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Gender and Authority in the Public Sector: The Case of Local Government Chief Administrative Officers in the United States

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

GENDER AND AUTHORITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR:
THE CASE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS IN
THE UNITED STATES

A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

by

Sebawit Genete Bishu

2017

To: Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

This dissertation, written by Sebawit Genete Bishu, and entitled Gender and Authority in the Public Sector: The Case of Local Government Chief Administrative Officers in the United States, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

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Florida International University, 2017

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents Bogalech Alemu and Dr. Genete Bishu whose steadfast support made it possible for me to complete this work. Thank you for believing in me and for owning my dream. I also dedicate this dissertation to my brothers Dr. Kalkidan Bishu and Alemseged Bishu, who have been my anchor in this long journey far away from home. Thank you for setting the bar high for me and for doing everything you could to help me reach it.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
GENDER AND AUTHORITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR:
THE CASE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS IN
THE UNITED STATES

by

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Florida International University, 2017

Miami, Florida

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In 2016, women represented 16.6% of all Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) in local governments across the United States. Previous studies have investigated gender disparities in managerial representation, which is explained by the glass ceiling phenomenon; however, little is known about whether the women that occupy these male dominated positions have the similar levels of responsibilities as their male counterparts. Thus, the purpose of this dissertation is to understand if gender disparities in levels of work authority manifest as a new form of the glass ceiling. Work authority in this study is operationalized as CAOs' sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) and decision-making authority (control over formal operations). Using a mixed methods research design, this investigation is implemented in two phases. The first phase employs Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression to explore the relationship between CAOs' gender and CAOs' level of work authority as well as the relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority and annual pay. In the second phase, using a qualitative research

method, I conduct an in-depth investigation of similarities and differences in the career paths of CAOs and the factors that shape their career-related decisions.

This research has five main findings. First, female CAOs do not have similar level of sanctioning authority as their male counterparts. Second, disparities in level of sanctioning authority yield economic inequality among CAOs. Third, male and female CAOs take different career paths. Last, female CAOs perform dual roles—professional and personal—whereas most male CAOs are less burdened with household responsibilities in their personal lives. Last, for female CAOs with family responsibilities, their career paths are significantly fashioned by the presence of institutional and social support networks.

Findings inform policy makers and public management practices. It informs that gender-based disparities in the workforce continually manifest in new forms, creating unequal employment opportunities for men and women in the workforce. Such disparities also continue perpetuating economic inequalities among men and women in the workforce. Also, it informs public management practices of the critical impact that institutional support has on leveling the playing field women to participate in male-dominated careers.

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LIST OF ABBREVAITONS AND ACRONYMS

ACS	American Community Survey
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
FCCMA	Florida City/County Management Association
ICMA	International City/County Management Association
ILCMA	Illinois City/County Management Association
OLS	Ordinary Least Square
VLGMA	Virginia Local Government Management Association
UCMA	Utah City/County Management Association
WLCMA	Wisconsin City/County Management Association

Chapter 1: Introduction

In 2016, women represented only 16.6% of the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) in local governments across the United States (International City/County Management Association [ICMA], 2016). Moreover, 61% of jurisdictions in the United States have never had female administrators (ICMA, 2014). The CAO, appointed by elected officials, is responsible for the day-to-day administration of local governments (Nelson & Svava, 2014). In 2012, the International City/County Management Association established the *Task Force on Women in the Profession* to investigate the factors and barriers that influence women's representation in local government management. After completing a 2-year investigation, the Task Force published its findings, which identified the challenges that women face, including gender bias (specifically, the biases of elected officials that make hiring and promotion decisions), work/life conflicts, and a lack of diversity in recruitment. In general, researchers have aimed to identify factors that shape women's representation in local government leadership—mainly the *glass ceiling* phenomenon within the context of local governments. The glass ceiling has been principally associated with gender-based workplace discrimination in access to managerial and leadership positions. The United States Department of Labor defines the glass ceiling phenomenon as “those artificial factors based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization” (1991, p. 1). The common thread in all definitions of the glass ceiling phenomenon is that invisible barriers impede the upward mobility of women and racial/ethnic minority groups to positions of authority in organizations (Powell & Butterfield, 1994). Identifying the barriers that prevent women from reaching positions of

authority continues to be important in the effort to eliminate this disparity. However, research is crucially needed to determine whether the work authority of women that reach leadership positions is similar to that of their male counterparts. Thus, the present study aimed to explore gender disparities in levels of work authority as a new form of the glass ceiling for women in administrative leadership positions.

In the present study, work authority refers to the legitimate power/control possessed by certain individuals based on their work-related positions (Kluegel, 1978; Smith, 2002; Wright, Baxter, & Birkelund, 1995; Zeng, 2011). Authority grants an individual the right to make work-related decisions on behalf of an organization. Dimensions of work authority can range from control over human resources, policy, and financial resources, to making technical decisions on behalf of an organization (Wright, Baxter & Birkelund, 1995; Kluegel, 1978; Wright et al., 1995; Zeng, 2011). Work authority is also an important driving factor that shapes employees' compensation (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Kluegel, 1978; Lopreato, 1967 Mintz & Krymkowski, 2010; Smith, 1997, 2002, 2012). Beyond determining an individual's compensation, Smith (2002) argued that work authority has been linked with "job satisfaction, autonomy, class consciousness, class position, voting behavior, party identification, and political views" (p. 511), which suggests that inequality in access to work authority is an issue of social and economic justice.

To this end, the present research empirically tested three main themes. First, I empirically tested if CAOs' gender is a salient factor that predicts their levels of work authority. To empirically verify the relationship between CAOs' gender and level of work authority, I adopted an analytical framework that has been put forward by prior

research. Previous studies on predictors of work authority have primarily identified micro-, meso-, and macro-level structural predictors of work authority (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Baxter, 1997; Elliot & Smith, 2004; Jaffee, 1989; Smith, 1997, 1999, 2002; Wright et al. 1995; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). Micro- and macro-level structural predictors encompass individual characteristics, human capital factors, organizational characteristics, and external factors, whereas meso-level predictors identify societal attitudes including gender role socialization and biases that shape individuals' access to work authority (Ehrlich, 1989; Filer, 1985, Jacobs & Steinberg, 1990; Smith, 2002). Previous studies have explored issues of gender-based authority disparities in the workforce in relation to micro- and macro-level predictors, but few have explored meso-level predictors of work authority—particularly how issues such as gender role socialization shape women's decision-making differently than their male counterparts. Thus, this research aimed to explore how gender role socialization and other structural factors shape the career paths of male and female CAOs in the workforce.

In this dissertation, first, I investigated gender disparity in level of work authority among CAOs; second, I explored if gender disparity in level of work authority induces economic inequality among the study population; and third, I compared the career paths of male and female CAOs and the factors that shape their career related decisions. To examine these issues, I adopted a two-phase mixed methods research design. In the first phase, using survey data, I conducted a quantitative analysis of the relationship between CAOs' gender and micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority. I designed a survey instrument, then distributed the survey to member CAOs of five ICMA state chapters (Virginia, Florida, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Utah). A total of 907 CAOs

were contacted, and 236 CAOs completed the survey (26% response rate). In this phase, the dissertation primarily provides empirical analysis on the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors, including individual characteristics, human capital factors, organizational factors, and external factors such as regional economy and CAOs' level of work authority. In the next step of the first phase, the study aimed to empirically test if level of work authority among CAOs predicts their annual pay (compensation). Here, the dissertation empirically tested arguments put forward by previous research—specifically, that disparities in level of work authority establish economic inequality among individuals in the workforce. In the second phase, using a qualitative research method, I explored if male and female CAOs have similar or different career paths and if similar, or various, factors shape male and female CAOs' career-related decisions. Here, the goal was to empirically test if concepts such as gender role socialization shape female CAOs' career paths differently than their male counterparts. At this phase, I conducted 20 in-depth semi-structured interviews with male and female CAOs from the State of Florida.

The main findings from this research are, first, male and female CAOs have different levels of authority. The study finds that, compared to male CAOs, female CAOs have lower levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations). Additionally, the study concludes that work authority disparity induces economic inequality among CAOs in the study. Third, the study finds that gender role socializations at home and at work—along with the opportunity structure available to men and women—differently shape male and female CAOs' career paths. The key message from these findings is that female CAOs are underrepresented in local governments and their

authority in the workplace differs from that of their male counterparts. Also, the study concludes that female CAOs are operating on an unlevel field in the workforce due to the burden of their additional primary role at home.

This dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides a literature review on work authority and the factors that shape career choices of individuals in the workforce; Chapter 3 presents the research questions and hypotheses that are addressed in the study and introduces the theoretical framework proposed in the dissertation; Chapter 4 introduces the research design and study context, and presents the research plan, including research phases and methodologies employed to answer the research questions; Chapter 5 presents data and results from the first phase. Using quantitative research methods, the first phase investigates the relationship between micro- and macro-level predictors of work authority and CAOs' level of work authority. Moreover, here, the study examines the relationship between CAOs' level of work authority and their annual pay. Chapter 6 presents data and results from the second phase. This phase employs a qualitative research method to conduct an in-depth investigation of similarities and differences in career paths of male and female CAOs and the factors that shape their career-related choices. Chapter 7 offers a discussion based on findings from the two phases. Here, the study highlights how level of work authority manifests yet as a new form of the glass ceiling. The chapter also informs us of the unlevel playing field on which female CAOs perform in the workforce. It highlights how dual roles that female CAOs play at home and at work shape their career related decisions. In addition, this chapter, offers us an overview of the research, along with implications of the research for policy, public management practices, and public management education. In closing, the

chapter presents limitations of the study that offer potential avenues of investigation for future studies.

Statement of the Problem

In 2016, ICMA demographic data shows that women comprised 16.6% of the CAO population and 37% of the Assistant CAO positions in the United States (ICMA, 2016). However, women comprised approximately 53% of the Assistant to the CAO positions. This data suggests that, at best, women have equal access to assistant positions in local government administrations in the United States. Despite efforts made by the ICMA to identify and address women's under-representation in local government leadership, their under-representation remains a critical problem that needs attention. So far, much of the effort has been to address the gap in gender representation in leadership positions; however, little is known about whether the women that attain executive administrative positions have authority and responsibilities that are comparable to that of their male counterparts. This dissertation, therefore, intended to identify if female executive administrators in local governments have similar levels of work responsibilities—specifically, similar levels of job authority, as their male counterparts. The examination of gender disparity in work authority is vital because work authority establishes economic rewards for the individuals that possess it. Beyond economic rewards, work authority is also associated with establishing social recognition and job satisfaction (Smith, 1997, 2002). Thus, inequality is perpetuated when organizations bestow work authority to individuals based on factors other than basic job-related competency skills.

Purpose of the Study

The main goal of this dissertation is to investigate if gender disparities in managerial representation manifests beyond the glass ceiling phenomenon. It therefore, aimed to identify if female CAOs in executive and managerial positions in local governments have work authority that is similar to that of their male counterparts. To examine this, I investigated the relationship between gender and level of work authority among CAOs in the United States. Second, the study aimed to explore if new forms of gender disparity perpetuate economic inequality in the workforce. Here the dissertation investigates if CAOs' level of work authority predicts financial rewards that come with the job. To identify this, the study examined the relationship between CAOs' level of work authority and CAOs' annual pay. Third, this research aimed to determine if issues such as gender role socialization at home and at work shape the career choices of female CAOs. To address this problem, I conducted an empirical investigation of similarities and differences in CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape CAOs' career-related decisions.

Significance of the Study

In the last few decades, several studies have investigated the glass ceiling concept, which is associated with gender and race based workplace discrimination practices in promotion to managerial positions. The glass ceiling concept represents barriers that women and racial/ethnic minorities face while climbing organizational ladders (Baxter & Wright, 2000; Smith, 2012; Zeng, 2011). Also, this concept depicts social, structural, and institutional factors that lead to an environment that creates employment disparities. However, despite an abundance of studies that investigate the scarcity of women in

managerial positions, few studies have investigated new forms of the glass ceiling phenomenon among women that reach executive positions in the workforce. The present study makes three significant contributions. First, by examining gender disparities in level of work authority, it expands empirical knowledge on how gender disparities manifest beyond the glass ceiling concept. Second, building on the existing literature on gender inequalities in the workforce, it investigates the gender gap in work authority in the public sector—specifically within the context of local governments. Aside from two studies—Lewis (1986) and Alkadry and Tower (2011)—which directly examine the gender gap in level of work authority within public organizations, no other study has examined this issue in the public-sector context. Third, the present study addresses an area of research that has been scarcely investigated in both the public and private sectors. The literature on gender disparities in managerial representation suggests that women often self-select out of positions/roles with work authority that could potentially create work-life conflict; however, little empirical research has been conducted on this issue. To address this gap in the literature, the present study empirically investigates similarities and differences in career paths of male and female CAOs and the factors that shape their career-related decisions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The aim of the literature review presented here is twofold. First, this chapter provides an overview of the literature on gender-based workforce disparities with particular focus on disparities in level of work authority. Along with a discussion on gender disparity in levels of work authority, this chapter also presents the link between disparities in authority and economic, social, and other inequalities in the workforce. Second, this chapter aims to highlight the literature on career choices and factors that shape individuals' career choices. The chapter is organized into three sections. The first section presents a discussion on gender-based employment disparities. This section offers insight into the various ways in which gender-based inequalities manifest in the workforce. The second section introduces inequalities in level of work authority as a form of workforce inequality. Here, the chapter presents dimensions of work authority and a discussion of authority inequality in the workforce. The last section examines the literature on career choices—with a focus on how gender role socialization and opportunity structure factors shape career choices of men and women in the workforce.

Gender-Based Employment Discrimination

Gender-based inequalities in society manifest in several ways. In the workforce, inequalities manifest as occupation, position, or agency segregation; pay inequity; and a disparity in benefits and opportunities available to women and racial/ethnic minorities (Alkadry & Tower, 2014). Public policies have been established to close the gender gap in access to equal employment opportunity in the workforce. Mainly, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 addresses issues of employment discrimination including sex-based employment discrimination and equal pay legislation (42 SEC. 2000e-2, 1964).

Moreover, this law, in 1964, established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to address workplace discrimination. However, despite the passing of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the establishment of the EEOC, evidence from previous research shows that the problem persists and continues to systematically manifest in new ways. Fifty years after the establishment of the EEOC, the gender pay gap persists and women remain highly concentrated in lower paying jobs, lower echelon positions, and female-dominated agencies and occupations (Alkadry & Tower, 2014; Bishu and Alkadry, 2017).

According to Sabharwal (2015) gender role socializations shape opportunities for men and women in the workforce and influence lack-of-access to certain male-dominated positions. Management positions that come with power and authority are typically reserved for men that are presumed to play leadership roles. Alkadry and Tower (2014) suggested that workplace discrimination manifests in the form of segregation in terms of agency, occupation, and position. Agency segregation relates to the concentration of women in certain female-dominated agencies such as health and human services, education, or welfare focused organizations. Women are also under-represented in regulatory agencies such as the Department of Defense, the Justice Department, and other high technology and financial institutions (Kim, 2004; Newman, 1994). Previous examinations of public sector hiring practices have revealed that women are concentrated in redistributive agencies with less regulatory autonomy—and not in male-dominated institutions, such as regulatory and distributive agencies (Alkadry, Nolf, & Condo, 2002; Alkadry & Tower, 2014; Guy, 2017; Guy & Newman, 2004; Kelly & Newman 2001; Kim, 2004; Naff, 1994; Newman, 1994; Stivers, 2000; Newman & Matthews, 1999).

Occupational segregation refers to the concentration of women in occupations such as education, nursing, or social work (Bishu & Alkadry, 2017). A major drawback of occupational segregation is that it limits the earning capacity of women, hence, widening the gap between employment related economic rewards for men and women in the workforce. Other researchers have argued that, within male-dominated agencies, women have relatively less opportunity to represent the public and contribute to regulatory and policy-making processes (Guy & Newman, 2004; Huffman, 1995; Huffman & Cohen, 2004; Kraus & Yonay, 2000). Last, position segregation, which is also explained by the “glass ceiling” phenomenon, refers to the concentration of women in lower echelon positions in organizations (Bishu & Alkadry, 2017; Alkadry & Tower, 2011, 2014; Sabharwal, 2015; Young, 2011). Position segregation explains conditions where women and racial and ethnic minorities face barriers that impede them from gaining access to executive positions in organizations. Beyond position segregation, this dissertation examined how gender-based disparities manifest among men and women in executive positions; differences in level of work authority were examined as a new form of the glass ceiling phenomenon.

