described gender traits perpetuate a male-dominated political institution (Dolan & Lynch, 2014, 2017). The study provides an additional step by exploring millennial women's perceptions of existing relationships among gender, policy, political representation, and their own social positioning. Extant research has not directly investigated these factors and their correlation with political policy and representation as perceived by millennial women. Different groups express unique policy interests, which impact the groups' perception of the effectiveness of their political representation and the quality of their life (York & Bell, 2014). Policy integration of social issues and the inclusion of groups creates models with which millennial women may identify and which they may support. The correlation of gender identity, as it relates to societal roles, equity

in social institutions, and the impact on candidate evaluation of political leadership, is not known. More research is needed to conceptualize political consciousness in relation to understanding where generational social ideals and gender intersect and influence voter outcome.

Chapter 3 contains the research methods used to answer the research questions posed for this study regarding the relationship between policy preferences of millennial and baby boomer women and their voter behavior. I discuss the use of secondary data from the ANES 2016 Time Series Study (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) to answer the research questions and associated hypotheses, as well as the use of a Mann-Whitney *U* test analysis to identify the differences between millennial and baby boomer women voters regarding their policy preferences. A binomial logistic regression analysis was used to test the relationship between millennial and baby boomer women and the potential predictability of their voter behavior. Potential threats to validity and ethical considerations guiding this study complete the discussion of research methods.

### Chapter 3: Research Methods

#### **Introduction**

With a woman running for president, the 2016 presidential election brought national attention to the institution of politics and government representation with a gendered perception of voter decision-making and candidate support. Political division by gender has been studied in the past; however, attitudes toward policy and voting behaviors of millennial women have not been investigated. The aim of this study was to answer two research questions. Research Question 1 was, “How are policy preferences of

millennial women (aged 20–35 years) different from those of baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) who participated in the 2016 presidential election?” Research Question 2 was, “How did millennial women (aged 20–35 years) and baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) differ in their presidential voter choice in 2016?” I used a quantitative cross-sectional research design for both research questions, using study designs of group differences, prediction, and relationships and applying secondary-data analysis.

In this chapter, the research methods and concepts that supported the data analysis are discussed. The rationale for the study design, the secondary data obtained from the ANES 2016 Time Series Study (ANES, 2018), and supporting methods are discussed with a description of the variables and their measurements. In subsequent sections, characteristics of the population and sample are provided along with a description of the sampling procedures. The survey instrument used in the data collection and how the data were analyzed with the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software are explained. Ethical issues are also addressed at the end of the chapter, followed by a summary and transition to Chapter 4.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine differences in policy preferences and predicting candidate choice of female millennial and baby boomer voters. The first research question was, “How are policy preferences of millennial women (aged 20–35 years) different from those of baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) who participated in the 2016 presidential election?” The independent variable was generation (millennial or baby boomer). The dependent variables were (a) equal pay, (b) health care,

(c) income disparity, (d) women elected, (e) discrimination, and (f) feminist evaluation. The data were analyzed with the use of a Mann-Whitney *U* statistical test to evaluate the differences between the two groups comprising the independent variable. The second research question was, “How did millennial women (aged 20–35 years) and baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) differ in their presidential voter choice in 2016?” Data were analyzed by employing a binomial logistic regression, testing for differences in proportion between the groups to predict their presidential voter choice, and controlling for the covariates of education, income, race, and political party.

To answer both research questions, a secondary data set, the ANES 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) was used. Election outcomes provided by secondary data sets are an accepted data source to answer questions regarding targeted group behavior and can be used in the application of statistical tests to measure differences between groups (Field, 2015). Quantifying the relationship between groups of women voters furthers the evolution of the broader questions of gendered political consciousness and generational perspectives of social policy and voting as a political response. A cross-sectional design accommodates the collection of survey data from a specific group from the larger population during a specific time (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015; Hall, 2009). A snapshot in time of social occurrences is provided by the use of a cross-sectional survey design and is particularly well-suited for election-response studies of voter attitudes (Blair, 2017; Shelley & Hitt, 2017). Cross-sectional survey designs are often applied to survey-based research that documents the voting of targeted populations of interest. Political observational tools such as surveys have been

used to capture attitudes and opinions of citizens since the 1940s (Brady, 2000). Previous researchers who conducted voter-behavior studies analyzed voter survey responses by gender and race to predict political trends (Blair, 2017; Philpot, 2018; Shelley & Hitt, 2017). Conducting statistical analyses on responses from women belonging to different generational cohorts allowed for making comparisons between generations of voters and provided new insights on gender-informed opinions and perceptions, which, in turn, can inform future representative policy.

Qualitative methodological approaches are often applied in the study of social-equity issues that include observations of gender and race. My focus was on the individual experience of the participants to gain new information and a unique perspective by studying a previously underresearched group (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Qualitative designs record such experiences, utilizing data collection methods such as interviews, case studies, and focus groups (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). These qualitative methods reveal themes based on observations and experiences of participants. However, the themes do not establish how gender is related to political behavior or in what ways the themes are statistically representative of the broader population.

The quantitative design allows for a specific statistical model to test the variables of policy preferences and voter support to determine differences among groups beyond the sample studied. The cross-sectional design does not establish causal order, but rather, addresses relationships between variables at specific points in time in natural settings (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). This is particularly helpful in analyzing influences of institutions like politics, involving the cultural realities of various citizens groups. Cross-

sectional designs eliminate problems associated with longitudinal studies such as participants' conditioned responses or attrition from the study (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). Although longitudinal studies can provide large quantities of data focused on the same variables, which can show cause and effect, the focus of this study was to determine differences between generations on policy and prediction of voter behavior by measuring public opinions surrounding a particular point in time—the 2016 presidential election. The quantitative approach chosen for this study was consistent with similar research of voter behavior through group comparison (Crowley, 2018; Philpot, 2018; Shelley & Hitt, 2017).

The comparison of opinions held by millennial and baby boomer women regarding policy effectiveness, gender issues, and candidate abilities could be studied with other designs as well. More specifically, a mixed-methods approach would allow the researcher to collect data using both qualitative and quantitative methods with a detailed, opened-ended questionnaire. The mixed-methods approach provides rich data on group life experiences and could capture the experiences of women in leadership positions, but time constraints rendered this approach unusable because it would require two distinct research methods for completion. Observations of voter behaviors can also be gathered with data from election surveys. A cross-sectional design provides a representative data sample from a specific point in time (Hall, 2009; Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007). Although the design selected did not provide data to support causation claims of voter opinions, it provided data to establish a relationship between variables (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). By concentrating on recorded voting differences between the

generational groups of millennials and baby boomers, the results of this study add to the knowledge and understanding of an emerging demographic's political opinions and the impact of gender on predicting future political environments.

### **Secondary Data**

Secondary data was chosen for this study to overcome the constraints of time and expense and provided access to repeated cross-sectional data collections at different points in time. Several electronic databases were evaluated. The databases included the PEW Research Center's American Trends Panel data development (Fry, 2018), the National Opinion Research Center's (NORC) General Social Survey (NORC, 2017), and the ANES 2016 Time Series Study (ANES, 2018; see Appendix). These databases provided a large amount of social data compiled over the years with continuous trusted social science techniques. A challenge in using secondary data was the differences in the focus of the survey questions. For example, the Pew Research Center did not ask gender-related questions connected to policy. Likewise, although the NORC General Social Survey contained some gender-policy variables under study, these variables were not reflected in the survey questions or investigated in relation to voter behavior.

All but one of the data sources was abandoned—the ANES 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (see Appendix)—with its focus on voter behavior and gender-related policy issues. The ANES had been used consistently since the 1940s to collect voter behavior data related to citizen perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes (ANES, 2018). The foremost reason for selecting the ANES 2016 data set was the amount and detail of the data contained in the survey questions about gender-related policy by age and gender,

as well as the follow-up questions addressing voter behavior during the 2016 presidential election.

Closely related to the current study is research conducted by Philpot (2018), in which gender and race were compared to policy preferences and voter choice. The use of voter survey data provides further opinion consistency with previous research on voter behavior (Crowley, 2018; Dolan & Lynch, 2014, 2016; Shelley & Hitt, 2017). I incorporated additional areas of gender and policy into my study, building upon previously published works on gender by Philpot (2018), who used ANES secondary data to identify categories of policy preferences in group perceptions of social power and the role of government responsibility for the welfare of citizens, representative democracy, and feminist identity. Thus, in order to obtain credible, reliable, and replicable results, the ANES 2016 Time Series Study was the best choice of a data set for this study.

Every study has resource constraints. With the approach of a quantitative cross-sectional design, obstacles include reliable data collection and time. The 2016 presidential election was an historic event and it was important to gather public-opinion data surrounding that event. The most suitable accessible data for that period of time was contained in the ANES 2016 Time Series Study (ANES, 2018; see Appendix). The data were repurposed for conducting the analysis of the relationship between two generational groups of women voters (millennials and baby boomers) and assess their policy preferences and voter behaviors. The use of secondary data collected with a different focus—albeit providing reliable data—requires applying more robust statistical techniques for a different set of research questions (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). The



Mann-Whitney  $U$  statistical test was employed to address Research Question 1 due to the use of ordinal dependent variables (see Laerd Statistics, 2015b) to measure differences between generational groups in policy preferences of equal pay, health care, income disparity, political representation, discrimination, and feminist evaluation. Research Question 2 was addressed with the use of a binomial logistic regression test, which allowed for the relationship to be modelled between a nominal independent variable and a single dependent dichotomous variable; voter choice. (see Laerd Statistics, 2015a).

The main advantage of using secondary data is the amount of time and resources conserved. The ANES data can be accessed online and downloaded free of charge. In addition, the data are significant as they were collected during a unique period of time in U.S. politics when the first woman endorsed by a major political party was running for President of the United States. Therefore, the timing of the opinions and perceptions of voters concerning policy and government representation were particularly relevant for this study. An additional positive aspect of using the ANES data set was the shared membership with Walden University through the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). Through the Walden university membership, the ICPSR granted permission to access the restricted data providing age and gender of respondents for data collection and providing answers to the first research question regarding cohorts. Addressing this research question expanded the application of the secondary data by exploring the relationship between policy preferences and age, thus providing greater depth to the understanding of political attitudes and voter perceptions of women by age cohort.

There are both advantages and disadvantages with using secondary data. The use of original instruments of measurement may offer new contributions not realized with data used before. It could be argued that secondary data are redundant and do not lead to new information and may, therefore, lead to less rigorous research results (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Formulating the research questions prior to exploring data sources circumvented problems associated with allowing the data to formulate or guide the research focus. Also, the use of data from a reputable source within the social science community offered sampling procedures and voter data measurement that reduced threats to validity. These criteria were considered in the selection of the survey data from the ANES 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (see Appendix) and the affiliation with the ICPSR.

However, the use of the ANES data posed problems of approximating the data to answer a different question. To overcome this limitation, repurposing of previously collected data was considered, and the following measures were taken:

1. Constructs for policy preferences were guided by liberal feminist theoretical perspectives of social positioning and power when considering the questions of wage equality, health care, economic opportunity, perceptions of discrimination, political representation, and evaluation of feminism.
2. Categories of policy preferences were closely aligned with categories of ANES survey questions regarding *evaluations of government and politics* (more women elected), *personal experience and outlook* (discrimination), *government policy* (equal pay, health care, income disparity), *feminist*

*thermometer* (feminist evaluation), and *candidate support* (political representation).

### **Research Methods**

I conducted Mann-Whitney  $U$  statistical tests on the hypotheses associated with Research Question 1, regarding differences in policy preferences between millennial women (aged 20–35 years) and baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years). The independent variable, generation, comprised these two age cohorts. The composite of gender and social-issues-related policy formed the dependent variables, represented in six categories: (a) gender equity in pay, (b) health care, (c) income disparity, (d) representative leadership, (e) discrimination, and (f) feminist evaluation. To test the hypothesis associated with Research Question 2, I performed a binomial logistic regression analysis separately to determine differences and possible predictability of candidate selection between millennial and baby boomer voters.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine if a relationship existed between policy preferences of millennial women and baby boomer women and whether their voting behaviors were predictable. Two research questions and seven hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

#### **Research Question 1**

How are policy preferences of millennial women (aged 20–35 years) different from those of baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years), who participated in the 2016 presidential election?

(H<sub>0</sub> 1A): There will be no difference in the policy views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women regarding equal pay for women.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1A): A difference exists in the policy views held by millennial women and those held baby boomer women regarding equal pay for women.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1B): There will be no difference in the policy views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women regarding accessibility to health care.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1B): A difference exists in the policy views held by millennial women and those held by baby boomer women regarding accessibility to health care.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1C): There will be no difference in the views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women with respect to how they judge income disparity policy.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1C): A difference exists in how millennial women and baby boomer women judge income disparity policy.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1D): There will be no difference in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify the need to elect women to political office.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1D): A difference exists in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify the need to elect women to political office.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1E): There will be no difference in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify discrimination against women in the United States.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1E): A difference exists in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify discrimination against women in the United States.

(H<sub>0</sub> 1F): There will be no difference in millennial women's and baby boomer women's evaluations of feminists.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1F): A difference exists in millennial women's and baby boomer women's evaluations of feminists.

### **Research Question 2**

How did millennial women (aged 20–35 years) and baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) differ in their presidential voter choice in 2016?

(H<sub>0</sub> 2G): There will be no difference in the likelihood that millennial women and baby boomer women voted for Hillary Clinton, when controlling for race, education, and political party.

(H<sub>a</sub> 2G): A difference exists in the likelihood that millennial women and baby boomer women voted for Hillary Clinton, when controlling race, education, and political party.

### **Operationalization of Variables**

Selection of the variables for the study involved consideration of alignment to the research questions, social relevance of the topic, and findings from the literature review. The variables chosen are defined in the following sections, based on the Pew Research and U.S. Census Bureau definitions of *generation*, liberal feminist theory concepts, other findings from the literature review, and the ANES 2016 Time Series Study (ANES, 2018). Table 1 provides a listing of question numbers, independent and dependent variables, ANES code survey questions, and measures.

Table 1

*Values and Categories of Variables and Covariates*

Research question 1		
Variables	Scales	Categories
Generation	1 = millennial (born 1981–1996). 0 = baby boomer (born 1946–1964)	Dichotomous
Equal pay	0 = <i>oppose</i> , 1 = <i>neither favor nor oppose</i> 2 = <i>favor</i>	Ordinal
Health care	0 = <i>decrease</i> , 1 = <i>no change</i> , 2 = <i>favor</i>	Ordinal
Income disparity	0 = <i>oppose</i> , 1 = <i>neither favor nor oppose</i> , 2 = <i>favor</i>	Ordinal
Women elected	4 = <i>extremely important</i> , 3 = <i>very important</i> , 2 = <i>moderately important</i> , 1 = <i>a little important</i> , 0 = <i>not at all important</i>	Ordinal
Discrimination	4 = <i>a great deal</i> , 3 = <i>a lot</i> , 2 = <i>a moderate amount</i> , 1 = <i>a little</i> , 0 = <i>none</i>	Ordinal
Feminist evaluation	8 = <i>very warm or favorable</i> , 7 = <i>quite warm</i> , 6 = <i>fairly warm</i> , 5 = <i>a bit more favorable</i> , 4 = <i>no feeling at all</i> , 3 = <i>a bit colder</i> , 2 = <i>fairly cold</i> , 1 = <i>quite cold or unfavorable</i> , 0 = <i>very cold or unfavorable</i>	Ordinal
Voter choice	1 = Hillary Clinton, 0 = Donald Trump	Dichotomous
Research question 2		
Covariates	Scales	Categories
Race	0 = white, 1 = nonwhite	Dichotomous
Education	0 = less than high school, 1 = High school diploma/GED, 2 = some college, 3 = Associate degree, 4 = Bachelor's degree, 5 = Graduate degree	Ordinal
Political party	1 = Identifies as a Democrat, 0 = Does not identify as a Democrat  1 = Identifies as a Republican, 0 = Does not identify as a Republican	Dichotomous

### **Independent Variables for Research Questions 1 and 2**

**Generation.** Millennials (aged 20–35 years, in 2016) were born between 1981 and 1996; they will be a dummy measure and coded as 1. baby boomers (aged 52–70 years, in 2016) were born between 1946 and 1964; they will be a dummy measure and coded as 0. This variable was captured by asking the respondents for the month, day, and year of their birth.

### **Dependent Variables for Research Question 1**

**Equal pay.** This variable was measured by asking respondents: Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose requiring employers to pay women and men the same amount for the same work?