Work Authority

Smith (2002) noted that the term work or job authority implies “legitimate relations of dominion and subjection” (p. 511). Authority in the workforce is validated by a position granted to an individual in an organization. Elliot and Smith (2004) emphasized that work authority is neither self-imposed nor self-initiated but derives from legitimate positions that people occupy in an organization. Work authority, therefore, relates to power that comes with a position, which enables an individual to make

decisions on human resources, finance, policy, and other organizational operations (Wright, Baxter & Birkelund, 1995; Kluegel, 1978; Wright et al., 1995; Zeng, 2011). Zeng (2011) argued that work authority is associated with "...the power to participate in and influence decision-making regarding an organization's operations and personnel. It can be measured by the extent of supervisory responsibility in hiring firing, and determining other people's wages, promotions, and work content, or defined simply as a formal position in organizational hierarchies" (p. 313).

In an earlier study, Kluegel (1978) identified two types of work authority "hierarchical and non-hierarchical authority" (p. 289). According to Kluegel, hierarchical authority grants an individual the right to oversee or "supervise" subordinates, whereas, the non-hierarchical authority only grants autonomy over technical operations of an organization (p. 289). Adler (1993) added that work authority refers to rights granted to an individual: to "design aspects of work, implement ideas, and introduce new tasks," "to decide on work hours and time off," and "to decide on the work pace" within an organization (p. 452). Wright et al. (1995) and Smith (2002) also discussed that work authority can be measured using number of direct and indirect subordinates, annual revenue administered, and the power to make personnel related decisions (appointing, removing, and promoting). Wright et al. and Smith also noted that authority drives individuals' compensation. A common thread among the above-mentioned aspects of work authority is that this authority entails legitimate control over an organization's work process. The following section reviews the existing literature that defines work authority.

Dimensions of Workplace Authority

Several scholars have highlighted different aspects of work authority. Nevertheless, all address one or multiple aspects of control over an organization's personnel, finance, production process, or policy decisions (Elliot & Smith, 2004; Fox & Schuhmann, 1999; McGuire & Reskin, 1993; Smith, 1999, 2002, 2012; Smith & Elliot, 2005; Wright et al., 1995; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). Wolf and Fligstein (1979), in particular, argued that "The essential feature of power in organizations is the ability to control resources: capital, people's work, and things. Indeed, for most people, being 'higher up' means precisely this: the ability to control one's work and the work process of others" (p. 235). Jacobs (1992) added that although individuals' level of work authority may vary, those with authority have a certain degree of control over an organization's work processes "including responsibility for hiring, firing, and promoting, controlling budgets, setting goals, and developing, recommending, and monitoring policies and procedures" (p. 287). Wright et al. (1995), on the other hand, emphasized the intellectual aspect work authority that he identified as "cognitive input." According to Wright et al., work authority encompasses the "extent to which an individual controls the conceptual aspects of work" (p. 324). Kluegel (1978) summarized two dimensions of work authority: the first, hierarchical authority, relates to "organizational official authority to supervise subordinates and give orders," and the second dimension is non-hierarchical authority—that is, "non-official authority derived from technical expertise" (p. 289). Although not significantly different from the dimensions discussed above, Baron, Mittman, and Newman (1991) identified three dimensions of work authority—authority: "(a) to design aspects of work, implement ideas, and introduce new tasks; (b) to decide on work hours

and time off, and (c) to decide on the work pace” (p. 452). Smith (2002) provided the most comprehensive summary of different forms of work authority: “sanctioning authority,” “span of control,” “decision-making (managerial authority),” “hierarchical authority,” and “supervisory authority” (p. 511). Sanctioning authority relates to a manager’s authority over hiring, promotion, and pay of subordinates (Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). Span of control relates to the number of subordinates that a manager supervises (Mueller, Parcel, & Tanaka, 1989; Smith, 2002). Decision-making or managerial authority relates to a manager’s influence over an organization’s financial recourses, as well as policy-making process including human resource policy and production policies (Moore & Shakman; 1996; Rosenfield, Van Buren, & Kalleberg, 1998; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). Hierarchical authority relates to the official position granted to a manager (Kluegel, 1978; Smith, 1999, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). In summary, the literature on dimensions of work authority identifies three aspects: control over policy, financial, and material aspects; control over personnel resources; and control over technical aspects of an organization.

Authority Inequality in the Workforce

Work authority attainment is an important aspect of an individual’s job related responsibilities, and work authority attainment shapes how economic rewards from work are determined. Disparities in access to work authority manifest when qualified individuals in the workforce are denied authority opportunities for reasons other than work-related competency skills. Huffman and Cohen (2004) argued: “Authority is a highly-valued attribute of jobs because it is status conferring and shapes how financial rewards are allocated to workers” (p. 121). In an analysis of the historic development of

studies on work authority, Smith (2002) grouped the literature into “first generation,” “second generation,” and “third generation” (p. 535). According to Smith, “first generation” studies capitalized on “theory building” while “second generation” studies expanded established theories and focused on “operationalization and measurement” of the concept of work authority; “third generation” research, on the other hand, focused on “hypothesis testing” (p. 535). Studies that included hypothesis testing have identified factors that predict individuals’ level of work authority. These studies identified factors such as human capital and structural, organizational, and individual characteristics—including gender, race/ethnicity, and class differences—as predictors of work authority attainment in the workforce. According to Smith (2002) third generation research investigate inequalities in levels of work authority, inequalities in access to work authority and economic implications of work authority disparities. This dissertation should be categorized as third-generation research on work authority.

In summary, this group of studies address issues of access to work authority, relative distribution of work authority, and the cost of unequal access to work authority. While some studies have examined remuneration implications of unequal access to authority (Adams & Funk, 2012; Alkadry & Tower, 2011), other studies have examined how inequalities in access to work authority propagate social stratification (Hill, 1980). Several of these studies have considered organizational and individual factors along with human capital factors as factors that shape disparities in access to work authority. In addition to investigating factors that predict access to work authority, past research has also explored different aspects of work authority including authority related to supervisory status and control over human resources and organizational finances

(Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Halaby, 1979; Spaeth, 1985; Smith, 2002). Several past studies also reported that control over an organization's personnel and financial operations are the two most important determinants of economic inequalities that derive from authority inequality in the workforce (Klugel, 1978; see also Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Halaby, 1979; Smith, 2002, 2012; Spaeth, 1985). In earlier studies, McGuire and Reskin (1993) and Spaeth (1985) found that men earned twice the salary of their female counterparts due to having authority to oversee the financial resources of their organizations, which highlights the economic implications of unequal access to authority over the financial resources of an organization. Researchers have long used the gender gap in human capital to support the scarcity of women in positions of authority or the gender gap in levels of authority. However, today, with women acquiring human capital that is comparable to that of men, most recent studies on the subject fail to confirm that human capital factors explain the persistent disparity in managerial representation (Alkadry & Tower, 2011). Discussing differential effects of human capital factors on men and women in the workforce, Smith (2002) explained that men are more likely to acquire positions of authority in organizations than women and that "employer behavior and organizational policies" reinforce disparities (p. 530). Smith notes:

Education and job tenure exert a stronger effect on the authority attainment of men than women—especially at high levels of authority. Family ties improve men's, but not women's, chances to gain authority, and to the extent that women occupy managerial positions, they tend to be located at the bottom of the command chain—largely supervising other women and receiving lower earnings than men who occupy similar positions. In fact, gender differences in authority

attainment account for much of the pay differences between men and women at high levels of authority. (p. 534)

In terms of impacts of organizational factors and work processes, previous studies have identified organizations' structure, size, and age; percentage of women in the organization; percentage of women in management positions; internal work policy (particularly due-process structures); and work/life balance policies as determinants of gender disparities in job-related outcomes (Rosenfield et al., 1998; Smith, 2002). Additionally, studies that investigated gender disparities in work authority have suggested that disparities may be explained by women opting out of work opportunities due to conflicts of responsibility at work and at home. These studies explain that sometimes women make rational choices to defer or opt out of career opportunities either because of conflicting roles at home and at work or because they face biases from others in the workforce (Jacobs & Steinberg, 1990; Smith, 2002; Wilde, Batchelder, & Ellwood, 2010). The following discussion presents the literature on gender and career choices in the workforce.

Gender and Career Choices

The literature on career choice highlights how gender shapes the career-related decisions of individuals in the workforce. Specifically, this literature identifies gender role socialization and opportunity structure as two driving factors that shape gender differences in career choice as well as overall differences in career paths that men and women take in the workforce. The first, gender role socialization, addresses how social norms and gendered responsibilities at home and at work shape women's career choices differently than men. Here, the discussion primarily focusses on the dual roles that

women play at home and work and how that impacts work/life conflict issues that shape their career related decisions. Second, the literature on opportunity structure—as a factor that shapes career choices—highlights how access to opportunities at institutional and individual-levels shape career outcomes for men and women in the workforce.

Gender Role Socialization

The literature that links gender role socialization to career choices has noted that social norms and values are important factors that shape men and women’s job-related outcomes in the workforce (Sabharwal, 2015). Researchers have argued that the gendered roles that women play at home, particularly during years of family formation, induce work/life conflict issues (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000; Sabharwal, 2015; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). The work/life conflict issue, as a result, shapes the career choices of women in the workforce. Women’s career choices (i.e., temporarily opting out of the workforce because of family commitment) are explained by concepts such as “compensation differential” or “the mommy track” (Ehrlich, 1989; Kilbourne et al., 1994; Smith, 2002). Studies that explore how gender role socialization impacts women’s career choices have reported that, in the absence of appropriate social and institutional support, the dual roles of work and family responsibilities weight heavily on women—consequently impacting their career choices (Jacobs & Steinberg, 1990; Smith, 2002). Studies that link gender role socialization to opting out or self-selection report two findings. First, studies report that work/life conflict issues sometimes result in women making rational choices to self-select from career opportunities in the workforce (Bridges & Miller, 1979; Bygren & Gähler, 2012; Lewis, 1986; Sapienza, 2010). Second, past studies also report little or no support for the argument that the gendered responsibilities

that women perform at home and at work lead to women self-selecting out of career opportunities (Baxter, 1997; Hopcraft, 1996).

In addition to the impact of women's gendered roles on their career development, the literature also explains that women in the workforce face barriers when institutional processes have pre-disposed biases against women with family responsibilities. The "think manager, think male" theory explains that the characteristics *needed* for leadership positions are associated with "male traits" (McGregor, 1967; Russell, 1994; Sabharwal, 2015; Schein, 1975, 2001). This attitude stems from the assumption that leadership positions are only suitable for men (McGregor, 1967). Sabharwal (2015) noted that "Leadership is considered a quality mostly associated with males, most of the traits cited in the literature for an effective leader have been male traits (risk taking, decisiveness, directive, assertive, ambitious)" (p. 3), which suggests that women face biases and negative attitudes when pursuing managerial roles in the workforce. The "think manager, think male" theory helps us understand the attitudes that are shaped by gender role socialization.

Opportunity Structure

Opportunity structure refers to how opportunities in the workforce and elsewhere shape career choices of men and women. The literature focusing on this area has shown that gender role socialization and opportunity structure are not independent of each other (Astin, 1984; Sabharwal, 2015). Astin (1984) noted that "gender role socialization process and the opportunity structure are interactive; each influences the other to some extent" (p. 122). Opportunity structure that impact individuals' career choices can be further grouped into two categories. The first group is individual factors that shape

individuals' work opportunities. Discussed here are access to human capital, including education and training opportunities, formal and informal mentorship programs, and work and outside of work socialization networks (Astin, 1984; Riccucci, 2009; Sabharwal, 2015). The second group relates to institutional factors that shape opportunities that are accessible to individuals in the workforce. Institutional factors include organizational policies including work/life balance policies and hiring and promotion processes that may impact career opportunities available to men and women. Among the institutional factors, individual attitudes and biases displayed by leadership shape career opportunities for men and women differently. In particular, leadership attitudes that align with the “think manager, think male” approach often fail to recognize the women’s potential as managers. The manner in which gender roles evolve in society also shape the opportunity structure for women everywhere. Opportunities manifest when gendered household roles are blurred, and more men actively participate in providing care to their families—consequently creating opportunities for women to take active roles outside of their home, including the workforce.

Chapter 3: Research Question, Hypothesis, and Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the research questions that will be addressed in the two phases of the dissertation. The first phase, using a quantitative research method, explores the relationship between CAOs' gender and CAOs' level of work authority (control over personnel operations and control over formal operations). In the next step of the first phase, the dissertation explores the relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority (control over personnel operations and control over formal operations) and CAOs' annual pay. To address these issues, the study therefore, poses the following research questions:

Research Question 1: Are there gender differences in levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) among CAOs?

Research Question 2: Are there gender differences in levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations) among CAOs?

Research Question 3: Is there a relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) and CAOs' annual pay?

In the second phase, using a qualitative research method, I conduct an in-depth investigation of similarities and differences in male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions. Here, the study poses the following question:

Research Question 4: What are the similarities and differences of male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions?

Predictors of Work Authority Inequality

This section summarizes findings from past studies that identified factors that predict work authority inequality. The discussion on predictors of work authority in this section is informed by Smith's (2002) categorization of the three levels of predictors of work authority. Smith (2002, p. 512) categorized factors that predict work authority inequality into:

- Micro-level predictors: individual-level factors that shape disparities in work authority attainment in the workforce.
- Macro-level structural predictors: organizational and external factors that shape disparities in work authority attainment in the workforce.
- Meso-level predictors: societal attitudes and perceptions that shape disparities in work authority attainment in the workforce.

Conceptual framework of this dissertation adopts the first two: micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority. Therefore, the first phase of the dissertation incorporates, and discusses, micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority.

Micro-level Predictors: Individual-Level Factors

The existing literature on work authority inequality suggests that inequalities in the workforce are shaped by individual factors (Mintz & Krymkowski, 2010; Smith, 2002; Smith & Elliot, 2005; Wright et al., 1995) and human capital factors (Elliot & Smith, 2004; Mintz & Krymkowski, 2010; Reskin, 1988; Smith, 2002; Smith & Elliot, 2005; Wright et al., 1995). The effects of individual factors and human capital factors on authority attainment are not exclusive of one another and oftentimes reinforce each other.

The discussion below identifies how individual and human capital factors shape authority attainment in the workforce.