**Health care.** This variable was measured by asking respondents: Do you favor an increase, decrease, or no change in government spending to help people pay for health insurance when they cannot pay for it themselves?

**Income disparity.** This variable was measured by asking respondents: Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the government's trying to reduce the difference in incomes between the richest and poorest households?

**Women elected.** This variable was measured by asking respondents: How important is it that more women be elected to political office?

**Discrimination.** This variable was measured by asking respondents: How much discrimination is there in the United States against women?

**Feminist evaluation.** This variable was measured by asking respondents: How would you rate feminist?

**Dependent Variables for Research Question 2**

**Vote.** This variable was measured by asking respondents: Who did you vote for?

**Covariates for Research Question 2**

**Race.** This variable was identified by asking respondents what they consider is their race.

**Education.** This variable was identified by asking respondents: What is the highest level of schooling you have completed or highest degree you have received?

**Political party.** This variable was identified by asking respondents which political party they identify with.

**Population and Sample**

The population of interest was derived from the research problem. Considering the gap in research on millennial political participation and in particular millennial women's participation, the parameters for the participants were formed by age cohort and gender. The population to be sampled were all eligible women voters in the United States who were between the ages 20 and 35 years or between 52 and 70 years, in 2016. Based on estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, of the total female population of 164,065,884 in 2016, approximately 3,702,353.32 met the age and gender criteria (Milligan, 2018). The inclusion criteria were applied to the accessible population who participated in the ANES 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix).

Of particular interest in the 2016 study was the dual-mode design of both face-to-face interviews and Internet questionnaires conducted during the preelection survey from September 7 to November 7, 2016, and the postelection survey conducted from



November 9, 2016, to January 8, 2017. The research method used in both designs included compiled data from a sample universe of U.S. eligible voters (cross-section) with two independently drawn address-based samples. The face-to-face component of the study was a complex, stratified, multistage cluster sample of addresses in the 48 contiguous states and Washington, DC (DeBell, Amsbary, Meldener, Brock, & Maisel, 2018). The ANES conducted further screening that resulted in the random selection of one person from each household for a total of 1,181 preelection and 1,059 postelection face-to-face interviews (DeBell et al., 2018). The ANES dual-interview mode of the Internet component of the survey was a simple random sample of eligible addresses in the 50 states and Washington, DC. The USPS Computerized Delivery Sequence File (CDSF or DSF) yielded 10,000 addresses from a simple random sampling; it then subsampled 7,800 addresses to which invitations were sent for one member of the household to participate in the Internet survey conducted in two waves: 3,900 in the preelection survey and 2,590 in the postelection survey (DeBell et al., 2018). The sampling frame for the present study drew upon the ANES postelection response rate of 90% for the face-to-face interviews (1,059) and an 84% response rate for the Internet surveys (2,590) (DeBell et al., 2018).

In the present study, postelection face-to-face and survey data of 3,649 responses were further screened by age (20–35 years 52–70 years) and gender (female). The frame of the study impacted the number of possible participants. In order to approximate the number of participants needed to draw meaningful conclusions, a power analysis was needed (Rudestam & Newton, 2015, p. 105). A power analysis was conducted to

determine if the ANES subsample was sufficient to allow generalizing to the population. The power analysis determined that a sample size of 377 would be required to provide a 5% margin of error, with a 95% confidence level (Raosoft, 2004). The anticipated sample size of  $N = 581$  was, thus, sufficient for hypothesis testing and determining statistical significance.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The data for this study were captured from a secondary data source, the ANES 2016 Time Series Survey, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix). Through permission granted by ANES, the data were available online free of charge. Application for access to restricted data from the ANES 2016 Time Series Study was sought through the Walden University Research Center membership. I obtained approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the study and then accessed the restricted data set through ICPSR. The data set was download within a file format and directly uploaded into SPSS for analysis. See Appendix A for a copy of the permission letter.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

SPSS version 25 software was used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses. Because secondary data were used in this study, careful screening and cleaning of the data were applied to avoid any information that could identify respondents, introduce coding or input errors, or omit required data. To ensure that the data had accurate response rates for the purpose of this study, data were screened to verify that data frequencies were within a normal range prior to running the SPSS analysis. In accordance

with Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), missing values were coded as such, and if any case indicated missing data for a particular statistical test, it was dropped.

The research question regarding differences between groups directed the study design to use statistical analysis of two groups independent of one another. The statistical test that measures differences on outcome ordinal variables is the Mann-Whitney *U*. The hypotheses associated with this statistical analysis evaluated differences between the two independent generational groups of women voters on the dependent ordinal variables of policy preferences.

In order to conduct a Mann-Whitney *U* statistical measurement, four assumptions must be met. The first three were met with design aspects of the study: (a) the dependent variables were ordinal, (b) the independent variable was categorical with two groups, and (c) different participants were in each group, or independence of observation (Laerd Statistics, 2015b). The fourth assumption was tested using the SPSS software to determine the distribution of scores to further guide the selection of additional statistical measurements to compare distributions through median or mean ranks (Laerd Statistics, 2015b). As the fourth assumption was met, hypothesis testing could be conducted. Alpha-level testing was used to conclude if each of the null hypotheses had to be either accepted or rejected based on a *p* value of less than .05 ( $p < .05$ ).

The second research question regarding the relationship of generation to prediction of candidate choice guided the analysis. The selection of a binomial logistic regression test was appropriate because the dependent variable (voter choice) was dichotomous. A critical aspect of using the binomial logistic regression test is that of

meeting all seven assumptions of data appropriateness for use of the SPSS (Laerd Statistics, 2015a). The first four assumptions were met with the design of the study; they read as follows: (a) the dependent variables are dichotomous; (b) the independent variable is categorical with two groups; (c) no relationship exists between observations in each category of the dependent variable (candidate voted for), and no relationship exists between the categories of the independent variable (generation); and (d) a minimum of 15 cases are used in each of the two groups (Laerd Statistics, 2015a).

The fifth assumption that had to be met was that a linear relationship exists between the independent variable of generational group and the transformation of the dependent variable of voter choice. A binary logistic regression procedure was used to test for this relationship. An inspection of correlation coefficients to counter data occurrences of multicollinearity (Laerd Statistics, 2015a) was also conducted to verify that the sixth and seventh assumptions were met.

Once it was determined that the data met the assumptions for binomial logistic regression, the hypothesis was tested with the same independent variable (generation) as for Research Question 1. The model included four covariates (political party Democrat or Republican, race, and education) to control for demographic factors that could influence policy and candidate preference (Blair, 2017; Dolan & Lynch, 2017; Dolan & Sanbonmatsu, 2009). Alpha-level testing of  $p > .05$  for each of the null hypotheses was performed.

### **Threats to Validity**

Research results are useful only if the interpretation is accurate and lends itself to future application and replication. To counter possible threats to the internal validity of the study data, a cross-sectional survey design was used. This type of design has been proven to provide trustworthy data through collection and representativeness of the total population (Hall, 2009; Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007), providing generalizable data. The use of secondary data, collected by the ANES 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) further insures internal validity through a survey instrument design based on pilot studies and peer-review processes (DeBell et al., 2018). Threats to internal validity exist through the instrumentation of repurposing of survey questions (Hall, 2009; Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007). To ensure that the measured variables represented the research questions, a more robust statistical measurement was conducted with the use of Mann-Whitney *U* tests and the theoretical framework provided by liberal feminist theory (Jaggar, 1983), applied to policy questions to ensure the questions represented a social reality, opinion, or perception. Internal threats to validity through influences on respondents' answers due to historical events during the election cannot be measured or countered and may have had an impact on the participants' responses. The responses are assumed to be an accurate portrayal of the attitudes and perceptions of the participants at that moment in time.

Threats to external validity also impact the degree to which results can be of importance to the larger population. External threats were minimized with the original study's use of rigorous sampling procedures to ensure random selection of participants,

thus assuring greater representativeness of the population. The dual-mode survey used in both face-to-face interviews and Internet questionnaires was conducted in two waves (pre- and postelection) by ANES-trained interviewers to control for bias (DeBell et al., 2018). To avoid threats to external validity, the application of operationally defined variables, meaningful beyond the study's definition of terms, were to be applied, so that conclusions reached would be guided by a statistical basis for gender interests (Laerd Statistics, 2015b). These threats were controlled for in the study to assure accuracy and generalizability of the findings.