Studies that identify individual factors as predictors of work authority attainment have noted that opportunity structure, including access to authority, are different for men and women in the workforce (Mintz & Krymkowski, 2010; Smith, 2002). Among the individual factors that have been identified by prior research, gender and race appear to be the most significant (Smith, 2002; Smith & Elliot, 2005; Wright et al., 1995). Differences in opportunity structure such as access to human capital investments—including education, training, and work experience—result in better authority attainment. Not only are there systemic differences in opportunity structure for men and women in the workforce, but returns from human capital yield different outcomes for men and women in the workforce (Halaby, 1979; Hill, 1980; Smith, 2002; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). Wright et al. (1995) argued that “gender differences in various kinds of individual attributes, especially specialized training and labor market experience, may make women less qualified for managerial jobs” (p. 408). A second problem associated with individual factors is that biases (both individual, group, and institutional biases) prevent women from gaining access to positions of authority (Kanter, 1977; Reskin & Padivac, 1994; Wright et al., 1995). Investigating this issue, prior studies have argued that intentions to preserve power in the hands of one group drive the exclusion of others from gaining access to power (Acker, 1990; Elliot & Smith, 2004; Kanter, 1977; Reskin, 1988; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). Theories such as “*homo-social reproduction*” and “social closure” specifically highlight the ways in which societal and institutional biases systematically exclude women and racial/ethnic minorities from positions with authority

(Elliot & Smith, 2001; Kanter, 1977; Kluegel, 1978, Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). The third problem: individual factors such as marital status, age, and having young children yield different outcomes for men and women in the workforce (Jaffee, 1989; Smith, 1997, 1999, 2002; Smith & Elliot, 2005; Wright et al., 1995). Studies that highlighted the factors mentioned above argue that women with dual responsibilities at home and at work are more likely to have intermittent career patterns during years of family formation (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Wright et al., 1995). Others have argued that, during the years of family formation, women will likely experience systemic discrimination that impacts their authority attainment. On the other hand, studies have also shown mixed results regarding the impact of family on men: while some have found that men with families are positively rewarded in the workforce (McGuire & Reskin, 1993; Smith, 2002), others have reported no special reward for men with families (Smith & Elliot, 2005). Conceptual framework of this dissertation adopts the two dimensions of micro-level predictors of work authority (individual and human capital factors) as laid out in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Micro-level predictors of work authority

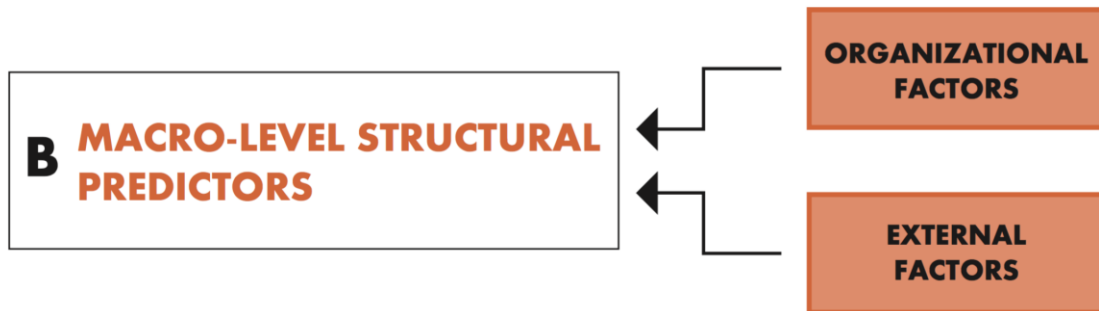


Macro-Level Structural Factors: Organizational and External Factors

Smith (2002) identified macro-level structural factors as those that help explain “ascriptive inequality in the distribution of authority” in the workforce (p. 519). Macro-level structural predictors of work authority identify organizational factors (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Baron et al., 1991; Huffman, 1999; Smith, 2002), labor force characteristics (Kaufman, 2002; Mintz & Krymkowski, 2010; Moore & Shakman, 1969; Reskin, 1988) and regional factors that predict authority attainment in the workforce. Past research has noted that larger and older institutions appear to provide career opportunities to women and racial/ethnic minorities (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Baron et al., 1991; Huffman 1999; Smith 2002). In the United States, this is partly explained by Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regulations that require organizations with more than 100 employees to report on their workforce diversity. Organizational hierarchy and one’s position in the hierarchy predict authority attainment for both men and women in the workforce (Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). There are mixed results on the association between gender representation at leadership levels and better authority attainment opportunities for other women in the workforce. Some researchers have argued that increased representation of women at the leadership level opens opportunities for other women in the workforce (Olsen & Martins, 2012). Others have concluded that increased representation of women at the leadership level only impacts women at lower levels of organizational hierarchies (Wright et al., 1995). At the other end of the spectrum, Huffman and Cohen (2004) reported a decline in opportunity for authority attainment (for both men and women) when more women are in leadership positions. Some have suggested a need for more research on the subject (Ali, Kulik, & Metz, 2011). In general,

the presence of formalized hiring and promotion procedures help increase chances for typically marginalized groups, including women, to attain positions of authority (Hultin & Szulkin, 2003; Kanter, 1977; Kluegel, 1978; Wright et al., 1995). Studies report that job attributes, full time versus part time jobs, impact individuals' authority attainment in the workforce (Wright et al., 1995). Here it is argued that individuals with full-time jobs have better chances of attaining authority than part time or seasonal workers. Institutions with family-friendly Internal Labor Management (ILM) policies—particularly work/life balance policies, lactation policies, and other policies that are responsive to work/life conflict issues—positively impact women's opportunities to attain work authority (Baron et al., 1991; Huffman, 1999; Kluegel, 1978; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). While men have a better chance of attaining authority in organizations with higher revenue (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Smith, 2002), women have better chances of attaining authority in female-dominated occupations and organizations (Mintz & Krymkowski, 2010; Smith, 2002). Women also appear to have better opportunity for authority attainment in urban areas with diverse population (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Moore & Shackman, 1996; Smith, 2002). Finally, geographic and regional factors yield different authority attainment outcomes for men and women in the workforce (Elliot & Smith 2004; Wright et al., 1995). Conceptual framework of this dissertation adopts the two dimensions of macro-level structural predictors of work authority (organizational and external factors) as laid out in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Macro-level predictors of work authority

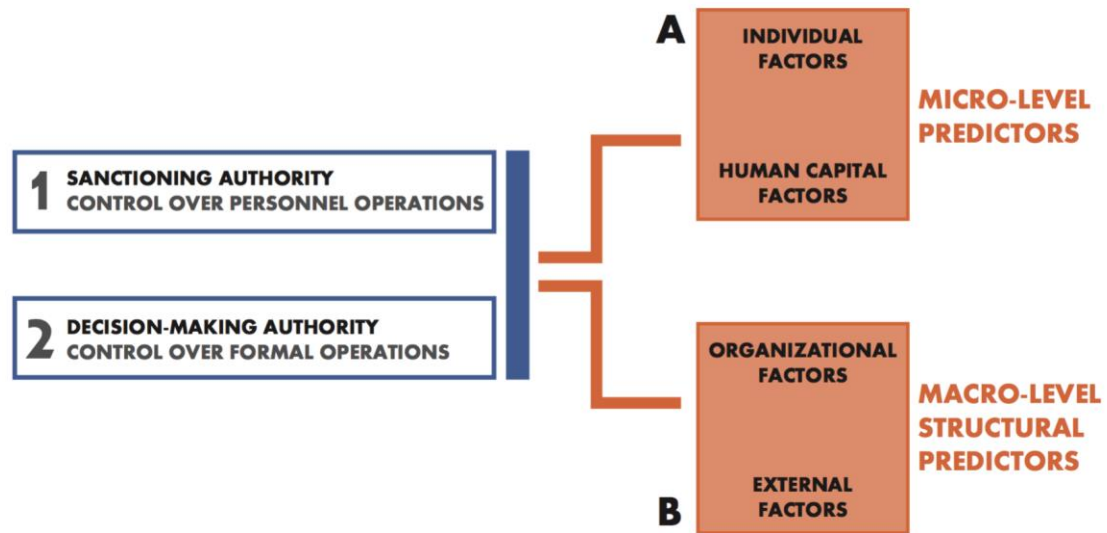


Hypothesis 1: Compared to male CAOs, female CAOs are likely to have lower levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations).

Hypothesis 2: Compared to male CAOs, female CAOs are likely to have lower levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations).

Conceptual framework of this dissertation adopts the two dimensions of predictors of work authority (micro-and macro-level structural predictors) as laid out in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Predictors of work authority



Work Authority and Pay

The discussion on predictors of managers’ pay (compensation) is categorized into four groups. First, individual characteristics (factors) that predict pay. Second, human capital factors—such as education, training, and work experience associated with individuals’ pay. Third, organizational factors—organizational characteristics that shape an individual’s economic reward from work. Fourth, external factors—geographic and regional characteristics that shape an individual’s pay.

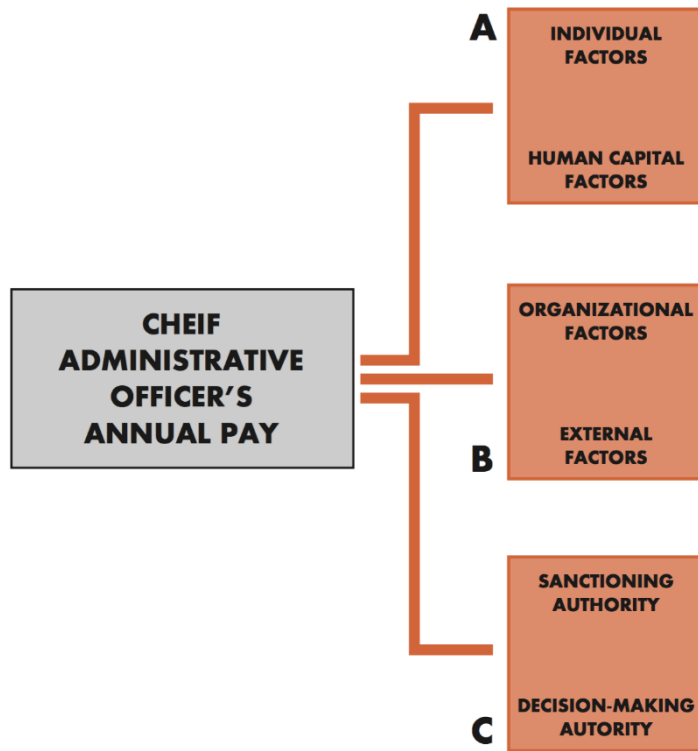
Factors Predicting Pay

The gender-based pay gap persists (Bihsu & Alkadry, 2016; Miller, 2009). Past studies have identified that women and racial/ethnic minorities in managerial positions are disadvantaged in terms of pay compared to men and non-minorities (Alkadry & Tower, 2006, 2011; Meier & Wilkins, 2002; Mitra, 2003; Zeng, 2011). In addition to gender, willingness to relocate when career opportunities open shapes individuals’ economic return from a job (Budig & Hodges, 2010; Loprest, 1992; Ng, Eby, Sorensen,

& Feldman, 2005). More recent research has shown that human capital factors fail to predict work authority attainment at managerial levels in the workforce (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Meier & Wilkins, 2002). Organizational characteristics, including industry, sector, and size (both workforce and budget size) shape individuals' economic return from work. Past studies have identified that managers who oversee a larger workforce (number of subordinates) and higher organizational revenue have greater pay benefits than others (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Hopcroft, 1996; Langer, 2000; Smith, 2001). Moreover, within the context of organizational characteristics, higher levels of authority increase the chance of better economic rewards from work (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Huffman & Cohen, 2004; Smith 2001, 2002). External factors such as regional characteristics (urban, suburban or rural), as well as geographic region and local economic characteristics, directly or indirectly shape an individuals' economic return from work (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Engstrom, McIntosh, Ridzi, & Kruger, 2006; Kearney, 2003). Last, past studies have linked work authority to individuals' compensation or pay (Alkadry and Tower, 2011). As laid out in Figure 4 below, this dissertation aims to establish the link between CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority) to CAOs' annual pay.

Hypothesis 3: Higher level of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) is associated with higher pay for CAOs.

Figure 4: Predictors of Pay



Constructing Work Authority

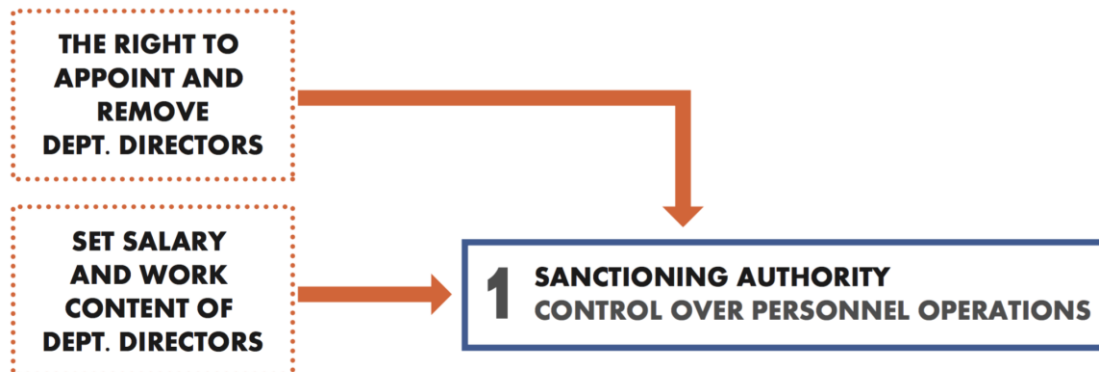
The literature review presented in Chapter 2 provided an overview of definitions and an operationalization for the concept of work authority. Here, I will discuss how the variable work authority is operationalized and constructed in this dissertation. This dissertation considers two dimensions of work authority: sanctioning authority and decision-making authority.

Sanctioning Authority: Control over Personnel Operations

The first dimension of work authority, sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations), considers Chief Administrative Officers' control over the work of others (departmental directors). As laid out in Figure 5 below, this dimension of work

authority encompasses CAO's sanctioning authority, including authority to appoint and remove department directors in local governments, as well as determine the salary and duties of these directors (England, Christopher, & Reid, 1999; Jacob, 1992; Mueller et al., 1989; Smith, 2001, 2002; Wright et al., 1995; Zeng, 2011).

Figure 5: Sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations)



Decision-Making Authority: Control over Formal Operations

The second dimension of work authority is decision-making authority—control over formal operations of local governments. This dimension of work authority encompasses CAOs' decision-making or managerial authority. As shown in Figure 6 below, this dimension of work authority considers the extent to which CAOs influence organizational policies and financial resources (Moore & Shakman, 1996; Rosenfeld et al., 1998; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). Here, the dissertation considers the extent to which elected officials incorporate CAOs' policy and financial recommendations during decision-making.

Figure 6: Decision-making authority (control over formal operations)

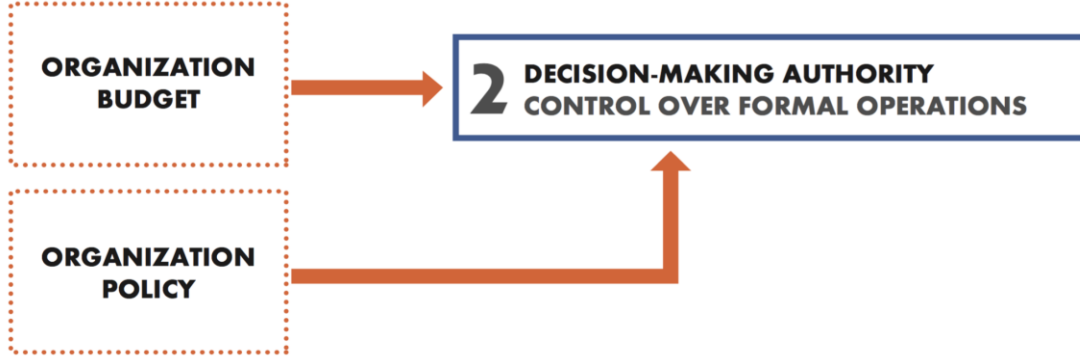
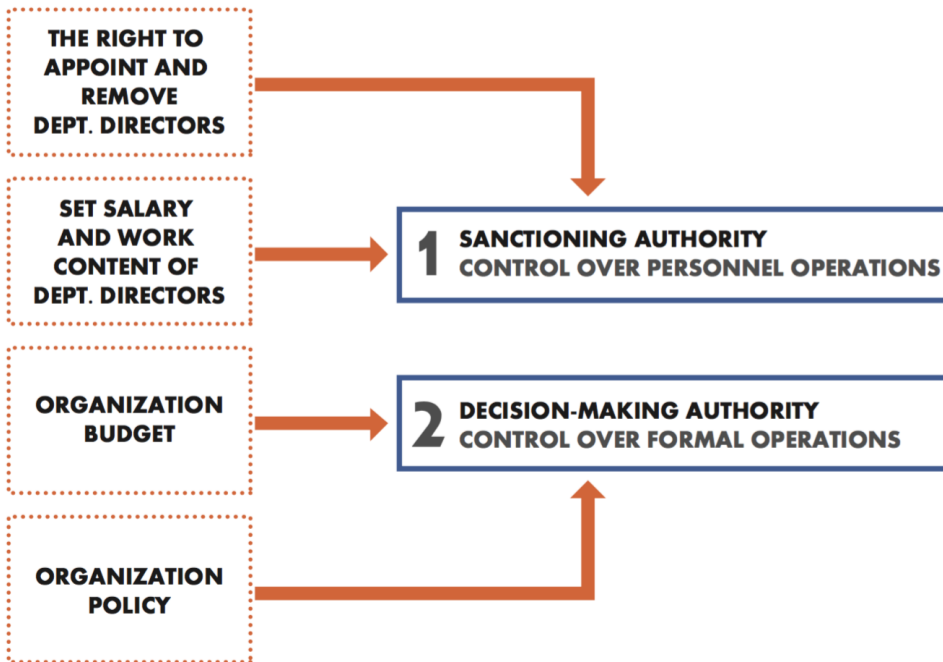


Figure 7 below lays out the two dimensions of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority) and their operationalization as considered in the overall conceptual framework of the dissertation.