### **Ethical Procedures**

The secondary data were downloaded from the ANES 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix), minimizing ethical concern. The data set contained no restricted data that could lead to inadvertent identification of individuals involved in this study. After IRB approval, the data were downloaded from the ICPSR, secured, and stored password-protected within an individual Dropbox account and the researcher's personal, secure PC. The data are to be stored for 5 years after completion of the study; then, they will be deleted from personal files and destroyed with the use of an overwrite/erase software.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

In this chapter, the research methods chosen for a quantitative study were described. The variables of interest were discussed, and the research questions to be answered with a cross-sectional design were detailed. The population of interest, which included all eligible women voters in the United States who, in 2016, were between the

ages of 20 and 35 years or 52 and 70 years, was described, and the sampling procedures and operationalization of variables were discussed. The required data, drawn from the ANES 2016 Time Series Study (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) data set and repurposed to answer the research questions regarding generational policy preferences and voter support for candidates, were described. A quantitative study design was chosen, using a Mann-Whitney *U* test to analyze Research Question 1 to determine the differences, if any, between generations of voters and their policy preferences. A binomial logistic regression analysis was used to answer Research Question 2 regarding the differences between generations and the potential predictability of candidate support. The covariates race, education, and political identification were controlled for because of their expected effect on voter support. How each variable was measured and presented was detailed in the data analysis plan. Threats to validity and ethical procedures and concerns were also described.

In Chapter 4, a detailed analysis is presented of the statistical tests applied to the secondary data, including specific information regarding data collection and data analysis. Also presented are the results of the study.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine the differences between female millennial and female baby boomer voting behaviors through statistical analysis of secondary data. Two research questions guided the study. The first research question explored how policy preferences of millennial women differed from those of baby boomer women by applying a Mann-Whitney *U* test. The second research question determined the relationship of generation and potential predictability of candidate selection with the use of binominal logistic regression to analyze the voter choice difference between millennial and baby boomer women.

This chapter contains a discussion of data collection procedures and the results of the study. Data procurement and methods of screening and cleaning are outlined, including the recoding of variables for accurate model testing. For clarity, the research questions are restated and hypotheses are outlined to show how they guided the application of descriptive statistics and the analysis used in the study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings and a transition to Chapter 5.

### Data Collection

The source of the secondary data set used in the study was the American National Elections 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix). Data of the ANES 2016 study were obtained from preelection surveys, collected from September 7 to November 7, 2016, and the postelection survey, conducted from November 9, 2016, to January 8, 2017. The ANES 2016 study of voter opinions and perceptions was



repurposed to answer the research questions focused on generational social policy preferences and voter support for presidential candidates in the 2016 election.

Upon approval by the Walden University IRB (Approval #06-17-19-0156334) to retrieve the ANES data from the ICPSR website, the data set was downloaded and imported into SPSS 25 for analysis. Screening of the original data set, containing 1,836 variables, was performed in SPSS; great care was taken to not delete any raw data potentially related to the 12 variables of focus in my study.

The data set contained cases outside the scope of this study. Based on participants who had taken both (pre- and post-ANES 2016 Time Series, Number 36824) survey waves, 3,649 responses were obtained (ANES, 2018; see Appendix). Further screening based on the inclusion criteria *female* and *generation* (millennials and baby boomers, using the criteria of birth years 1981–1996 and 1946–1964, respectively) resulted in a total of 1,111 cases that met all inclusion criteria for this study. The sample for testing each of the hypotheses was lower due to missing data (see Table 2). However, all subsamples drawn from the original data set exceeded the power analysis recommendation of  $n = 377$ , required to provide a 5% margin of error, with a 95% confidence level (see Raosoft, 2004). As a result, subsamples for the hypotheses were determined to be sufficient to generalize to the overall population represented in both groups of generational cohorts. Once all the cases that met requirements had been identified, recoding for the independent and dependent variables (IV, DV) and covariates was conducted.

Table 2

*Subsample Sizes*

Research question 1		
Independent variable		
Generation	millennials <i>n</i> = 469	baby boomers <i>n</i> = 645
Dependent Variables		
Equal pay	<i>n</i> = 1,108	
Health care	<i>n</i> = 1,101	
Income disparity	<i>n</i> = 1,105	
Elect women	<i>n</i> = 1,102	
Discrimination	<i>n</i> = 1,074	
Feminist feel	<i>n</i> = 1,095	
Research question 2		
Dependent variable		
Vote choice	<i>n</i> = 743	

**Descriptive Statistics**

In order to summarize the data in a meaningful way, I discuss in this section the basic features of the 12 variables derived from the larger ANES 2016 Time Series Survey, Number 36824 data set (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) used in the study. The subsample size of 1,111 women voters represented the independent variable *generation* with frequency distributions  $M = .42$  and mode = 0. baby boomers were coded as 0 and millennials as 1. Symmetry of the data set for *generation* was reported with skewness = .327 and kurtosis = -1.897. Kurtosis <3 is considered within normal distribution range

(see Westfall, 2014). The dependent variables of equal pay, health care, income disparity, women elected, discrimination, and evaluation of feminist were measured on an ordinal scale with mean, median, and mode scores, as reported in Table 3. Skewness was within 0.5, data fairly symmetrical, and kurtosis falling within acceptable levels to indicate normal distribution, as seen in Table 3.

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics RQ 1 Variables*

	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Independent variable				
Generation	0	1	.42	.494
Dependent variables				
Equal pay	0	2	1.91	.336
Health care	0	2	1.30	.808
Income disparity	0	4	1.17	.829
Elect women	0	4	2.16	1.284
Discrimination	0	4	2.03	1.026
Feminist feel	0	8	5.03	2.162

The second research question of voter support was asked of the same sample of 1,111 women voters, derived from the larger ANES 2016 Time Series Survey, Number 36824 data set (ANES, 2018; see Appendix). Generation was the independent variable for RQ 2 with frequency distributions  $M = .42$  and mode = 0. baby boomers were coded as 0 and millennials as 1. Symmetry of the data set for *generation* was reported with skewness = .327 and kurtosis = -1.897. Kurtosis <3 was used in the study. Symmetry of

the data set for RQ 2 dependent variable *vote choice* was analyzed with frequency distributions  $M = .58$  and mode = 1. Symmetry of the data set for *voter choice* was reported with skewness =  $-.325$  and kurtosis =  $-1.899$ . Basic population demographics of political party, race, and education were selected as covariates for the model and supported by the literature as being predictors of voter behavior. Voter choice was measured as a dichotomous variable: Hillary Clinton = 1, Donald Trump = 0. Mean and mode scores reported skewness within 0.5, data fairly symmetrical, and kurtosis falling within acceptable levels to indicate normal distribution (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics RQ 2 Variables*

	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Independent variable				
Generation	0	1	.42	.494
Dependent variables				
Vote choice	0	1	.58	.494
Covariates				
Party ID (Democrat)	0	1	.42	.494
Party ID (Republican)	0	1	.27	.442
Race	0	1	.28	.449
Education	0	6	2.82	1.515

### Assumption Testing for RQ 1

To answer the first research question to determine if there were differences in policy preference between generations of voters, a Mann-Whitney  $U$  statistical measurement was conducted for all six hypotheses. The statistical test has four assumptions that must be met in order for the measurement to be applicable to the research question. The first three assumptions were met with design aspects of the study: (a) the dependent variables were ordinal, (b) the independent variable was categorical with two groups (millennials and baby boomers), and (c) different participants were in each group, or independence of observation (Laerd Statistics, 2015b).

The fourth assumption, according to Laerd (2015b), is that the two groups have a similar distribution of scores. Using SPSS, the distribution of scores was generated using a means test to determine group mean ranks (see Table 5). Higher and lower means values are acceptable, as shown in Table 5, because they have a similar distribution requirement of being representative of the occurrence in the population (Field, 2015). To determine frequency distribution by generation in order to meet the fourth assumption, an additional procedure was performed in SPSS on all dependent variables, using a histogram. A visual check of the population pyramid graph confirmed a lack of skewness for both generations, indicating that population distribution of the data was similar. All of the assumption criteria were met for RQ 1, allowing the study to move forward to test the six hypotheses using a Mann-Whitney  $U$ .

Table 5

*Mean Ranks Social Policy*

millennials	Mean Rank	baby boomers	Mean Rank
Equal pay $n = 466$	536.58	$n = 642$	567.51
Health care $n = 465$	559.22	$n = 636$	544.99
Income disparity $n = 465$	576.08	$n = 640$	536.23
Elect women $n = 464$	592.48	$n = 638$	521.69
Discrimination $n = 449$	568.18	$n = 625$	515.45
Feminist feel $n = 460$	566.26	$n = 635$	534.77

### Assumption Testing for RQ 2

The second research question regarding differences in voter choice between the generational cohorts was framed with Hypothesis 7: millennial women and baby boomer women were equally likely to vote for Hillary Clinton when controlling for race, education, and political party. The sample size was  $n = 743$ . The analysis included four covariates: (a) political party Democratic = 1; (b) political party Republican = 0; (c) race; and (d) education, as these were anticipated to impact voter choice (see Table 5).

The assumptions for the binomial logistic regression test applied to RQ 2 were initially met with the design of the study. Specifically, independence of observations and the independent variable *generation* are mutually exclusive with membership determined by age at the time of the survey. The assumption of nominal variables was met with covariates of political party identification of Democrat or Republican, and race. The dependent variable of vote choice was dichotomous: Hillary Clinton (1) Donald Trump (0), further meeting the assumptions of the test with the design of the study.

Additionally, the application of a binominal logistic regression assumes that a linear relationship exists between the independent variable and transformation of the dependent variable (Laerd Statistics, 2015a). A key in regression analysis is to isolate the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable. According to Frost (2019), the interpretation of a regression coefficient represents the mean change in the dependent variable. To determine the effect, each 1 unit of change on an independent variable is measured. In order to conduct this measurement of change, variables must be separate, or lack multicollinearity. Using SPSS, a collinearity diagnostic was run to analyze variance inflation factors (VIF). This was tested through multiple regression, and VIF values fell within tolerance <3 levels, which are considered moderate (Frost, 2019). Additional regression methods of casewise diagnostics to identify any outliers were conducted to determine model fit. The required assumptions for each variable were met and statistical significance was accepted at .05, allowing the study to continue with the analysis of RQ 2 of generation as a predictor of vote choice.

### **Results for RQ 1**

The first research question considered differences in policy preferences between millennial and baby boomer women who participated in the 2016 presidential election. The six null hypotheses associated with RQ 1 presumed that there was no significant difference in social policy preferences of millennial and baby boomer women, based on the six dependent social policy variables. Significance of each social policy variable was evaluated to accept or reject the null hypothesis, applying alpha-level testing ( $p > .05$ ) with the Mann-Whitney  $U$  to each of the six social policy variables associated with RQ 1.

**Hypothesis 1 (Equal Pay)**

(H<sub>0</sub> 1A): There will be no difference in the policy views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women regarding equal pay for women.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1A): A difference existed in the policy views held by millennial women and those held baby boomer women regarding equal pay for women.

The difference in the median equal pay preference was statistically significant between the two generational groups with  $u = 141235$ ,  $z = -3.482$ , and  $p = .000$  (see Table 6). Because the difference regarding equal pay preference between the generational groups had a  $p$  value  $<.05$ , the null hypothesis was rejected (see Table 6).

**Hypothesis 2 (Health Care)**

(H<sub>0</sub> 1B): There will be no difference in the policy views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women regarding accessibility to health care.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1B): A difference existed in the policy views held by millennial women and those held by baby boomer women regarding accessibility to health care.

Median health care preference was not statistically significantly different between the two generational groups with  $u = 144049$ ,  $z = -.803$ , and  $p = .422$ . Because health care preference between the generational groups had a  $p$  value  $>.05$ , the null hypothesis was accepted (see Table 6).

**Hypothesis 3 (Income Disparity)**

(H<sub>0</sub> 1C): There will be no difference in the views of millennial women and those of baby boomer women with respect to how they judge income disparity policy.



(H<sub>a</sub> 1C): A difference existed in how millennial women and baby boomer women judged income disparity policy.

Median income disparity preference was statistically significantly different between the two generational groups with  $u = 138066$ ,  $z = -2.196$ , and  $p = .028$ . Because there were significant differences between generational groups with a value  $p < .05$ , the results rejected the null hypothesis (see Table 6).

#### **Hypothesis 4 (Electing Women)**

(H<sub>0</sub> 1D): There will be no difference in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify the need to elect women to political office.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1D): A difference existed in how millennial women and baby boomer women identified the need to elect women to political office.

Median scores on the need-to-elect-women preference was statistically significantly different between the two generational groups with  $u = 129000$ ,  $z = -3.752$ , and  $p = .000$ . Because of the statistically significant difference between generational groups with a  $p$  value  $< .05$ , the results rejected the null hypothesis (see Table 6).

#### **Hypothesis 5 (Discrimination)**

(H<sub>0</sub> 1E): There will be no difference in how millennial women and baby boomer women identify discrimination against women in the United States.

(H<sub>a</sub> 1E): A difference existed in how millennial women and baby boomer women identified discrimination against women in the United States.

Median scores on discrimination policy preference were statistically significantly different between the two generational groups with  $u = 126531$ ,  $z = -2.869$ , and  $p = .004$ .

Because of the statistically significant differences between the generational groups with a  $p$  value  $<.05$ , the null hypothesis had to be rejected (see Table 6).

**Hypothesis 6 (Feminist Evaluation)**

( $H_0$  1F): There will be no difference in millennial women's and baby boomer women's evaluation of feminists.

( $H_a$  1F): A difference existed in millennial women's and baby boomer women's evaluation of feminists.

Median scores on feminist-evaluation preferences were not statistically significantly different between the two generational groups with  $u = 137648$ ,  $z = -1.645$ , and  $p = .100$ . Because no statistically significant difference existed between the generational groups regarding feminist evaluation with a  $p$  value  $>.05$ , the null hypothesis had to be accepted (see Table 6).

Table 6

*Mann-Whitney U and Significance of Results*

	Equal Pay	Health Care	Income Disparity	Elect Women
Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	141235.000	144049.500	138066.000	129000.000
Wilcoxon <i>W</i>	250046.000	346615.500	343186.000	332841.000
<i>Z</i>	-3.482	-.803	-2.196	-3.752
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.422	.028	.000

  

	Discrimination	Evaluation of Feminism
Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	126531.500	137648.500
Wilcoxon <i>W</i>	322156.500	339578.500
<i>Z</i>	-2.869	-1.645
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	.004	.100

**Results for RQ 2**

Answers to the second research question regarding the effect of generation on voting behavior was ascertained by performing a binominal logistic regression. The null hypothesis associated with RQ 2 presumed that there was no significant difference in voting behavior between millennial and baby boomer women regarding candidate choice in the 2016 presidential election. The effect of generation on the likelihood of voting for Hillary Clinton were evaluated by controlling for political party, race, and education to accept or reject the null hypothesis, applying alpha-level testing of  $p > .05$  with the application of binominal logistic regression.

### **Hypothesis 7 (Vote Choice)**

The second research question guiding the analysis asked: How do millennial women and baby boomer women differ in their presidential vote choice? The null and alternative hypotheses for RQ 2 were as follows:

(H<sub>0</sub> 2G): There will be no difference in the likelihood that millennial women and baby boomer women voted for Hillary Clinton, when controlling for political party, race, and education.

(H<sub>a</sub> 2G): A difference existed in the likelihood that millennial women and baby boomer women voted for Hillary Clinton, when controlling for political party, race, and education.

A binary logistic regression was conducted to investigate if generation, political party, race, and educational level were factors that predicted vote choice. The possible predictor variables were generation: millennial (1), baby boomer (0). The outcome of interest was vote choice for Hillary Clinton.

Initial assessments of the overall statistical significance of the model in predicting categories was found to be significant at  $p > .0005$  with no independent variables in the model. An additional assessment of model prediction adequacy was conducted with the Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit to test how poor the model is at predicting outcomes. Results of .164 confirmed model was not significant ( $p > 0.005$ ), indicating that the model was correctly specified and a good fit.

The model showed a 67% (Nagelkerke *R* squared) variance in vote choice, correctly classifying 86% of the cases. As shown in Table 7, the model results for the

independent variable *generation* were not found to be a statistically significant contributor ( $p > 0.05$ ) to the model; the null hypothesis could, thus, not be rejected. However, the control variables (party ID, race, and education) were all significant contributors to the model in predicting vote choice.