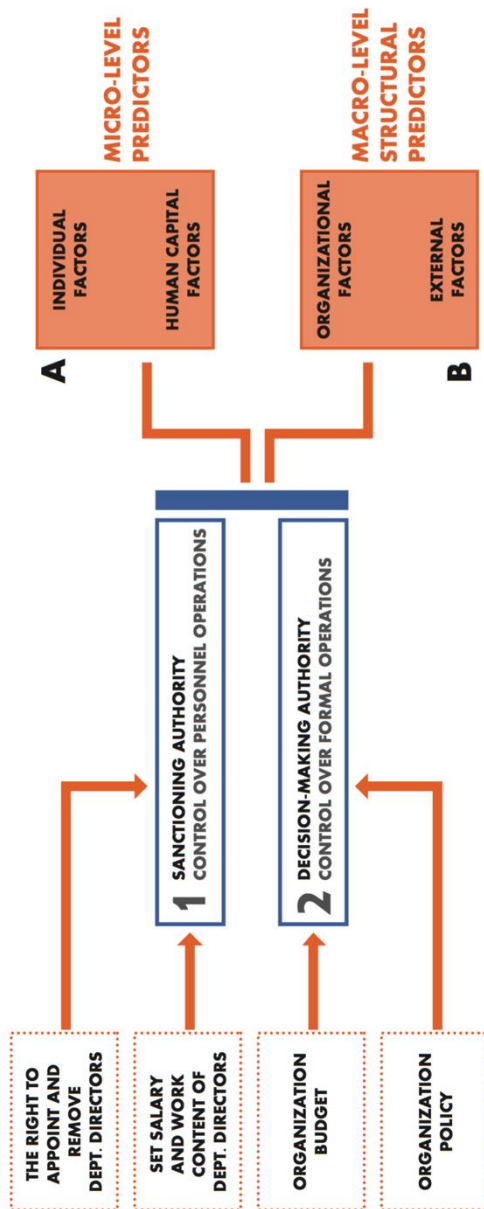
Figure 7: Constructing CAOs' two dimensions of work authority



Overall Conceptual Framework

The overall conceptual framework of the dissertation, as presented in Figure 8 below, brings together the two dimensions of CAOs' level of work authority (i.e., sanctioning and decision-making) and the micro- and macro-level structural predictors of CAOs' level of work authority.

Figure 8: Overall conceptual framework



Chapter 4: Research Design and Study Context

Research Design

This dissertation employs a two-phase mixed methods research design. In the first phase, using a quantitative research method, I explored factors that predict CAOs' level of work authority. In this phase, the study investigated if CAOs' gender is a statistically significant predictor of CAOs' level of work authority. In addition, the study investigated if CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority) predict CAOs' annual pay. In the second phase, using a qualitative research method, I conducted an in-depth investigation of CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions—with the intention of identifying similarities and differences between male and female CAOs. I first describe the research context, with a focus on forms of municipal governments in the United States and the study population: Chief Administrative Officers in local governments in the United States. Later, I provide a description of the two phases of the dissertation.

Forms of Municipal Governments in the United States

There are five types of municipal government in the United States: council-manager, mayor-council, commission, town meeting, and representative town meeting (National League of Cities, n.d.). The most common forms of municipal government are mayor-council, and council-manager. The council-manager form is the most common, and fastest growing, form of municipal government in the United States. The town meeting and representative town meeting forms of municipal government are the least common of the five; mayor-council government has contracted the most in the last two decades (12.2% decrease). Table 1 below summarizes types of municipal governments in

the United States and the changing demographics of the five forms of municipal governments in the last two decades.

Table 1: Forms of municipal government in the United States

(representing only municipal governments with a population of 2,500 or more)

Form of Government	2011	2000	1984
Council-Manager	3,647 (48.7%)	3,302 (48.3%)	2,290 (35%)
Mayor-Council	3,280 (43.8%)	2,988 (43.7%)	3,686 (56%)
Commission	143 (1.9%)	143 (2.1%)	176 (3%)
Town Meeting	349 (4.7%)	334 (4.9%)	370(6%)
Representative Town Meeting	64 (0.86%)	65 (.95%)	81 (1%)
Total	7,483 (100%)	6,832 (100%)	6,603 (100%)

Source: Adopted from Official Website of International City/County Management Association (n.d.,a). Local Government Longitudinal Statistics (1984-2011).

The mayor-council form of government is the oldest and the most common among large municipalities with a population over 100,000 and small municipalities with population of under 5,000 (see Table 2 below). The council-manager form of government, on the other hand, is most common in medium sized municipalities with a population of 5,000 to 100,000.

Table 2: Council-Manager versus Mayor-Council, (2014)

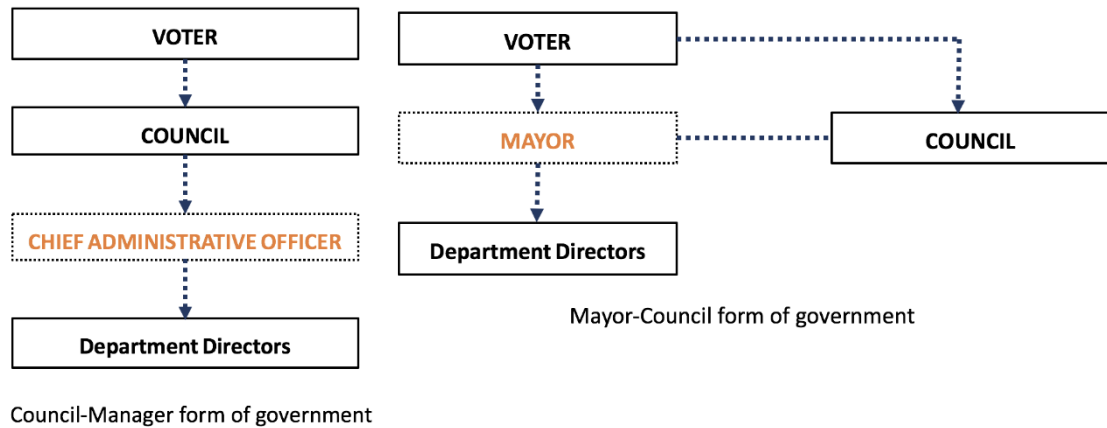
Population	Council-Manager	Mayor-Council
2,500 and 4,999	CM: 743 (37%)	MC: 1,123 (56%)
5,000 and 9,999	CM: 894 (46%)	MC: 864 (45%)
10,000 and 24,999	CM: 1,004 (52%)	MC: 760 (39%)
25,000 and 49,999	CM: 552 (62%)	MC: 299 (34%)
50,000 and 99,999	CM: 309 (64%)	MC: 165 (34%)
100,000 and 249,999	CM: 144 (69%)	MC: 61 (29%)
250,000 and 499,999	CM: 20 (48%)	MC: 21 (50%)
500,000 and 1,000,000	CM: 8 (32%)	MC: 16 (64%)

1,000,000	CM: 3 (33%)	MC: 6 (67%)
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Source: Adopted from Official Web page of International City/County Management Association (n.d.,b).

In the mayor-council form of government, the mayor is elected independent of the elected body (council members). In this form of government, the mayor has significant administrative authority. Some municipalities with a mayor-council form of government may hire professional managers whose roles and responsibilities are limited to some administrative roles (National League of Cities, n.d.). In this form of government, the council holds the autonomy to make policy and legislative decisions. The structure of the council-manager form of government, however, differs from the mayor-council form of government (see Figure 9 below). Here, the roles and responsibilities of the council (elected body) include making policy and budgetary decisions (Nelson & Svara, 2014). Power in this form of government is concentrated around roles played by elected officials (ICMA, n.d.,c). In a council-manager form of government, elected officials appoint a professional administrator that oversees the day-to-day administration of municipalities (Nelson & Svara, 2014). In a town, village, or city, the professional administrator of the municipality is called a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO); the administrator of a county is called a Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Figure 9: Forms of municipal government structure



Source: Adopted from Official Web page of International City/County Management Association (n.d.,c).

The Chief Administrative Officer

The CAO position was established for the first time over 100 years ago. Nelson and Svava (2014) reported that “Beginning in 1908, American cities began using a new form of government that combined the political leadership of an elected board and the professional leadership of an appointed administrator (the city manager)” (p. 20). While CAOs are appointed by and serve at the will of elected officials, elected officials in a council-manager form of government are elected periodically. CAOs in the council-manager form of government are responsible for the day-to-day administrative operations of cities including human resource, budget, and policy oversight (Ammons & Newell, 1989; Nelson & Svava, 2014; Svava, 1999; Wheeland, 2000). In addition to overseeing administrative operations of local governments, CAOs are also active players in mediating interests of communities and elected officials. CAOs play this role by serving

as policy advisors to elected officials (Nelson & Svara, 2014). Stillman (1977) noted that “A complex working relationship evolves between the elected legislative policy makers on council and the appointed chief administrator” (p. 659). In practice, roles of a CAO can vary significantly (Nelson & Svara, 2014; Selden, Brewer, & Brudney, 1999; Svara, 1999). In some cases, a CAO exclusively engages in administrative responsibilities, including executing policies initiated by elected officials; CAOs’ roles can also extend to participating in policy and financial decision-making processes (Selden et al., 1999).

The CAO profession in the United States is highly dominated by men (Aguado & Frederickson, 2012; Nelson & Svara, 2014). Moreover, Nelson and Svara (2014) noted that the demographic composition of CAOs and council members “continued to be similar in race, gender, and socio- economic status—white, male, and middle class” (p. 53). According to 2016 members’ demographic data from the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), women represent about 16.6% of the total CAO population in cities and counties. This data also show that Caucasians comprise 94.3%, and African American minorities comprise 3.3%, of the total ICMA member CAO population—which suggests that there is a lack of gender and racial/ethnic diversity in local government leadership.

Phase I: Quantitative Method

As mentioned earlier, the first phase of the dissertation investigated the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors and CAOs’ level of work authority related to control over personnel operations and control over formal operations. In addition, in this phase, the dissertation investigates the relationship

between CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority) and CAOs' annual pay. The primary purpose of this phase of the research is to identify if CAOs' gender predicts their level of work authority as well as to identify if disparities in levels of work authority induce economic inequality. Therefore, I addressed the two research questions: *“Are there gender differences in levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) among CAOs?”* and *“Are there gender differences in levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations) among CAOs?”* Next, I examined the relationship between CAOs' level of work authority and CAOs' annual salary. Here, I investigated the following research question: *“Is there a relationship between CAOs' level of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) and CAOs' annual pay?”* By investigating this question, the dissertation aimed to identify if levels of work authority establishes economic inequality among the study population. To address the three research questions, the study utilized survey data collected from ICMA chapter member CAOs across five states (Virginia, Illinois, Wisconsin, Florida, and Utah).

Unit of Analysis and Sampling Procedure

The unit of analysis and population of interest for this dissertation are Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) across five states in the United States. This stage of the dissertation utilized a combination of expert and convenience sampling method. The study population are member CAOs from ICMA state chapters from five states across four regions in the United States: Northeast, Midwest, West, and South. This process aimed to ensure diversity and representation of the study population from the above mentioned four regions. Member CAOs that participated in the survey were contacted

through their respective ICMA state chapters: Virginia (VLGMA), Florida (FCCMA), Wisconsin (WCMA), Illinois (ILCMA), and Utah (UCMA). Selection of participating state chapters was based on prior working relationship with and recommendations from ICMA state chapter members. Also, as noted above, state chapter selection was intended to ensure representation from the four regions of the United States. Regional classification was based on U.S. Census Bureau regional classification (Northeast, Midwest, West, and South).

Data

During this phase of the dissertation, survey data from participating CAOs was collected using a survey instrument that was designed for this dissertation. The survey instrument incorporates questions about CAOs' level of work authority and micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority discussed in the literature review (see survey instrument in the Appendix). The survey instrument was first pilot-tested with three volunteer CAOs. After modifications were done to the survey instrument, based on comments/input gathered during the pilot test, the instrument was administered online using Qualtrics survey software. Participants that received an invitation to take part in the survey were provided with a web-link to the survey instrument. To encourage individuals to complete the survey, three follow-up emails were sent to member CAOs from the five ICMA state chapters.

Variables

Dependent variables. There are three dependent variables in this study. The first two dependent variables measure CAOs' level of work authority [i.e., CAOs' sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) and CAOs' decision-making authority

(control over formal operations)]. These two work authority variables are composite values constructed using work-control dimensions discussed in the literature review. Table 3 below presents operationalization and measurement of the dependent variables related to CAOs' level of work authority. The third dependent variable—CAOs' pay—measures CAOs' annual compensation from work. Table 4 below presents operationalization and measurement of the dependent variable representing CAOs' annual salary.

Independent variables. As discussed in Chapter 2 (literature review), the independent variables of interest in this dissertation are: individual factors, human capital factors, and organizational factors. The primary variable of interest in the first two regression models that predict CAOs' levels of work authority is CAOs' gender. Primary variables of interest in the second regression model are CAOs' sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) and CAOs' decision-making authority (control over formal operations). Table 3 and Table 4 below present measurement and operationalization of independent variables included in the three regression models.

Control Variables. Control variables included in this dissertation are external factors that capture regional differences including municipal population, region, urban versus rural, and regional economic characteristics. Table 3 and Table 4 below present a description (operationalization and measurement) of control variables included in all three regression analyses.

Table 3: Operationalization and measurement of predictors of work authority

Variables	Definition and Measurement
DEPENDENT VARIABLES	
<i>Authority Variables</i>	
Sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations)	Composite value of CAOs' sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations), continuous variable.
Decision-making authority (control over formal operations)	Composite value of CAOs' decision-making authority (control over formal operations), continuous variable.
MAIN INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	
<i>Individual Factors</i>	
Gender	CAOs' gender, dummy variable (1= female, 0= male).
Age	CAOs' age, continuous variable.
Marital status	CAOs' marital or cohabitation status, dummy variable (1=married or co-habiting, 0=single, widowed or divorced).
Children under 18	Number of children under the age of 18, continuous variable.
<i>Human Capital Factors</i>	
Education	CAOs' highest level of education, interval variable. (1=high school diploma, 2=technical/vocational, 3=Some college, 4=Associate degree, 5=Bachelor's degree, 6=Master's degree, 7=Some doctoral level course, 8=Doctoral degree, 9=Juris doctor).
Certification	CAO has professional certification, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).
Local government experience	CAOs' number of years of work experience in local government, continuous variable.
Work experience	CAOs' total number of years of work experience, continuous variable.
Experience as manager	CAOs' number of years of work experience as a manager, continuous variable.
<i>Organizational Factors</i>	
Full-time Employees (FTE)	Number of full-time employees that a CAO supervises, continuous variable.
Budget	Local government annual budget that a CAO oversees, continuous variable.

Mayor-Council	CAOs' form of local government, dummy variable (mayor-council=1, council-manager=0).
Fire department	There is a fire department in CAOs' administration, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).
Police department	There is a police department in CAOs' administration, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).
Council gender diversity	Gender composition of council, range between 0 and 1 (0=there is gender balance in council representation, 1=there is no gender balance in council representation).

External Factors

Population	Local government population size, continuous variable
State (IL, WI, VA, UT)	State in which CAO serves, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0), FL is baseline.
Urban	CAO is from urban area, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).
Rural	CAO is from rural area, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).
Median income	County level median income, continuous variable.
Median housing value	County level median housing value, continuous variable.

Table 4: Operationalization and measurement of predictors of CAOs' annual pay

Variables	Definition and Measurement
DEPENDENT VARIABLE	
CAO annual pay	CAOs' annual salary, continuous variable.
MAIN INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	
<i>Individual Factors</i>	
Gender	CAOs' gender, dummy variable (1= female, 0= male).
Relocate	CAOs' willingness to relocate when career opportunities are presented, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).
<i>Human Capital Factors</i>	
Education	CAOs' highest level of education, interval variable (1=high school diploma, 2=technical/vocational, 3=Some college, 4=Associate's degree, 5=Bachelor's degree, 6= Master's degree, 7=Some doctoral level course, 8=Doctoral degree, 9=Juris doctor).
Certification	CAO has professional certification, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).
Local government experience	CAOs' number of years of work experience in local government, continuous variable.
Work experience	CAOs' total number of years of work experience, continuous variable.
Experience as manager	CAOs' number of years of work experience as a manager, continuous variable.
<i>Authority Factors</i>	
Authority (Sanctioning Authority)	Composite value of CAOs' sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations), continuous variable.
Authority (Decision-Making Authority)	Composite value of CAOs' decision-making authority (control over formal operations), continuous variable.
<i>Organizational Factors</i>	

Full-time Employees (FTE)	Number of full-time employees that a CAO supervises, continuous variable.
Budget	Local government annual budget that a CAO oversees, continuous variable.
Mayor-Council	CAO's form of local government, dummy variable (mayor-council=1, council-manager=0).
<hr/> <i>External Factors</i> <hr/>	
Population	Local government population size, continuous variable.
State (IL, WI, VA, UT)	State in which CAO serves, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0), FL is baseline.
Urban/Suburban	CAO is from urban or suburban area, dummy variable (yes=1, no=0).
Median income	County level median income, continuous variable.
Median housing value	County level median housing value, continuous variable.

Phase II: Qualitative Method

Using a qualitative research method, this phase of the dissertation addresses the last research question: “*What are the similarities and differences of male and female CAOs’ career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions?*” The primary goal of this phase of the dissertation is to investigate similarities and differences of male and female CAOs’ career paths and the factors that shape decisions they make related to their careers. To address this research question, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participating male and female CAOs from the State of Florida (Chapter 5 provides a complete description of participating CAOs). During this phase, I noted how issues such as gender role socialization and opportunity structure shape male and female CAOs’ career path in similar or different ways.

Unit of Analysis and Sampling Procedure

The unit of analysis for this phase is CAOs from the State of Florida. Only CAOs from the State of Florida were recruited to participate in the second phase of the study due to convenience of location to conduct face-to-face interview with participants. Male and Female CAOs are contacted through the ICMA chapter of the State of Florida (FCCMA). During this phase, the study also used a combination of convenience and snowball sampling procedures. An important criterion for participant selection was participant’s position in local government administration; additionally, I ensured that a comparable number of male and female CAOs were recruited to participate at this phase of the research. First, invitations were sent to FCCMA member CAOs. Subsequently, using snowball sampling method, five more female CAOs were recruited to participate in

the study. A total of 20 CAOs (12 male; 8 female) participated in semi-structured interviews.

Data

Qualitative data for this phase was collected using semi-structured interviews. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 17 CAOs, and 3 phone interviews were conducted with participants that preferred to be interviewed over the phone. Face-to-face interviews were conducted at CAOs' offices. Semi-structured interviews took approximately 45 minutes to one hour to complete. At the discretion of each participant, both face-to-face and phone interviews were audio-recorded using electronic recording equipment (see Appendix for interview protocol).

Chapter 5: Gender and Work Authority

The first phase of this dissertation utilized primary online survey data using Qualtrics survey software. An online survey was conducted with male and female ICMA state chapter member CAOs across five states in the United States: Virginia (VLGMA), Florida (FCCMA), Wisconsin (WCMA), Illinois (ILCMA), and Utah (UCMA). A total of 907 male and female CAOs were invited to participate in the survey. To promote response rates, three reminder email messages were sent to the survey target population. The survey yielded a total of 236 respondents (192 male; 44 female), which resulted in a 26% response rate. Additionally, I utilized publicly available data from the American Community Survey (ACS) 2010-2014. Table 5 below presents information on data sources and variables included in the study.

Table 5: Data sources

<i>Data Sources</i>	Survey data: member CAOs from five ICMA state chapters (FL, IL, WI, VA, UT) Census data: American Community Survey (2010-2014)
<i>Dependent Variable</i>	Sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) Decision-making authority (control over formal operations) CAOs' annual pay
<i>Main Predictor Variables</i>	Gender (in the first two regression models); Work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority included in the third regression model).
<i>Additional Predictor Variables</i>	Individual factors, human capital factors, organizational factors
<i>Control Variables</i>	External factors

Descriptive Statistics

The following descriptive statistics provide a description of dependent, main predictor, and control variables that were included in the regression analysis. Predictor and control variables fall under categories of individual factors, human capital factors,

organizational factors, and external factors. Table 6 presents a summary of the descriptive statistics of variables under each of the above-mentioned categories.

Table 6: Predictor and control variables' descriptive statistics

Main Predictor Variables	Variables	Percentage (Male)	Percentage (Female)	Mean (Male)	Mean (F) (Female)
Individual factors	Age	-	-	52.96	47.93
	Married or co-habiting	92.06	77.27	-	-
	Children Under 18	-	-	.88	.72
Human capital factors	Master's Degree	76.32	75.00	-	-
	Certification	40.96	58.14	-	-
	Local Government Experience	-	-	24.34	19.66
	Experience as Manager	-	-	15.27	9.01
	Work Experience	-	-	30.73	26.74
Organizational Factors	FTE			258.48	170.81
	Budget	-	-	65,500,000	12,000,000
	Mayor-Council	15.79	20.45	-	-
	Council-Manager	84.21	79.55	-	-
	Fire Department	76.92	86.05	-	-
	Police Department	93.41	95.35	-	-
	Council Gender Diversity	-	-	.71	.71
	Population	-	-	47,914.04	29,427.14
External factors (Control variables)	Urban	19.78	21.43	-	-

Suburban	51.10	45.24	-	-
Rural	29.12	33.33	-	-
Median Income	-	-	59,057.5	55,384.87
Median Housing Value	-	-	188,439.9	180,300
State (Illinois)	24.60	25.00	-	-
State (Wisconsin)	13.90	27.27	-	-
State (Virginia)	20.32	11.36	-	-
State (Utah)	8.56	2.27	-	-

Dependent Variable: Sanctioning Authority (Control over Personnel Operations)

The first dependent variable is a construct that measures CAOs’ level of work sanctioning authority related to control over personnel operations. This study specifically examined CAOs’ authority over personnel operations related to department directors. It takes two factors into consideration. First, CAOs’ authority to set salary and work content of department directors. This is a Likert-type Scale variable that measures the extent to which CAOs participate in making salary and work content decisions of department directors. The second dimension considers CAOs’ authority to appoint and remove department directors. This variable is also measured using Likert-type scale. Table 7 below presents descriptive statistics of CAOs’ responses concerning the two dimensions of sanctioning authority.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics of CAOs' responses on sanctioning authority

Work Authority Dimensions	Description	Frequency/ Percentage (N=235)
Set Salary and Work Content	Council makes decision directly (low authority level)	3 (1.28%)
	Council makes decision and confirms with CAO	0 (0%)
	CAO makes recommendations but council decides	66 (28.09%)
	CAO consults with council before making decisions	33 (14.04%)
	CAO makes decision and informs council (high authority)	133 (56.60%)
Appoint and Remove	Council makes decision directly (low authority level)	4 (1.70%)
	Council makes decision and confirms with CAO	2 (0.85%)
	CAO makes recommendations but council decides	60 (25.53%)
	CAO consults with council before making decisions	30 (12.77%)
	CAO makes decision and informs council (high authority)	139 (59.15%)

Dependent Variable: Decision-Making Authority (Control over Formal Operations)

The second dependent variable is a construct that measures CAOs' decision-making authority related to control over formal operations. Here, this construct considers CAOs' level of work authority related to making budgetary and policy recommendations. This construct is operationalized, first, in terms of the extent to which elected officials approve CAOs' budget recommendations. Second, it identifies the extent to which elected officials approve CAOs' policy recommendations. Both dimensions of CAOs' decision-making authority are measured using a sliding scale that ranges between 0 and 5, where 0 indicates that CAOs' recommendations are never approved or adopted by

elected officials and 5 indicates that CAOs' recommendations are always approved or adopted by elected officials. Table 8 presents descriptive statistics of CAOs' responses to the two work authority dimensions.

Table 8: Descriptive statistics of CAOs' decision-making authority

Work Authority Dimensions	Description	Minimum	Maximum	Mean (N=236)
CAOs' budget recommendation	Elected officials' approval of CAOs' budget recommendations	0 (never approve)	5 (always approve)	4.37
CAOs' policy recommendation	Elected officials' approval of CAOs' policy recommendations	0 (never approve)	5 (always approve)	4.21

Dependent Variable: CAOs' Annual Pay

The third dependent variable is CAOs' annual pay. This variable captures CAOs' annual compensation from work. The online survey provided a sliding scale, which participating CAOs used to indicate their annual salary amount. The sliding scale provided a range from 0 to \$500,000. Table 9 presents descriptive statistics of CAOs' responses on the dependent variable: CAO annual pay.

Table 9: Descriptive statistics of CAOs' responses on annual pay

Dependent Variable	Description	Minimum	Maximum	Mean (N=233)
CAO annual pay	CAOs' annual salary	\$40,320	\$300,000	\$133,369

Mean Comparison Results

In this study, responses from female CAOs comprised 18.8% of the total survey respondents. This response rate is comparable to the 16.6% female representation among CAOs in ICMA's 2014 state of the profession survey (see Table 10 below). ANOVA comparison of means reports that compared to female CAOs (n=43), on average, male

CAOs (n=190) have 6.26 more years of work experience as a manager (significant at .001 alpha level). Compared to female CAOs (n=44), male CAOs (n=189) have 4.99 more years of work experience in local government (significant at .05 alpha level). On average, female CAOs (n=43) have 3.99 fewer years of work experience compared to their male counterparts (n=188), significant at .05 alpha level. Compared to male CAOs (n=185), on average, female CAOs (n=42) earn 13.8% less than their male counterparts (significant at .05 alpha level). The gender pay gap in this survey data indicates that for every dollar that a male CAO earns, female CAOs earn 86.2 cents. Finally, ANOVA comparison of means also reports that, on average, female CAOs (n=43) are 5.04 years younger than male CAOs (n=189), significant at .05 alpha level.

In summary, descriptive statistics results suggest that male CAOs tend to have more years of work experience in the workforce—including as a manager and in local government. In addition, male CAOs tend to be older than female CAOs and on average earn \$17,970 more every year than their female counterparts (see Table 11 below).

Table 10: Survey response comparison with ICMA demographic data (2016)

CAO Demographics	ICMA Demographics data (2016)	Dissertation Survey
Gender		
Female	16.6%	18.8%
Male	83.4%	81.20%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	4.4%	6.06%
Non-Hispanic	95.6%	93.94%
Race		
Caucasian	94.3%	97.45%
Non-White	5.7%	2.5%

Table 11: ANOVA group descriptive statistics

Variable	Significance	Sex	Count	Mean	F/M Ratio (%)
No. of Years as Manger	.001	Female	43	9.01	59%
		Male	187	15.27	
		Total	230	14.10	
No. of Years in Local Government	.013	Female	44	19.66	80%
		Male	189	24.35	
		Total	232	23.46	
Work Experience	.032	Female	43	26.74	87%
		Male	188	30.73	
		Total	231	29.99	
CAO annual pay	.024	Female	42	118.61	86.8%
		Male	185	136.58	
		Total	227	133.25	
Age	.004	Female	43	47.93	90%
		Male	189	52.97	
		Total	232	52.03	

Constructing Dependent Variables: CAOs' Level of work Authority

Each of the two dimensions of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) are further operationalized using two variables. Sanctioning authority is further operationalized as CAOs' authority to set salary and work contents of department directors and CAOs' authority to appoint and remove department directors. Decision-making authority is further operationalized as council approval of CAOs' budget recommendations and council approval of CAOs' policy recommendations. While the study initially intended to factor together the two work authority dimensions (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) to construct one work authority composite value, principal component factor analysis showed that variables under each of

the dimensions mentioned above factored separately. Table 12 below demonstrates how the four variables (i.e., Set salary and work content of department directors, Appoint and remove department directors, Council approval of CAO’s budget recommendations, and Council approval of CAO’s policy recommendations) of work authority representing the two dimensions’ factor together. Although the four authority variables failed to factor into one work authority composite value, a grouping of the two factors using Principal Component Factor Analysis confirmed to how the two work authority dimensions are operationalized in the literature. Cronbach’s alpha of the first factor is above the typically accepted reliability scale at 73%. However, the Cronbach’s alpha of the second factor appears to be less than the typically accepted reliable scale at 61%. Although some argue that 70% is the acceptable reliability scale, others have also argued that this cut off can be challenged (Lance, Butts, & Michels, 2006). Scholars that fall under the latter group contend that reliability scale within the range of 60 and 70% can be acceptable (Loewenthal, 1996).

Table 12: Constructing work authority (principal component factor analysis)

Item	Factor One	Factor Two	Uniqueness
Set salary and work content of department directors	0.8713	-	0.2019
Appoint and remove department directors	0.8972	-	0.2338
Council approval of CAO’s budget recommendations	-	0.8419	0.2980
Council approval of CAO’s policy recommendations	-	0.7697	0.3609
Eigenvalue	1.663	1.243	
Cronbach’s alpha	0.73	0.61	

Constructing Independent Variable: Council Gender Diversity

The study adopts the Herfindahl Index to compute a single value that captures elected officials' (i.e., council members) gender diversity. This index is typically used to compute market concentration in economic development studies. This index is computed using the sum of squares of each "market shares." In this dissertation, the Herfindahl index is used to compute gender concentration (gender diversity of council members). Local government administrations are considered gender balanced (or diverse) when the Herfindahl Index score is close to .5. On the other hand, the absence of council gender diversity in local governments results in diversity index value of 1.

Council Gender Diversity Index = (proportion of male council members)² X (proportion of female council members)²

Diagnostic Tests

Prior to conducting Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression analysis, diagnostic tests were conducted to ensure that regression models in the dissertation met OLS regression normality assumptions. First, diagnostics tests that check for multicollinearity among independent variables were conducted. This diagnostic test identifies if the independent variables included in the study are independent of each other. The test indicates that two sets of variables were highly correlated. These highly correlated sets of variables are number of full-time employees (FTE) and local government annual budget as well as CAOs' age and CAOs' years of work experience. A multicollinearity test shows that these two sets of variables are correlated at 0.8 level or more. To identify if these sets of variables can be represented by one variable from each set, regression models were run using one variable at a time from each set. However, regression analysis

provides varying results while substituting one variable from each set. Indicating that substituting one variable from each set will not be sufficient to capture the effects of each of these variables in the regression analysis. As opposed to substituting one variable from each set of highly correlated variables, the two variables—number of FTE and years of work experience—were transformed by considering the common effects of budget on number of FTE as well as the common effects of age on years of work experience. Hence, only including residuals (independent effects) of the two variables number of FTE and years of work experience in the regression analysis.

Second, fitted plots and histograms were run to check for multivariate normality among all independent variables. In addition to plotting each continuous independent variables, Doornik-Hansen tests were also conducted. The Doornik-Hansen test results show that variables—CAOs' annual pay, local government work experience, local government annual budget, population, median housing value, and median income—fail to meet multivariate normality assumptions. To correct this, variables that did not meet multivariate normality assumption were transformed using log transformation technique.

Finally, diagnostic tests were conducted to check for constant variance of error terms (Homoscedasticity). Breusch-Pagan tests were run to diagnose constant variance of error terms. Results showed that each regression model failed to pass the assumption of constant variance of error terms, suggesting that OLS regression models in this dissertation suffered from heterogeneity of error terms. To correct this problem, robust standard errors were used using STATA software.

Results

Regression Model One: Gender and Sanctioning Authority

The first OLS regression analysis (see Table 13 below) addresses the research question: “*Are there gender differences in levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) among CAOs?*” I hypothesized that “*Compared to male CAOs, female CAOs are likely to have lower levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations).*” This analysis explores the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority and the dependent variable—CAOs’ levels of sanctioning authority. Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression analysis was used to predict the relationship between the dependent variable and predictors of work authority included in this model (see Table 13 below). Results from OLS regression analysis support the hypothesis.

The study reports that, holding all other variables constant, compared to male CAOs, female CAOs have lower levels of sanctioning authority or authority related to control over personnel operations. CAOs’ gender is a statistically significant predictor of CAOs’ level of sanctioning authority at .05 significance level. In addition to gender, CAOs’ years of work experience is also a positive and significant predictor (at .001 alpha level) of CAOs’ level of sanctioning authority in this model. Moreover, among predictor variables included in this regression analysis, holding all other variables constant, work experience is the strongest predictor of CAOs’ sanctioning authority (coefficient=1.068). This OLS regression model also shows that three variables under organizational factors—number of FTE, form of government (mayor-council), and gender diversity of council members (council gender diversity)—are statistically significant predictors of CAOs’

level of sanctioning authority. Holding all other variables constant, the variable FTE has a statistically significant (at .05 alpha level) and positive relationship with CAOs' level of sanctioning authority. Additionally, holding all other variables constant, the study finds that form of government (mayor-council) has a negative and statistically significant relationship (at .01 alpha level) with CAOs' level of sanctioning authority—therefore suggesting that, compared to CAOs from council-manager form of government, CAOs from mayor-council form of government have lower levels of sanctioning authority. In addition, holding all other variables constant, the regression analysis reports that the predictor variable—council gender diversity—is a statistically significant predictor of CAOs' level of sanctioning authority. Here, the variable council gender diversity has a negative and statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable. This variable is the second strongest predictor of CAOs' level of sanctioning authority (coefficient=-.645). Finally, this OLS regression analysis reports that regional factors are statistically significant predictors of the dependent variable CAOs' level of sanctioning authority. The analysis reports that, holding all other variables constant, compared to CAOs from the State of Florida (FL), CAOs from the states of Illinois (IL), Wisconsin (WI), and Utah (UT) have lower levels of sanctioning authority (significant at .01 alpha level). In addition, compared to CAOs from urban areas, CAOs from suburban areas have higher levels of sanctioning authority (significant at .05 alpha level).