Table 7

*Binominal Logistic Regression Predicting Vote Choice*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	Wald	<i>df</i>	Sig.	Exp( <i>B</i> )	EXP( <i>B</i> ) 95% CI <i>LL</i> – <i>UL</i>
Generation	.351	.245	2.052	1	.152	1.420	.879–2.295
Democrat	2.249	.267	70.665	1	.000	9.474	5.609–16.005
Republican	-2.862	.331	74.676	1	.000	.057	.030–.109
Race	1.603	.323	24.652	1	.000	4.969	2.639–9.356
Education	.428	.084	25.831	1	.000	1.534	1.301–1.809

*Note.* *B* = unstandardized regression weight. *SE* = standard error, Wald = test for individual predictor variable. *df* = degrees of freedom. Sig. = Significance at the  $p < .005$ . Exp(*B*) = exponentiation of the *B* coefficients, odds ratio 95%. CI = confidence interval. *LL* = lower limit. *UL* = upper limit.

### Summary

This quantitative study built upon previous research findings regarding gender and politics and provided empirical results on millennial women's perceptions of existing relationships among gender, policy, political representation, and personal social positioning. The research was guided by two questions regarding voter behavior with respect to social policy preferences and candidate choice. Question 1 asked whether there was a difference between generations of women voters in policy preference? A Mann-

Whitney *U* procedure was used to test six null hypotheses associated with RQ 1 to answer the research question for each of the social-policy items.

Test results showed that there was a significant difference in the policy views held by millennial women and those held by baby boomer women regarding equal pay for women, their judgement about income disparity and the role played by the government, and the manner used to identify the need to elect women to political office. A further significant difference existed with respect to how millennial and baby boomer women identified discrimination against women in the United States. Hypothesis testing produced no statistically significant differences in two of the policy views held by millennial women and baby boomer women, respectively, regarding accessibility to health care and the evaluation of feminists.

A binominal logistic regression was performed for the second research question to ascertain the effect of generation on the likelihood of voting for Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election, when controlled for political party, race, and educational level. Based on the results, the null hypothesis had to be accepted that *generation* was not a significant predictor of vote choice for Hillary Clinton. However, the covariates *political party*, *race*, and *educational level* were predictors of vote choice.

In this chapter, data collection sources, data set screening, and recoding of variables in preparation for analysis were detailed. Assumptions for statistical testing and statistical significance of results were explained. In chapter 5 I provide an interpretation of the findings and possible implications for public policy. Limitations of the study and

the impact of those limitations on future studies is discussed along with a potential impact on positive social change.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to contribute to the understanding of women's underrepresentation in political systems despite their demographic footprint and participation in the voting process. To bridge this knowledge gap, the influence of generational cohort on women's policy preferences and candidate support from a liberal feminist perspective were examined. Two research questions were focused on the differences between female millennials and female baby boomers with respect to policy preferences in the areas of income equality, opportunity, representation, and candidate support. In this quantitative cross-sectional study, secondary data from the ANES 2016 Time Series Study, Number 36824 (ANES, 2018; see Appendix) were repurposed, selecting millennial and baby boomer women voters, aged 20 to 35 years and 52 to 70 years, respectively, for this voter research. The analysis results in Chapter 4 supported key findings of differences in generation-related social policy preference of equal pay, income disparity, election of women, and discrimination. Generational differences were not found with respect to health care and evaluation of feminists. The second research question about voter behavior revealed that generation was not a predictor of candidate support.

Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the findings, interpreted through a liberal feminist theoretical lens, providing institutional perspectives and limitation of the study. Research recommendations for further insights and possible policy implications leading to positive social change are presented for consideration.



### **Interpretation of the Findings**

Democratic ideals of inclusion rely on participation of citizens to elect their representatives through the political process. The citizens' experiences of politics are influenced by the binary division of humans based on gender (Buss, 2015) and therefore, differ between men and women. Although not a direct predictor of voter behavior, the elected candidates' gender has been found influential in the political representation of women (Anderson et al., 2011; Mendelberg et al., 2014; Wittmer & Bouché, 2013), providing an institutional mechanism for greater equity and, therefore, the ability to transform the balance of social power. In order to understand more fully the influences of gender and generational cohort on political transformation, the purpose of this study, based on a liberal feminist theoretical framework, was to explore the issue of equality for women within the institution of politics. The use of feminist theory enabled me to construct the research questions of social policy preferences and political representation from a feminist perspective. The viewpoint of liberal feminist theory acknowledges women's views as unique and generally attributable to an awareness of a marginalized social status (Mansbridge, 1999; Okin, 1979; Phillips, 1992). Viewing U.S. politics through a liberal feminist lens justified the study's focus on women voters and the gender-specific questions of social policy preferences and perceptions of representation.

Assuming that there were no generational differences in social policy preferences of women, the focus of the first research question was on the opinions of female voters, comparing millennials and baby boomers regarding their perceptions of social policy addressing areas of equal pay, accessibility to health care, income disparity, the

importance of electing women to office, awareness of discrimination, and evaluation of feminists. The study built upon existing literature on gender and politics through the formulation of six hypotheses to answer Research Question 1: “How are policy preferences of millennial women (aged 20–35 years) different from those of baby boomer women (aged 52–70 years) who participated in the 2016 presidential election?”

Findings indicated that the different responses regarding social policy between millennial and baby boomer women were in four policy areas. The first area of response differences pertained to the policy preference expressed by millennial women who supported the role of government in addressing income disparity. This response to survey questions on the importance of policy set by the government to address income disparity contradicted previous generational findings that portrayed millennials as distrusting the government’s ability to address social problems (see Twenge et al. 2012; Twenge et al., 2015). Results showing greater support by millennials than by baby boomers for the role of government to address income inequality may indicate a willingness by millennial women to seek political solutions through elected representatives who support policy initiatives of economic equality. Awareness of economic policy focused on correcting an unequal labor market may motivate millennials to exercise political engagement. Millennials may also have experienced economic insecurity in their personal lives, which may be influencing their perception regarding the responsibility of government.

The second area of response differences in policy preference between the generational cohorts was found with the policy question addressing opinions on the existence of discrimination against women. Millennials expressed a greater degree of

perceived discrimination than baby boomers. This policy preference confirmed earlier findings reported in the literature where millennial women had expressed awareness of differential treatment in the workplace supported by organizational policies and gender stereotypes (see Worth, 2016). These results expand the body of knowledge regarding generational awareness of discrimination and may reflect the experience of discrimination in career limitations and economic insecurity. These results could reflect perceptions of continued institutional discriminatory practices experienced by a new generation of women, regardless of educational attainment and skill. Millennial women's identification of workplace inequities in career progression and opportunity highlighted the importance of the gender experience within the larger economic institutions and cultural organizations that treat women differently. Results indicated that millennial women may turn to political processes of the government when it is seen as more responsive to correcting issues of organizational discriminatory practices of described and prescribed gender stereotypes that disadvantage women.

Study results regarding the desire to elect more women identified millennial women as attributing a higher priority to this goal than baby boomer women. These generational differences in support of more women as elected leaders and government officials expanded the knowledge pool regarding gender in politics, indicating an acceptance of changes in gender role expectations by millennial women, as well as their opinion of political representation, indicating greater support for women as candidates. These results may indicate a greater willingness to expand female gender roles to include leadership positions of authority with increased social positioning that challenges

traditional gender traits and gender roles. This policy preference could also indicate generational considerations of political leadership to representative government not previously attributed to millennials. This generation may more accurately understand the dynamics of unequal social power and political representation to counter through elected officials who are seeking legislation and policy reforms on the issues with which these women voters identify. This result may not translate to other populations, such as male voters, who may continue to view this type of role for women as too authoritative and as breaking from traditional views of gender or prescribed gender roles. Within the political institution, women who are seeking leadership roles and thereby greater social power may continue to be targets of hostility from certain segments of the population. However, the study results indicated that millennial women had become more accepting of expanded gender roles in politics.

The results also showed that social policy addressing equal pay found greater support among baby boomer women who ranked equal pay legislation higher than millennial women. This generational difference appears to be substantiated by previous research on unique generational experiences that tend to shape the opinions of generational cohorts (see Coomes, 2004). The social conditions of the time dictate the social phenomenon experienced by those who live through it such as workplace pay inequalities and the resulting political awareness by members of the group (Cullen & Fisher, 2014). An additional feminist perspective considers the day-to-day lived experiences of this specific group of citizens who may have been marginalized by their perceived lack of social power (Marrow et al., 2013) and the socially imposed limitations

of gender role expectations, limited career choices, and limited access to educational opportunities during their experience of the workplace environment. Millennials may not have been long enough in their careers or the workplace to identify the impact of long-term pay differences. As a social issue, equal pay was identified as a social-change issue of the 1960s and 1970s and may therefore predominantly reflect the past experiences of this particular demographic.