Table 13: OLS regression estimation of CAOs' levels of authority

CONSTRUCTS		Predictor Variables	DV: Sanctioning Authority N=175, R ² =.47 Coefficient (S.E.)	DV: Decision-making Authority N=175, R ² =.18 Coefficient (S.E.)
Micro-Level Predictors	Individual Factors	Female	-.359 (.167)**	.096 (.199)
		Age	-.007 (.009)	.004 (.013)
		Marital/co-habitation status	-.215 (.247)	.484 (.261)*
		Children	-.033 (.069)	-.033 (.083)
		Human Capital Factors	Education	.098 (.066)
		Certification	.043 (.125)	.019 (.163)
		Loc. government Exp. (log)	-.011(.136)	-.138 (.191)
		Work experience	1.068 (.275)***	-.647 (.350)*
		Experience as Manager	0.020 (.084)	.094 (.103)
	Macro-Level Structural Predictors	Organizational Factors	FTE	.215 (.076)**
Budget (Log)			-.099(.064)	-.068 (.095)
Mayor-council			-.382 (.217)*	-.540 (.219)**
Fire department			.281 (.173)	-.011 (.224)
Police Department			-.086 (.304)	.105 (.372)
Council			.645 (.317)**	.264 (.475)
gender diversity				
External Factors (Control Variables)		Population (Log)	-.052 (.066)	.044 (.102)
		State (IL)	-.691 (.197)***	.568 (.263)**
		State (WI)	-1.109 (.234)***	.187 (.269)
		State (VA)	-.199 (.160)	.477 (.273)*
		State (UT)	-.855 (.264)***	-.003 (.328)
		Urban	-.277 (.128)**	-.399 (.221)*
	Rural	-.285 (.199)	-.773 (.256)**	
	Median income	-.218 (.339)	-.241 (.508)	

Median housing Value	.388 (.270)	-.108 (.399)
Constant	-3.382 (1.173)	4.683 (5.194)

Note: Regression coefficients marked with an asterisk (*) are statistically significant at:

* p<.10, **p<.05, *** p<.001.

Regression Model Two: Gender and Decision-Making Authority

The second regression analysis addresses the question “*Are there gender differences in levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations) among CAOs?*” I hypothesized that “*Compared to male CAOs, female CAOs are likely to have lower levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations).*” This analysis predicts the relationship between micro- and macro-level predictors of work authority and the dependent variable: CAOs’ level of decision-making authority (control over formal operations). An OLS regression was used to predict the relationship between dependent variable and predictor variables included in this analysis. Results from the OLS regression fail to support the hypothesis. It finds that gender (being a female CAO) is not a statistically significant predictor of the dependent variable CAOs’ level of decision-making authority (control over formal operations). Also, unlike results from the first regression analysis, this analysis reports that, holding all other variables constant, CAOs’ marital or cohabitation status (being married or having a partner) has a positive and statistically significant relationship (at .10 alpha level) with CAOs’ level of decision-making authority. Additionally, in contrary to the first regression analysis, this analysis finds that, holding all other variables constant, CAOs’ years of work experience has a negative and statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable. Holding all other variables constant, CAOs’ work experience is a statistically significant predictor of

the dependent variable at .10 alpha level. Similar to the first regression analysis, the second analysis also reports that, holding all other variables constant, mayor-council form of government has a statistically significant (at .05 alpha level) and negative relationship with the dependent variable CAOs' level of decision-making authority. Hence, compared to CAOs from council-manager form of government, CAOs from mayor-council form of government have lower levels of decision-making authority. This result suggests that organization structure predicts CAOs' level of decision-making authority. Among external factors (control variables), the regression analysis reports that compared to CAOs from the state of Florida, CAOs from the states of Illinois, and Virginia have higher levels of decision-making authority. Lastly, this analysis shows that compared to CAOs from suburban areas, CAOs from urban and rural areas have lower levels of decision-making authority.

Results from the two OLS regression models indicate that while CAOs' gender is a significant predictor of level of sanctioning authority, it fails to predict CAOs' level of decision-making authority. These results suggest that within the context of the CAO population, factors that predict sanctioning authority and decision-making authority are different.

Regression Model Three: Gender and Pay

The third regression analysis addresses the research question "*Is there a relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) and CAOs' annual pay?*". I hypothesized that "*Higher levels of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) are associated with higher pay for CAOs.*" This regression analysis mainly aimed to identify if the two

dimensions of work authority have a statistically significant relationship with CAOs' annual pay. Results from the regression analysis partially confirm the above-mentioned hypothesis. It finds that while CAOs' sanctioning authority predicts CAOs' annual pay, decision-making authority fails to predict CAOs' annual pay.

Using OLS regression (see Table 14 below), this model predicts the relationship between CAOs' annual pay and work authority variables (CAOs' level of sanctioning and decision-making authority), individual factors including CAOs' gender, human capital factors, organizational factors, and external factors (control variables). Confirming findings from prior research, this OLS regression analysis reports that gender (being a female CAO) has a negative and statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable CAOs' annual pay. CAOs' gender (being a female CAO) has a statistically significant and negative relationship (at .10 alpha level) with the dependent variable CAOs' pay. This result holds true when the model controls for variations in human capital and other organizational characteristics. Among human capital factors, holding all other variables constant, this analysis reports that CAOs' years of work experience as a manager has a statistically significant (at .001 alpha level) and positive relationship with the dependent variable CAOs' annual pay. The analysis also reports that, holding all other variables constant, CAOs' level of sanctioning authority related to control over personnel operations has a positive and statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable CAOs' annual pay. This authority variable is a statistically significant predictor of CAOs' annual pay at .05 alpha level. Also, confirming results from prior studies that established the relationship between a managers' salary and amount of financial responsibility (see Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Halaby, 1979; Spaeth, 1985),

holding all other variables constant, the present analysis suggests that local government annual budget size has a statistically significant and positive relationship with the dependent variable CAOs' annual pay. Local government budget is a statistically significant predictor of CAOs' annual salary at .001 alpha level.

Results from this regression analysis also report that, among the control variables, regional characteristics are statistically significant predictors of the dependent variable CAOs' annual pay. Holding all other variables constant, the analysis reports that compared to CAOs from rural areas, CAOs from urban and suburban areas have higher pay (significant at .05 alpha level). In addition, compared to CAOs from the State of Florida, CAOs from Wisconsin, Virginia, and Utah have lower annual pay.

Table 14: OLS regression estimation of CAOs' annual pay

Constructs	Predictor Variables	DV: CAO Annual Pay N=177, R²=.78 Coefficient (S.E.)
Individual Factors	Female	-.062 (.036)*
	Relocate	-.025 (.026)
Human Capital Factors	Education	-.021(.018)
	Certification	.016 (.028)
	Local Government	.038 (.031)
	Experience (log)	
	Work Experience	-.002 (.002)
	Experience as Manager	.068 (.014) ***
Authority Factors	Sanctioning Authority	.035 (.018)**
	Decision Making Authority	.008 (.014)
Organizational Factors	FTE	.025 (.021)
	Budget (log)	.099 (.026)***
	Mayor-Council	.032 (.039)
External Factors	Population (log)	.043 (.028)

(Control variables)	Urban-Suburban	.060 (.034)*
	Median Income	.006 (.096)
	Median Housing Value	.215 (.070)**
	State (IL)	-.079 (.054)
	State (WI)	-.206 (.046)***
	State (VA)	-.188 (.043)***
	State (UT)	-.209 (.071)**
Interaction Terms	Female*Sanctioning Authority	.006 (.037)
	Female*Decision-Making Authority	.051 (.035)
	Constant	.175 (.819)

Note: Regression coefficients marked with an asterisk (*) are statistically significant at: * p<.10, **p<.05, *** p<.001.

Discussion

This section aims to link the results yielded in this phase of the dissertation to the findings from previous research. The discussion is presented in two parts. The first section connects findings from the first two regression analyses that predict relationships between micro- and macro-level structural predictors and work authority to what prior research has established as factors that predict work authority. Here sub-sections present discussions on the relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority and each category of predictors included in the regression models (individual factors, human capital factors, organizational factors and external factors). Following that, a discussion is presented that links findings from the third regression analysis that predicts the relationship between work authority (both sanctioning and decision-making authorities) and CAOs' annual pay to the existing literature that established a relationship between pay and work authority.

Gender and Work Authority

Important dimensions of work authority are control over personnel and formal operations in an organization (Fox et al., 1977; Lopreato, 1967; Robinson, 1979; Smith, 2002). Past studies have identified micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority in the workforce (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Baxter, 1997; Jaffee, 1989; Smith, 1997; 2002; Wright et al., 1995; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). Among micro-level predictors, gender is one of the often-identified predictors of inequalities in authority attainment in the workforce (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Baron, 1987; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). The two OLS regression analyses (see Table 13 above) in this dissertation report mixed results on the relationship between CAOs' gender and levels of work authority. The first regression analysis that predicts the relationship between gender and CAOs' sanctioning authority confirms the hypothesis "*Compared to male CAOs, female CAOs are likely to have lower levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations).*" Here, the study finds that gender, specifically, being a female CAO, is associated with lower levels of sanctioning authority. While the first regression analysis linked CAOs' gender to lower levels of sanctioning authority, the second regression analysis that hypothesized "*Compared to male CAOs, female CAOs are likely to have lower levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations)*" failed to establish a similar link.

CAOs in local governments have the primary responsibility of overseeing administrative operations of their organization (Ammons & Newell, 1989; Nelson & Svara, 2014; Svara, 1999). Administrative operation responsibilities comprise appointing and removing, as well as setting salary and the work contents of, subordinates. Although

administrative operations fall under roles and responsibilities of CAOs, findings from this analysis suggest that elected officials tend to engage in administrative operations when there is a female CAO in office. This result also holds true when the analysis controls for human capital, organizational, and external factors. This implies that gender sets the stage for the extent to which a CAO exercises sanctioning authority in local government administration. Moreover, this result implies that, not only are female CAOs underrepresented in local government executive positions, but even those that reach executive positions do not have authority levels that are similar to those of their male counterparts. Therefore, this suggests that authority inequalities emerge as a new form of the glass ceiling.

Policy-making and financial decisions in local governments, on the other hand, fall under responsibilities of elected officials (Nelson & Svara, 2014; Svara, 1999). CAOs also serve as policy advisors to local governments (Nelson & Svara, 2014; Selden et al., 1999; Stillman, 1977; Wheeland, 2000). Past research has reported varying extents to which CAOs engage in policy-making activities (Nelson & Svara, 2014; Svara, 1999). The second regression analysis (see Table 13 above)—which predicts the relationship between CAOs' gender and levels of decision-making authority—fails to make a link between CAOs' gender and levels of decision-making authority. This result may suggest that, since the primary role of policy and financial decisions belong to elected officials, the process leaves little room for biases and discriminatory practices to manifest against female CAOs' exercise of decision-making authority.

Individual Factors and Work Authority

The existing literature on gender differences in level of work authority suggests that women are more likely to be impacted by intermittent workforce participation during years of family formation (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Jaffee, 1989; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). Concepts such as *compensation differentials* (Filer, 1985; Jacobs & Steinberg, 1990; Smith, 2002) and *mommy track* (Ehrlich, 1989; Smith, 2002) explain that due to family-related responsibilities, women make career choices that impact their career advancement in the workforce. In addition to women making choices that impact career-related outcomes, prior studies have also reported that individuals in leadership positions show biases against women with family responsibilities (Sabharwal, 2015). In this study, individual factors, particularly, marital status and number of children under the age of 18 intended to capture if family-related responsibilities predict CAOs' levels of work authority. These two variables, however, fail to show the link between family status and CAOs' levels of work authority. The variable, marital or cohabitation status, shows a positive and statistically significant relationship with CAOs' decision-making authority. Perhaps, confirming findings from prior studies that have shown the positive link between social status and authority attainment (Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995).

Human Capital Factors and Work Authority

Human capital investment is one of the critical factors that increases individuals' likelihood of attaining work authority (Halaby, 1979; Hill, 1980; Smith, 2002; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). Human capital investments include training, education, and work experience (Alkadry & Tower, 2011). This study takes a number of human capital factors into consideration, including, level of education, certification, number of years of work

experience, years of work experience in local government, and years of work experience as a manager. Both OLS regression analyses (see Table 13) report that the human capital variable (number of years of work experience) predicts CAOs' levels of work authority. Number of years of work experience is also the strongest predictor of CAOs' level of work authority (see Table 13). However, the unexpected result is that, while the variable number of years of work experience has a positive and statistically significant relationship with CAOs' sanctioning authority, it reports a negative and statistically significant relationship with CAOs' decision-making authority. Further investigation will be needed to identify why years of work experience has an inverse relationship with the decision-making dimensions of work authority.

Organizational Factors and Work Authority

Organizational characteristics including organization size, sector type (public vs. private), form of organization structure, and employment status explain work authority attainment in the workforce (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Baron et al., 1991; Huffman, 1999; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). The first regression analysis that predicts the relationship between CAOs' level of sanctioning authority and micro- and macro-level structural predictors reports that the three variables: organization size (number of full-time employees), form of government (mayor-council), and council gender diversity predict CAOs' level of sanctioning authority. Compared to CAOs from smaller municipalities, CAOs from larger municipalities appear to report higher levels of sanctioning authority. Both regression models that predict CAOs' level of sanctioning and decision-making authorities report that, compared to CAOs from council-manager form of government, CAOs from mayor-council form of government report lower levels

of authority. This finding is consistent with the different roles that are played by CAOs in council-manager form of government and CAOs in mayor-council form of government. While the CAO in a council-manager form of government is responsible for day-to-day administrations of local government and serves as a policy advisor to elected officials, a CAO in a mayor-council form of government oftentimes has limited administrative responsibilities.

The existing literature reports mixed results related to the relationship between gender diversity of organizational leadership and better opportunity for authority attainment for women in the workforce. While some have reported a positive association (Olsen & Martins, 2012), others have reported that gender diversity in leadership only makes a difference for women in lower echelons of organizational hierarchies (Wright et al., 1995). Huffman and Cohen (2004) on the other hand, reported that gender diversity at leadership levels is associated with a decline in authority attainment for all in the workforce. The first regression analysis that predicts CAOs' level of sanctioning authority reports that the higher gender diversity of elected officials (council members) in local governments, the lower CAOs' sanctioning authority. This indicates that when a local government has a gender-balanced elected body, it tends to reserve authority to itself. Findings from the first regression analysis, therefore, confirm the results of Huffman and Cohen (2004).

External Factors and Work Authority

Macro-level structural predictors that explain work authority attainment include region (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Smith, 1997, 1999, 2002, city population (Smith, 1999, 2002), and regional economic structure (Mueller et al., 1989; McGuire & Reskin, 1993;

Smith, 1999, 2002; Wilson, 1997). The two regression models that predict the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors and CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority) report that regional factors—including state (geographic location), urban vs. suburban and rural vs. suburban—explain CAOs' levels of work authority. These findings are consistent with prior research that has established that regional geographic characteristics shape authority attainment in the workforce.

Work Authority and Pay

The third regression analysis investigates the relationship between CAOs' level of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority) and CAOs' annual pay. Here, the dissertation addresses the question “*Is there a relationship between CAOs' work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authorities) and CAO's annual pay?*”. Based on past research that established a link between an individual's level of work authority and pay (Alkadry & Tower, 2011, Meier & Wilkins, 2002; Zeng, 2011), this dissertation also hypothesized that “*Higher levels of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority) are associated with higher pay for CAOs.*” In addition to identifying the relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority and pay, this analysis identified whether CAOs' gender, human capital factors and the interaction terms of gender and the two dimensions of work authority predict CAOs' annual pay. Findings from this analysis confirm links established by prior research. These findings report that while CAOs' level of sanctioning authority has a statistically significant and positive relationship with CAOs' annual pay, CAOs' level of decision-making authority fails to show a statistically significant association with CAOs' annual pay. Also, the analysis reports that local

government annual budget under organizational characteristics is a statistically significant predictor of CAOs' pay. This result confirms findings reported by prior research that established financial resources as an important predictor of managers' pay in the workforce (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Hopcroft, 1996; Langer, 2000). However, the analysis failed to establish an association between CAOs' level of decision-making authority and CAOs' annual pay. Further investigation will be needed to understand why CAOs' decision-making authority fails to predict pay.