Contrary to preelection literature of millennials' lack of support for Clinton, the results for Research Question 2 indicated that generation was not a statistically significant indicator of vote choice. While the results did not support generational prediction, the findings did confirm previous research findings on voting trends of specific groups by race, political identification, and education (Fry, 2017; Shelley & Hitt, 2016). Regression analysis confirmed political party identification was a predictor of voter choice; identification as Democrat resulting in prediction of voting for Clinton (see Table 7). Conversely, identification as Republican resulted in 94% less likelihood to vote for Clinton. In addition, studies of persistent voting trends showed women and minorities supporting Democrats in greater percentages than white men did (Philpot, 2018) were also confirmed by the findings of this study, which indicated that race was a predictor of vote choice for Clinton (see Table 7). As the educational level of voters increased, the statistical significance of voting for Hillary Clinton also increased by 53% for each additional year of education (see Table 7). These findings confirmed previous research on demographics and voter choice (Blair, 2017; Ratliff et al., 2017). These findings confirmed previous research on group voter trends; however, additional understanding of

the institutional implications for women was provided through liberal feminist theoretical adaptation, further explained in the following paragraphs.

Guiding additional interpretation of women's experience of political systems and agencies of government, liberal feminist theory seeks to understand institutionalized unequal gender power. The organization of society through public institutions both influences and reinforces gender roles and the resulting division of labor. Due to institutional design impacting such organizational elements as career progression, work schedules, leave policy, childcare support, and health care restrictions, to name but a few, women do not benefit equally from laws and policies. The liberal feminist theory provides a systems approach to understanding the difference in impact and experience of "institutionalized" social systems and agencies on women. The unique perspective of women in politics is ignored by political theory (Okin, 1979). It was, however, addressed in this study through the application of liberal feminist theory to the formulation of research questions on policy preferences, voter behavior, and representation of women in the political institution. Power asymmetries along identity categories such as race, class, and gender differentiate democratic ideals of inclusion by those marginalized groups (Asenbaum, 2019), resulting in unequal social power. In order for women to achieve presence in the political system, institutional practices and policies must consider the everyday life dynamics of work, family, and economics of women. Liberal feminist theory offers insights into equal rights and social status together with the deeper question of power and cultural sentiments regarding gender, which are shaped and perpetuated through institutions such as politics.

Inquiries into the political perceptions of women are more fully explained by research framed by liberal feminist theory that focuses on these imposed restrictions delivered through social institutions (Hoffman, 2001; Lorber, 1997). Imposed institutional restrictions based on social meaning subordinate women as a group. According to Jaggar (1983), a presupposition of liberal feminist theory is that the state should pursue social reforms to ensure equal opportunities for women. The study of these social institutions was the focus of this research aiming at equal status of women. To identify the interaction of these social institutions, liberal feminist theory frames as the topic of analysis the study of women and their experiences, resulting from their treatment by those institutional systems and processes. To add nuisance to the complexity of gender, the study identified the social policy preferences of women voters, thus considering new information on their perceptions of politics and the intersections that shape the everyday reality of women.

With a focus on political institutions, I applied liberal feminist theory in this study to expand the current understanding of institutional gender bias and provide additional empirical content to factors that perpetuate the underrepresentation of women in executive political leadership. Gender and related societal expectations of traits and behaviors of role occupancy characteristics explain known social organizations' positioning around the binary category of gender. This aids in understanding the current organizational structure of political institutions and their mostly male models of leadership. Pointing to studies that have identified gender as a factor in voter behavior and how socially prescribed and described gender traits perpetuate a male-dominated

political institution allows liberal feminist theory to question the distribution of social power dominance. Political representation is the mechanism that provides inroads into power sharing. From a liberal feminist theoretical viewpoint, this type of representation means attending to differences in marginalized populations and providing “representative” governance that will more accurately address institutional outcomes that have, thus far, disproportionately negatively affected women as a group.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The foremost interest of this quantitative study was to explore the voter behavior of women, which limited the study to female voters. The research question regarding generational impact further limited the population to two generational cohorts: millennials (aged 20–35 years) as the largest emerging demographic generational group and baby boomers (aged 52–70 years) as the second-largest demographic generational group. An additional limitation of the study was the framing constructed by the two research questions. The first question addressed social policy preferences regarding equal pay, health care, income, election of women, discrimination, and evaluation of feminists. The second research question of voter choice during the 2016 presidential election further limited the study to data collected during that specific period of time. The use of secondary data additionally limited the study to the data collected by the original researchers. The data source for this study used a dual-mode design of face-to-face interviews and Internet questionnaires, administered during the preelection survey from September 7 to November 7, 2016, and the postelection survey from November 9, 2016, to January 8, 2017 (ANES, 2018). Although the selected research design and the



conduction of the study on generational cohorts of women voters did not provide data to support causation claims of voter opinions, it did provide cross-sectional population data to establish a relationship to generation and gender in policy preferences. An additional limitation of the ANES database was the restricted access to income demographics, and, as such, this aspect was not available for inclusion in the analysis. This aspect limited the opportunity to determine the relationship or influence of income on voter choice and to identify a possible area of interest for further voter research.

Limitations of the study were also derived from researcher bias, developed as a result of individual social learning and societal expectations of appropriate gender traits and role assignment. Individual experiences of voting and candidate support in political processes had the potential to bias perceptions and concepts of the topic of study. In an attempt to eliminate personal bias, the utilization of robust statistical techniques, namely, the Mann-Whitney *U* analysis and binomial logistic regression were applied to the study.

### **Recommendations**

The focus of this study on the 2016 presidential election limited the insight into generational voting differences. However, the research opened a discussion on the experience of women in the political process that invites additional study. For example, qualitative methods could provide rich individual experiences of the political process by exploring policy as motivational and stimulating participation. In addition, qualitative research focused on experiences of millennial women in areas where they had significant differences in policy preferences from those of baby boomers would further detail generational differences and unique perspectives. Qualitative methodological approaches

applied in a study of social-equity issues that include observations of gender and race could draw upon the unique experience of the individual and record individual experiences, utilizing data collection methods such as interviews, case studies, and focus groups (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Additional studies of women's experience of politics beyond voting could provide insight into how women engage in politics in their community and at local levels of government, further expanding the understanding of generational representation at multiple levels of government.

Quantitative methods exploring individual experiences of specific policies could contribute to a deeper understanding of generational experiences and provide useful information to policy developers, policy platforms of political parties, and to government leaders. Additional research on the role of political party and gender may further identify common areas of policy interests such as economic concerns and access to health care, which could counter party ideology and encourage seeking government solutions that transcend political ideology.

To further understand women as a body politic, correlations between their social positioning and their political interests could be studied to predict and expand the understanding of voting behavior. The approach to voter decision research has taken different avenues to uncover correlations. Although previous voter research did not find a direct impact of gender on voter choice, the complexity of gender and the societal meaning attached through ideas of what is "feminine" and "masculine" invite further research into role and trait influence in politics. Due to gender role assignment of trait expectations (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011; Fulton, 2014) to socially prescribed compatible

occupations, gender continues to influence voting behavior. Expanded research into generational influence of traits and violation of traits associated with gender may be another area revealing how voter decisions come about. This would extend the line of inquiry to evolving gender roles in a new generation of citizens, further developing the literature of political expression and voter behavior.

### **Implications**

As noted in the literature review of Chapter 2, studies about women in politics are few, and research about millennial women are all together absent from the literature. This study provided additional generational voter research in areas of economic equality, discrimination, and political representation, previously not extended to millennial women. First, previous research on the civic interest of young voters (Twenge et al., 2012) was expanded through empirical results of millennial women's policy preference to address income disparity through government. This policy preference reflected a broader view of responsible societal welfare. The second gap in the literature on generational voters pertained to millennial women's experience of workplace discrimination. Building on previous workplace research (Worth, 2016), study results of policy preferences and the role of government to address discrimination against women as a group was identified as important to millennial women. Economic equality was additionally addressed through quantitative results that focused on baby boomers' awareness of the continued economic inequality through pay disparity and the importance of equal pay policy to correct these institutional practices of inequality impacting women in the workplace. In addition to closing a gap in the literature on millennial women-voter

perceptions on discrimination and economic equality, gaps in opinions of millennials on political representation were addressed.