Among individual factors, gender (being a female CAO) appears to have a statistically significant and negative relationship with CAOs' pay (significant at .1 alpha level). This finding is consistent with findings established by prior research (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Zeng, 2011). It indicates that even when controlling for human capital factors including level of education and years of work experience, female CAOs still earn comparably less than their male counterparts. Thus, showing a persistent income disparity among the CAO population. Also, confirming findings established by prior studies that report a positive association between individuals' years of work experience and pay (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Ross & Reskin, 1992), the third regression analysis (see Table 14) reports that CAOs' years of work experience as a manager has a positive and statistically significant relationship with CAOs' annual pay (significant at .01 alpha level). Consistent with prior studies that report the link between regional factors and pay, this analysis also reports that compared to CAOs from the State of Florida, CAOs from Wisconsin, Virginia, and Utah have higher annual pay. In addition, CAOs from urban or suburban areas report higher pay than CAOs from rural areas. Finally, results from interaction terms of the two dimensions of work authority and CAOs' gender suggest that

there is no differentiated effects on CAOs' annual pay between female and male CAO groups.

Key findings from three OLS regression analyses are three-fold. First, despite controlling for human capital, organizational, and external factors, female CAOs appear to have lower levels of work authority (sanctioning authority) compared to their male counterparts. Second, higher levels of sanctioning authority are associated with higher economic return for CAOs. Third, gender (being a female CAO) is associated with lower economic return from the job.

Chapter 6: Career Path and Career Choices

To complement findings from the first phase of this dissertation, I conducted in-depth one-to-one interviews with male and female CAOs from the State of Florida. In this second phase, I identified similarities and differences in male and female CAOs' career paths, and I investigated if similar and different factors shape career-related decisions of male and female CAOs. The goal was to precisely identify if gender role socialization and opportunity structure shape female CAOs' career paths differently in comparison to their male counterparts. Therefore, the second phase of this dissertation compared male and female CAOs in the context of the following research question: *“What are the similarities and differences of male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions?”*

Semi-Structured Interview Topics

The interview questions relate to CAOs' career choices and identify CAOs past, current, and future career advancement. Questions were classified into four sections. First, the questions investigated CAOs' career transitions across different sectors and levels of government. Second, they explored if, at any stage, CAOs have experienced work/life conflict issues that resulted in taking time off from work. Additionally, these interview questions also explored whether family responsibilities shape CAOs' career-related decisions. The aim here was to identify the extent to which CAOs engage in family responsibilities and if work/life balance issues shape CAOs' career-related decisions. Questions also explored CAOs' past career paths—leading to their current position. Here, I explored if CAOs were promoted to their current position within the same organization or if they moved from other institutions—investigating if CAOs

actively search for opportunities including those that may require them to geographically relocate. Finally, the fourth group of questions provides insight into additional factors that shape CAOs' career-related decisions.

Participant Selection

The main criteria used for participant selection were gender, location (only CAOs from the State of Florida participated in this phase), and managerial status. Through Florida City/County Management Association (FCCMA) leadership, an invitation was sent out to FCCMA member CAOs to participate in this phase of the dissertation. Initially, 15 CAOs agreed to participate in the study. Of the 15 CAOs that agreed to participate, 12 were male and 3 were female. Using snowball sampling method, additional invitations were sent out to 8 female CAOs; as a result, 5 more female CAOs agreed to participate in the study— bringing the total number of participants in this phase to 20.

Study Participants

All 20 study participants are CAOs within the State of Florida. In addition, all CAOs that participated in the study, except for two male CAOs, are married and have children. Twelve CAOs have only worked in the public sector and 8 have worked both in private and public sectors. Participating CAOs have an average work experience of 33 years. Eighteen CAOs are White (11 Caucasian and 7 Hispanic) and 2 CAOs are Black (one African American and another Hispanic). Although all CAOs that participated in the study reported that they engage in household or family-related responsibilities, their levels of engagement vary significantly by gender. Compared to CAOs that do not have children under the age of 18, CAOs with children under the age of 18 dedicate more time

to household and family responsibilities. Of the 12 male CAOs that participated in the study, 8 reported that they have spouses that stay at home and their spouses are the primary caregivers for their families. Two male CAOs are not married or do not have partners. Only 2 male CAOs have spouses that are active in the workforce and these male CAOs share household responsibility with their spouses. Compared to male CAOs whose spouses are in the workforce, male CAOs that have stay-at-home spouses dedicate less time to household and child care responsibilities. All female CAOs have spouses that are active in the workforce except for one female CAO, whose spouses recently retired from the workforce. The average local government population where both male and female CAOs serve is 28,249. All interview participants serve in local governments that are in urban setting. Table 15 below provides summary of information regarding CAOs that participated at this phase of the dissertation.

Table 15: Summary of information about interview participating CAOs

Characteristics	Male CAOs	Female CAOs
Average local government population	24,962	33,238
Average work experience (yrs.)	34	29
Cohabitation (Percent)	83.33%	100%
Children under 18y/o (Percent)	66.67%	62.50%
Primary bread winner (Percent)	100%	12.5% (Note: one female CAO has a spouse that recently retired from the workforce)
Primary caregiver (Percent)	33.33% (Note: two male CAOs share responsibility with their spouses)	100% (CAO is primary caregiver)
Support system	Spouse	Spouse, extended family, and friends
Willingness to relocate (Percent willing to relocate)	66.67% (Note: willing to relocate including those	25% (Note: female CAOs did not indicate preference,

	who may not prefer to relocate but can relocate if necessary)	only indicated if they can or cannot relocate)
Total number of participants	12	8

Data Analysis

For this phase of the dissertation, interview data was collected using an electronic audio-recording machine. All interview data was manually transcribed and later analyzed using NVIVO 11 software. Emerging themes were identified—guided by the research question, existing literature, and concepts that appeared frequently.

Data analysis in this phase identified five themes that were common in most participant interviews. These themes help explain gender differences in career paths and the factors that shaped the career-related decisions of participating CAOs. I identified the following themes: organization mobility, family responsibility, support network, career motivation, and institutional support. After I identified emerging themes and completed the coding process of each participant interview transcript, male and female CAOs responses were compared using the identified themes.

Results

This section discusses the emerging themes associated with factors that shape CAOs’ career-related decisions and their career paths—highlighting gender differences in these factors. Below, I present findings for each of the identified themes.

Organizational Mobility

The theme of Organizational Mobility identifies patterns of career mobility of CAOs across and within organizations. Results show clear gender differences in the career mobility approaches of participating male and female CAOs. Of the 12 male

CAOs that participated in the study, only 3 were promoted within their current organizational hierarchies. In contrast, of the 8 female CAOs that participated in the study, 5 were promoted from within their current organization. The interviews with CAOs indicated that individuals that grow within an organization's hierarchy acquire institutional knowledge that is beneficial to leadership. Female CAOs that participated in the study noted that several years of work experience with a local government helped them build trust and organizational knowledge that eventually became an asset—making them desirable candidates to elected officials that consider such skills useful to their organization. Most female CAOs that were promoted through organizational hierarchies were also personally approached for promotion by their elected officials. In addition, most female CAOs indicated that they were mentored by outgoing CAOs. Two circumstances might explain why female CAOs appear to take routes of within-organization mobility. First, all female CAOs in the study are secondary or co-breadwinners with their spouses, which implies that their career-related choices are also influenced by the career choices of their spouses. Thus, compared to their male counterparts, female CAOs in the study are less willing to relocate for jobs in other geographic locations. Female CAOs' several years of work experience with local governments may suggest that commitment to one's organization and institutional knowledge offer elected officials incentives to pursue female candidates when seeking someone to fill a position. Therefore, female CAOs may systematically position themselves for such opportunities. Two female CAOs that took the route of within organization mobility discussed their experiences:

I started working in the city in 1982. I was promoted to accounts payable within a year and in 1983 I was promoted to city clerk. I became a became CAO in the 1990s. I have been blessed to be able to keep my job but then I bring with me institutional knowledge which is extremely important. Commissions come and go but institutional knowledge is huge in terms of applying for grants, for your day today work, for your projects, for your capital improvements and for your infrastructure. I think it is the most important asset anyone brings to this job is institutional knowledge. (anonymous female participant)

We had a city manager that worked here for 16 years and was retiring, I have worked with him the entire time. I was not planning to apply for the position because I did not know what the commission wanted to do, if they wanted to go out and do a big search to replace him. But immediately when he announced that he will be retiring they asked me to consider accepting the position. I think that type of an offer is an understanding, it is extended to somebody who has shown a level of commitment because I have been here 16 years. (anonymous female participant)

Family Responsibilities

All participating CAOs except for two have family responsibilities. However, levels of responsibility vary—depending on each CAO’s level of engagement with household responsibility. Eight of the 12 participating male CAOs have spouses that are primary caregivers in their families. Thus, their spouses perform most household related responsibilities. Two male CAOs have spouses that are active in the workforce and they share equal responsibility in the household. Among older CAOs, most family-related

responsibilities revolve around providing care for grandchildren and elderly parents. Three participating CAOs have grandchildren to whom they provide regular care. Five of the 8 female CAOs indicated that they are primary care caregivers of elderly parents. Most CAOs indicated that their career offers some degree of flexibility to respond to family-related emergencies during the day; however, they also indicated that their work responsibility requires seven days-per-week type of engagement with frequent evening activities. However, despite busy work schedules, evidence from this study shows that most female CAOs actively play dual roles as family caregivers and professionals at work. A male CAO with a spouse that provides full-time family support explains household responsibility arrangement by noting that:

I think for me as a father the earning potential is generally better. I think also there are certain elements especially when the kids are younger, that the dependency on the mother figure is more, just because there are real basic things that men are just not adept to doing, at least not until now. (anonymous male participant)

Similarly, a second male CAO indicated that:

My wife and I purposely made the decision for me to work and she stays home to give care to the family. When I got my first job, we decided I would work and she would stay at home because I would not be available to help with the children. (anonymous male participant)

On the contrary, female CEOs that manage dual roles of family and work responsibilities explain that:

So for me, it very well could be that the 20 years in the same chair was because I had this great formula of, where I lived, where my daughter went to school and where I worked. I had help raising my child but from a financial point of view, it was just me. So my decisions needed to be solid decisions. So I live 0.6 miles from work, my daughter's school was may be one mile away so I was in a really good triangle. To manage a lot of things for that, which was important to me, so my location my geography was probably more influenced than other things.
(anonymous female participant)

My Dad has Parkinson disease and my in-laws need care. But my father in law needs more care especially physically picking him up and moving him from the bed, giving him a bath and giving him care, because my mother in law is not able to do that for him. So yeah, is it stressful. (anonymous female participant)

My granddaughters are very close to us—we see them all the time, they sleep over every week, I pick them up at school I pick them up at summer camp, they are extremely close to us. I bring them here to my office, I pick them up from school, I bring them here. If they have an after-hour event if it does not coincide with my commission meetings, I drop what I am doing to be a grandma. I am still juggling. (anonymous female participant)

Support Network

The Support Network theme identifies the important role that support network plays in CAOs' ability to maintain work/life balance. It also highlights how support network shapes CAOs' career-related decisions. Support network in this study relates to help CAOs receive from extended family, parents, siblings, and/or friends that live in close proximity. This theme consistently appeared when CAOs indicated the importance of their support network during times of work/life conflict. Despite family-related responsibilities that CAOs reported, this theme showed clear gender differences in the extent to which male and female CAOs relied on support networks. In addition, gender differences are evident in the extent to which support networks shape CAOs' career-related decisions. Of the 8 female CAOs, 5 participants—who also have young children under the age of 18—heavily depend on their support networks. In contrast, of the 12 male CAOs that participated in the study, 2 have no family-related responsibility, 8 depend on their spouses for support, and 2 others share responsibilities with their spouses and depend on support from extended family. The highlight here is that female CAOs tend to depend on help from their support networks, and as a result, consider their support networks when making career-related decisions. Two female CAOs that extensively depend on family support explain that:

I have my in-laws living with me and I have my mother come every day, so the three of them take care of the baby. I have the benefit of having my in-laws and my mother who can take care of my child. I do not have to worry because I have somebody who takes care of him full-time and so you know although he is an infant I am not worried about him. (anonymous female participant)

I could not have done what I have done without my mother and my father in my life and in my children's life. My absence by attending meetings and required participation that the commission had for me really did not affect me, because I had my mother and my father help with my children and other tasks in the house.

(anonymous female participant)

Another female CAO that shares household responsibility with her spouse and receives help from a family member explains that:

The support I get helps hugely, I have my husband and his mother that lives very close to us. She is semi-retired which gives her some flexibility, and gives us some help with our kids. She watches them so I can come to work, you know, commission meetings public meetings and other activities. If I did not have all the help I have now, it would have made it much, much harder. I just rely a lot on my mother-in-law. (anonymous female participant)

Male CAOs that depend on their spouse for family care on the other hand explain that:

I do my job and my wife takes care of the family. We have division of labor. This way my head can be clear so I can concentrate on my job and her head is clear of financial issues and she can concentrate on the family. (anonymous male participant)

I am the bread winner and my wife oversees taking care of the children. (anonymous male participant)

When I got my first job as a CAO, my wife and I decided that I would work, she would stay home because I would not be available to help with the children.
(anonymous male participant)

In addition to the help that CAOs receive from their respective support networks, this factor is critical for career advancement of CAOs. As mentioned previously, CAOs have demanding work schedules, which require them to be available for the job 24 hours a day. These circumstances make it difficult for CAOs to balance work/life demands without a support network. The present study found that, while most male CAOs seem to have the support of their spouses—who are primary caregivers in their families—female CAOs perform the role of family caregiving while simultaneously meeting the demands of their role as CAOs. Such circumstances make support network a critical factor that shapes female CAOs' career-related decisions.

Career Motivation

The Career Motivation theme identifies two aspects of CAOs career paths. First, it highlights factors that influence CAOs' decision to pursue a career in public service. Second, it highlights factors that shape CAOs' decision to pursue their current role as a CAO. The study identifies five factors that influence CAOs' interest in a career in public service, particularly in local government. These are need, affinity to a community, opportunity to solve problems, public administration education, and family and mentor influence. Most CAOs indicated that their initial entry into a career in public service was driven by opportunity and the need for a job. Of the 20 CAOs, 11 pursued an education in public administration, 2 in management, and 2 others in urban planning. All CAOs that have public administration education indicated that education was an important factor

that shaped their interest in pursuing a career in public service. Nine of the 20 CAOs (four male and five female) indicated that a mentor or a family member influenced their interests in career in public service. Speaking of the role of mentors the following participating CAOs report:

The former CAO was my mentor. When you are learning from your mentors you pick up their style, so one of the things I wanted was to move from one place to another so I could get an opportunity to learn from different mentors. (anonymous participant)

I have been fortunate at a young age to be thought by other mentors. (anonymous participant)

Really, the core has been the relationship that I had with my boss, he has been my mentor for a long time. (anonymous participant)

CAOs that started their career in the private sector and later transitioned into public service indicate that job-related benefits and job stability influenced their decision to transition into public service. Clear gender differences in career motivation is, however, observed in the factors that shape CAOs' decision to pursue an executive position in local government administration. There were gender differences in reasons for why male and female CAOs made career choices to pursue an executive management position in local government. Female CAOs were mostly promoted into their current position. Six of the 8 female CAOs that participated in the study were either recommended by their boss or were recruited by elected officials to their current position. In contrast, 9 of the 12 male CAOs that participated in the study deliberately sought opportunities across different organizations. Most male CAOs also indicated that

economic benefits, location, and interest in an executive position were important factors that shaped their decision to pursue their current role as a CAO. Male CAOs that participated in the study explain that:

I do not necessarily pursue a position because I am connected to a community. I am rather drawn by opportunities. (anonymous male participant)

My personal goal was wherever I start off in the business community, it happened to be in local government, even if it was as a bank teller just like anybody else I would have started off as a teller and I want to be the president. You know just like I said, I would have started as a cashier at Wal-Mart but I want to be the president or CEO. So that was my goal. (anonymous male participant)

Institutional Support

This theme highlights institutional support as an important factor that shapes CAOs' decision to pursue executive position in local governments. The importance of institutional support as a factor that shapes career-related decisions was pronounced among CAOs that provide care to young children and elderly parents. Institutional support encompasses flexible working environment and understanding from elected officials and colleagues. Participating CAOs also indicated that institutional support is critical during times when they need the flexibility to care for a sick child or an emergency call. Others indicated that elected officials' understanding of work/life conflict issues and their willingness to accommodate needs was critical in their decision to pursue their current roles. This theme repeatedly surfaced during interviews with the five female CAOs that have young children and elderly parents. These women indicated that:

When the city offered to promote me to the job, I met with each of the elected officials and told them that I had small children, they are my priority and that means I have to leave to go to piano practice and games. I love the profession but I am not willing to do it in a way that sacrifices my children. Every single one of them understood and were supportive. That was a huge influence for me to whether to take the job. I have an excellent city commission that is very understanding. (anonymous female participant)

The organization is very accommodating and very supportive of my needs. (anonymous female participant)

When I was offered a promotion, the city council was very supportive of my personal agenda. They knew I wanted to get married and I wanted to have children. They did not want that to be a reason for me not to take the job. So, a couple of things gave me reassurance, first, they let me pick my deputy and they allowed me to bring a crib in my office. They were completely supportive. (anonymous female participant)

Results from the qualitative data analysis reveal important information about how gender role socialization and opportunity structure differently shape male and female CAOs' career paths. Here, the analysis also provides insight into the unlevel path that female CAOs take. The following section first highlights main differences in the characteristics of participating CAOs; following that, it links results reported in this chapter to the literature on gender differences in career choices.