Political leadership appropriateness reflects gender expectations (Donnelly et al., 2016) and the limitations associated with gender traits (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011; Fulton, 2014) within the culture and larger society. This study closed a knowledge gap in voter behavior by identifying millennial women's preference for more women to be elected as political leaders. These results expand previous understanding of the perceptions of women candidates (Lawless, 2011) by providing empirical findings of a different perspective held by millennial women voters regarding political representation and identification with social policy when considering political representation, regardless of previous gendered societal leadership expectations.

In addition, the study framed by liberal feminist theory, identified women's perspectives within the larger context of social institutions of politics and government, building on previous research of gender. This study also closed a gap in feminist theory of intersectional feminism (Evans, 2016; Lewis & Marine, 2015) with empirical findings of millennial women's awareness of social issues and their willingness to seek out responsive leaders who can represent their concerns through institutional representation in politics.

Empirical findings of the study bolster social policy possibilities as a mechanism of change for women. Within policy, gender has been identified as "differencing," or having a different impact on women that disadvantages them. Affecting half of the population, policy that addresses or seeks to remove these negative impacts can greatly

improve the social status of women. Of particular significance for policy implications was the perception of both generational groups regarding economic disparity. While millennials' perception of income disparity and the role of government identified income disparity reduction policy, baby boomer women's expressed preference aimed at workplace policy addressing equal pay. Although expressed differently, both generational groups identified economic inequality as a significant policy issue.

In addition to economic policy impacts, study results of voter opinions provided empirical information to groups recruiting political leaders with possible insights into voter motivation and candidate support. The credibility of political leaders is enhanced when everyday life experiences demonstrate that workplace discrimination and wage gaps, for example, are addressed with meaningful policy reform. The existence of political adaptation of targeted policy initiatives provides a more responsive leader to the community. The experience of gender intersecting with institutions and systems adds the narrative of gender role identity, which is specific to women, as an area of consideration in effective and responsive governing. Recruitment of candidates and campaign messages and themes that echo wage disparity reform, facilitated with inclusive policy development, support a candidate's political platform and invite support from marginalized groups such as women.

Social change is implicated by the study results of millennial women's awareness of social issues and their opinions on the role of government to address those social concerns. The opportunity exists for organizations that promote political candidates to adopt and address on their policy platforms solutions in the areas of income disparity,

workplace discrimination, and equal pay to promote their candidates. Political organizations can further change the narrative by conducting political discussions on topics of interest and engagement for women and for millennial women in particular. Giving women a voice in the discussion of social issues connects them to politics. Knowledge is power, and individual women are empowered through increased knowledge and awareness of the personal impact of political issues; in other words, the personal is political perspective. Voter-informed decisions of policy and candidate support connect women in their role as citizens and actively engages them in the democratic process, thus enhancing their social position.

Millennial women's perceptions of executive leadership invite further positive social change through the importance they attach to having more women in political leadership positions. Knowing that millennial women see equality in government through the election of more female candidates, political organizations can act on this knowledge by promoting and supporting more women to participate in political campaigns. Providing more female candidates also provides more role models for younger generations to aspire to participate in the political process. Generational and gender preferences that work to support a candidate informs political parties at the local and state levels to promote candidates who align with what the demographic has identified as descriptive representation. Candidates who address issues of importance to women and articulate them through policy provide more descriptive leadership qualities with which to support the community.

Social change realized through inclusive policy, based on what is meaningful to women, facilitates change that impacts the social position of women. Connecting women through policy facilitates addressing institutional differences through informed political participation and empowers their position as a citizen and as a group. As citizens, women exercising their rights to participate and engage in the political process drawn by social issues because of their import, will promote more informed representative support and candidate selection. Women electing executive leaders who represent their interests can change the focus of institutional powers through policy and concentrate on reversing the social injustice of gender disparity, thus providing meaningful positive social change.

### **Conclusion**

Along with the influence of women, millennials are projected to become the United States' largest electorate with the potential to impact future political outcomes. Generational differences in social policy preferences have been identified in this study; this research, thus, contributes to and informs future research regarding the opinions and perceptions of these two generational groups of women. The perceptions and opinions of women voters, both millennials and baby boomers, further add insight to platform issues in political engagement and should be acknowledged along with understanding the nature of women's experience of social institutions. This kind of gender-informed voter preferences could lead to political transformation of policies and government practices.

Gender-informed policy challenges social powers and provides an institutional pathway to greater equality for women and other marginalized groups. Increased understanding of the political consciousness of women, expressed through policy

preferences and candidate support, informs inclusive policy, designed with the consideration of lifecycle needs of women and their families. Policy, then, becomes a mechanism that contributes to positive social change at the institutional level, impacting the social positioning of women, both individually and collectively. The political transformation gained with attention to the way women are represented in public policy and political leadership is the voice of democracy heard in an equitable society.



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### **research subject**

A person or organization observed for purposes of research. Also called a respondent. A respondent is generally a survey respondent or informant, experimental or observational subject, focus group participant, or any other person providing information to a study or on whose behalf a proxy provides information.

## Appendix: Study Number 36824 (ANES 2016 Time Series Study)

Question Number	Variables	ANES code	Survey Questions	Measure
V161267a	Independent generation	DEM_BIRTH	What is the month, day, and year of your birth?	Nominal
V162149	Dependent equal pay	GENDPOL EQUALPAY	Do you favor, oppose or neither favor nor oppose requiring employers to pay women and men the same amount for the same work?	Ordinal
V162193	Health care	ECONEQ_GOVHLT	Do you favor an increase, decrease, no change in government spending to help people pay for health insurance when they can't pay for it themselves?	Ordinal
V162148	Income disparity	INEQINC INEQRED	Do you favor, oppose, or either favor nor oppose the government trying to reduce the difference in incomes between the richest and the poorest households?	Ordinal
V162227	Women elected	PRES_ELECT	How important is it that more women be elected to political office? Extremely important, very important, moderately important, a little important, not at all important	Ordinal
V162231	Discrim	DISCRIN_DISCWOM	How much discrimination is there in the U.S. against Women? A great deal, a lot, a moderate amount, a little, none at all.	Ordinal

(table continues)

Question Number	Variables	ANES code	Survey Questions	Measure
V162096	Feminist	THERMGR_THGRFEM	How would you rate feminists? 100 degrees = very warm or favorable feeling 85 degrees = quite warm or favorable feeling 70degrees = fairly warm or favorable feeling 60 degrees = a bit more favorable feeling than cold. 50 degrees = no feeling at all 40 degrees = bit more cold or unfavorable feeling than warm feeling 30 degrees = fairly cold or unfavorable feeling 15 degrees = quite cold and unfavorable feeling 0 degrees = very cold or unfavorable	Ordinal
RQ 2 Variable V162034a	Vote Pres	PRESVT POST_VOTE WHO	Who did you vote for? Hillary Clinton Donald Trump	

(table continues)

Question Number	Variables	ANES code	Survey Questions	Measure
Covariates				
Race	Race	DEM_RACE	I am going to read you a list of five race categories. Please choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be: White, black or African American, Native American, or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or other	Categorical

(table continues)

Question Number	Variables	ANES code	Survey Questions	Measure
V165568	Education	DEM_EDUR	<p>What is the highest level of school you have completed or highest degree you have received?</p> <p>01. Less than 1<sup>st</sup> grade  02. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> grade  03. 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade  04. 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade  05. 9<sup>th</sup> grade  06. 10<sup>th</sup> grade  07. 11<sup>th</sup> grade  08. 12<sup>th</sup> grade no diploma  09. High school graduate, diploma or GED  10. Some college, no degree  11. Associate Degree/vocational  12. Associate Degree/academic  13. Bachelor's degree  14. Master's degree  15. Professional School degree MD, DDS, JDD  16. Doctorate degree PhD, EdD.</p>	
V162030	Political party	POSTVOTE REGPTY	<p>What political party are you registered with?</p> <p>1. Democratic Party  2. Republican Party  3. None or Independent</p>	Categorical

*Note.* From the “ANES 2016 Time Series Study Postelection Survey Questionnaires,” by the American National Election Studies, 2018. Reprinted with permission.