Discussion

This section discusses results from the qualitative data analysis, following that it links findings from the qualitative data analysis to the existing literature on career choices. My qualitative data analysis results report similarities and differences among male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions. These findings, therefore, address the question "*What are the similarities and differences of male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions?*" The study identifies five themes related to the factors that shape male and female CAOs' career-related decisions. These are organization mobility, family responsibility, support network, career motivation and institutional support. The study also finds clear differences in how male and female CAOs' career-related decisions are influenced by the identified themes above.

Gendered Economic and Household Roles

The data analysis in this phase allows me to observe the gendered roles that male and female CAOs assume in their private lives. It also reveals that gendered roles that CAOs perform at home are significant drivers that shape differences in career outcomes for male and female CAOs. All study participants, except for two male CAOs, are married and have children. Clear gender differences are observable in two areas of household roles and responsibilities. First, the data shows differences in male and female CAOs' economic roles at home. It indicates that male CAOs that participated in the study are primary breadwinners in their families. In contrast, all female CAOs, except for one, are secondary or co-breadwinners in their families (one female CAO is currently the primary breadwinner because her spouse recently retired from the workforce). Second,

except for two male CAOs, all the CAOs with family responsibilities have spouses that stay at home to provide care to their families. Two male CAOs have spouses that are engaged in the workforce. In contrast, all participating female CAOs, except for one, have spouses that are fully engaged in the workforce. In addition, all female CAOs that participated in the study are primary care caregivers to their families.

Gender Role Socialization

The literature on gender role socialization explains that gender role assignments are socially constructed norms that shape day-to-day experiences of men and women in society (Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2000; Sabharwal, 2015). The literature also highlights that because of socially constructed gendered norms, historically, men have been engaged in the public sphere—including the workforce—while women have been primarily involved in the private sphere (Darley, 1976; Eagly et al., 2000). Nevertheless, these roles have been shifting in the last few decades as women’s participation in the workforce has increased, and the increases include positions that have been historically reserved for men (Sabharwal, 2015; Schein, 2001). Gender role socializations not only shape men and women’s engagement in the workforce but also shape their interactions in their private spaces. Nelson and Svara (2014) note that the population of CAOs and local government elected officials in the United States lacks gender and racial/ethnic diversity. Female CAOs that engage in local government leadership are, therefore, pushing the boundaries of male-dominated spaces in local government leadership. Simultaneously, female CAOs in this study also appear to be pushing gendered boundaries in the workforce while navigating their roles as primary care caregivers to their families. A female CAO that pushed gendered career boundaries while also performing family care responsibilities

noted:

I want to tell you something, when I was at the Department of Transportation (DOT) as a project manager, which was a very difficult job to get as a woman, the first job I took was from 7:00pm to 7:00am at night. I worked at night, just to prove I can do it. So you know, I remember I used to rush home just so I can see my child going to school, you know. At that time, I had my older child so I used to rush home just so I can get her dressed and take her to school so I can see her before I go back to sleep. Talking about sacrifice, sacrifices a lot compared to anybody else. You know, nothing fell on my lap I really had to put my heart and soul in every job I have had. (anonymous female participant)

Indicating challenges of performing dual duties, other female CAOs noted that:

I purposely throughout my career made a conscious decision not have a family because my focus was more work and I could not do both. And then obviously you become older and wiser and then you realize your life cannot be all about work and family is important and then I made the decision to have a child later in my life. (anonymous female participant)

I do not think I would have been as successful as I am now, or built my career as well as I have, if I had my children earlier. I do not think that I would have been up for the hours and the time commitment that this job requires. I could not have been able to put in 50 and 60 hours weeks. There is no way, I could have worked the hours I was working and had a family to care for. (anonymous female participant)

Here, qualitative data reveals that while female CAOs are pushing gendered

career boundaries, they still perform gendered roles in their private lives. They are molding the dual roles that they play at home and at work. The following section presents a discussion on ways in which dual roles shape female CAOs' career paths and career choices.

Dual Roles

Evidence from the qualitative data analysis suggests that compared to male CAOs, female CAOs bear an unequal burden of family-related responsibilities. My findings suggest that most male CAOs in this study are primary breadwinners and have spouses that fully engage in family care-giving responsibilities. In contrast, most female CAOs play dual roles—engaging in the workforce while also performing primary caregiving roles for their families. Such circumstances impact the career choices that female CAOs make along the way. The qualitative data in this dissertation suggests that, in their efforts to maintain their dual roles at home and at work, in general, female CAOs make four distinct choices.

First, because of potential work/life conflict issues, some female CAOs make choices to delay having children.

Throughout my career, I purposely made a conscious decision to delay having a family because my focus was on building my career. (anonymous female participant)

I would not have been as successful, or built my career as well as have if I had my children earlier. (anonymous female participant)

Second, female CAOs with young children made choices to stay in positions that allowed them to play dual roles at home and at work.

When I was trying to have children in the summer of 1998. They offered me the job and I said no, so they hired someone else and I stayed in the deputy position.

(anonymous female participant)

Third, dual roles, for most female CAOs with young children, meant that they extensively depend of social support networks that offer them the help they need to navigate work and home responsibilities. Female CAOs that depend on their social networks for support noted that:

I could not have done what I have done without my mother and my father in my life and in my children's life. (anonymous female participant)

The support I get helps hugely...If I did not have all the help I have now, it would have made it much, much harder. I just rely a lot on my mother-in-law.

(anonymous female participant)

Fourth, female CAOs negotiate institutional support with elected officials that appoint them to the position.

When the city offered to promote me to the job, I met with each of the elected officials and told them that I had small children...Every single one of them understood and were supportive. That was a huge influence for my decision to take the job. I have an excellent city commission that is very understanding.

(anonymous female participant)

The career choices women made in this study revealed the challenges they face as they attempt to marry two areas: their private and public lives. Unlike their male counterparts, the career choices that female CAOs make demonstrates the unlevel paths they navigate as they make career related choices.

Opportunity Structure

The literature on gender differences in career choices explains that, aside from social norms and gender role socialization, opportunity structure shapes individuals' career-related decisions in the workforce (Astin, 1984). Astin (1984) explained that opportunity structure comprises human capital factors such as education, work experience, training, networking, and other opportunities that increase the likelihood of an individual gaining access to career opportunities. Astin (1984) and Sabharwal (2015) also argued that gender role socialization and opportunity structure constantly interact, shaping individuals' career-related choices. Despite the fact female CAOs in the present study must constantly navigate dual roles at home and at work, opportunity structure benefits them when institutions determine their contributions to be vital and provide them with the needed support to succeed in their roles. This dissertation identifies that opportunity structure creates avenues for female CAOs to engage their roles in four ways. First, institutions and leadership that provide mentorship to women in local government prepare them for leadership roles. The female CAOs that received mentorship noted:

At different times, I used to work for two managers as their assistant in two different cities. The manager in the city where I work now was my very strong mentor. (anonymous female participant)

It just happened that my mentor became a city manager in one of the cities around here and he offered me the deputy position. (anonymous female participant)

My former city manager was very humble and generous, he set the organization culture that mentored everybody with him, he gave us experience and opportunity. (anonymous female participant)

In addition to mentorship opportunities, women in this study appear to self-select into institutions that were responsive to creating an accommodating and understanding working environment. Female CAOs indicated:

Here the leadership is very accommodating and very supportive of women.
(anonymous female participant)

Every single one of them understood and were supportive. That was a huge influence for my decision to take the job. I have an excellent city commission that is very understanding. (anonymous female participant)

My organization has a very supportive family-friendly work culture...we have that informal understanding. (anonymous female participant)

Opportunity structure—specifically, institutional knowledge that women accumulate by staying with an organization for a long time—also appears to offer them career opportunities. While it is difficult to conclude if women select into institutions that seem to value institutional knowledge or if institutions select women that are committed to working with them for a long time, a common factor here is that institutional knowledge appears to be an asset that opens opportunities for women in local government workforces. Female CAOs indicated that:

I bring with me institutional knowledge which is extremely important...the commission benefits from my knowledge of the city. (anonymous female participant)

It is an informal understanding extended to somebody who has shown a level of commitment, so you know I have been here 16 years so that helps. (anonymous female participant)

Finally, findings from this phase of the study highlight the uneven playing field on which female CAOs pursue a career in local government administration. By its very nature, the CAO position is demanding of anyone in that role. Hence, for female CAOs that bear the double burden of family caregiving while engaging in a role as a CAO, maintaining balance between work and family critically depends on institutional and social support. In contrast, their male counterparts in this study benefit from the gendered division of labor at home; while they engage in the workforce, their spouses provide family care. This uneven playing field appears to differently shape male and female CAOs' career paths.

Chapter 7: Discussion, Conclusion, Implications, and Future Research

Discussion

This section will link and summarize findings from the two phases of the dissertation to each other. In addition, it aims to link knowledge learned from the present study to the existing literature on gender disparity in work authority attainment and career choices.

Unequal Access and Unequal Reward

Before conducting this research, previous research had documented that female CAOs—who represented only 16.6% of the CAO population in the United States in 2016—are underrepresented in local governments. Moreover, research in this area has documented that these historical, overt disparities in gender representation have persisted since the first CAO positions were established. The aspect of this gender disparity that was previously unknown was whether women who break the glass ceiling, and become CAOs of local governments, have employment opportunity that is similar to their male counterparts. That is, does the glass ceiling continue to manifest in new forms—even after women are appointed as executives of local government administration? Findings from the first phase of this dissertation conclude that, yes, the glass ceiling manifests in new forms and covert gender disparity manifests within the study population. Presently, differences in levels of sanctioning authority manifests as a new form of the glass ceiling for female CAOs. Most importantly, the same way that the glass ceiling bears economic costs for women facing barriers to managerial positions, this dissertation reports that,

disparities in levels of work authority bears financial costs to those facing barriers to exercising sanctioning authority.

Gender and the Managerial Misfit

The literature on gender roles and gendered organizations and processes documents how gender role socialization shapes the space in which men and women perform their roles in society (Acker, 2006, 2012; Kanter, 1977 Sabharwal, 2015). Traditionally, the “home” or “reproduction” is known as women’s frontier and “work” or “production” is where men are expected to perform their roles as primary breadwinners (Acker, 1992, 2006, 2012). These socialized gendered processes also shape the very concept of “work” and the “universal worker” (Acker, 1992). “Universal workers” in the public space have been men, and work itself has been crafted to fit lives of the “universal worker” (Acker, 1992, 2012; Rees & Garnsey, 2003). Acker reported that gender role “divide between reproduction and production constitute the gendered understructure of society’s institutions. This divide is perpetuated in institutional processes” (Acker, 1992, p 567). In Chapter 4, I highlight the roles and responsibilities of CAOs in local government administration. The CAO, appointed by elected officials, is responsible for the day-to-day administration of local governments (Nelson & Svara, 2014). The CAO position also places heavy demands on the time and personal lives of those performing the role. Interview sessions with participating CAOs indicated that, beyond the regular working hours, the job often requires CAOs to commit evenings, weekends, and, sometimes, late hours of the day. CAOs that participated in the interviews reported that:

So my husband when he gets home if I have a council meeting he will take care of the baby. (anonymous female participant)

If I have a meeting and it runs late, I do not have to worry about running to go pick up the baby at the day care, whereas a lot of women that I know they cannot stay, they have to go. (anonymous female participant)

My mother-in-law gives us some help with our kids and she can watch them so I can come to work, you know, commission meetings and public meetings. (anonymous female participant)

The rigors and responsibilities of the CAO position necessitate that the individual must be fully committed to fit the expectations of the job. At the same time, expectations are selectively fitting to those that can fully engage in the “production” process. Those that must navigate the overlapping roles of “production” and “reproduction” appear, on the surface, to be unfit for this job. As such, the nature of the CAO position is like other executive positions in organizations. It is like other executive roles where women and those that navigate the two worlds of family and work are “unfit” to perform expectations of the job. The qualitative data in this dissertation suggests that, to fit the expectations of the CAO role, individuals that navigate “production” and “reproduction” roles must have a strong social support network and institutional support to enable them to play the dual roles.

Changing Trends and the Future

In Chapter 4, I introduce different forms of municipal governments in the United States. The chapter also shows changing trends in forms of municipal governments. ICMA data indicates that council-manager is the fastest growing form of municipal government in medium size cities in the United States (see Table 1). Growing trends in council-manager form of government suggest that CAOs are increasingly playing

administrative roles in local governments across the United States. The important roles that CAOs are increasingly playing in local government administration further highlight the need for researchers and other professionals to tackle gender disparities. Otherwise, local governments will soon become a place where gender inequalities perpetuate in the public sector workforce. Also, gender role socialization trends show changing patterns in that more women are participating in “production” and more men are engaging in household responsibilities. Such changing trends suggest that, sooner or later, the issue will be divided less frequently along gender lines and more along the competing demands of “production” and “reproduction”.

Conclusion, Implications, and Future Research

Previous studies have investigated the dearth of women in leadership positions in private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Most of these studies focus on issues of gender representation. While investigating factors that shape gender representation—or the lack thereof—in organizations is necessary, this approach only explores issues that manifest as overt disparity. Little is known about whether the women that occupy male dominated positions have the same power and responsibilities as their male counterparts. Hence, there is a need to explore covert disparity among women that are in positions of authority. By investigating covert disparities, this dissertation therefore aimed to explore new forms of gender disparities in the public-sector workforce. In this study, I identified whether women in executive leadership positions in local government have work authority that is similar to that of their male counterparts. At a time when local governments in the United States have made stale progress in advancing gender representation in executive leadership positions, the present research argued that it is imperative to learn about how

gender disparities—both overt and covert disparities—manifest within the study population. Previous research has made great strides to address low gender representation in local government administration. However, the focus on gender disparity in local government administration should not only be on how to increase women’s participation in leadership positions but also on understanding if women that attain leadership roles have job opportunities and economic rewards that are similar to those of their male counterparts. In addition, it is essential that we seek to understand factors that shape career choices of male and female CAOs. Unlearning ways in which gender disparities manifest among the study population will help uncover the many ways in which gender disparity has manifested in the workforce and perhaps better prepare us to tackle the problem in a systematic manner.

My approach to studying gender disparity in work authority is unique in three ways. First, it is unique in that it explored the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority and CAOs’ levels of work authority. In addition, this dissertation specifically identified the relationship between gender and two dimensions of work authority: sanctioning authority and decision-making authority. Second, this dissertation contributed to the literature by empirically testing the relationship between CAOs’ levels of work authority and CAOs’ pay. This aspect of the dissertation tested the argument made by prior researchers that gender disparity in levels of work authority establish economic inequality among those that exercise it (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Halaby, 1979; Spaeth, 1985; Smith, 2002). Third, it is unique in that it engages in a qualitative investigation of CAOs’ career path to executive leadership and the factors that shape their career choices. This aspect of the research helped elucidate

understanding on whether similar or different factors shape male and female CAOs' career choices.

I approached this challenge using a two-phase mixed methods research design. Using quantitative methods, the first phase explored if there are gender differences in levels of work authority among CAOs that participated in the study. Considered here are two dimensions of CAOs' work authority: sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) and decision-making authority (control over formal operations). In the next step of the first phase, I investigated the relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority and pay. The first phase addressed the research questions: *Are there gender differences in levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) among CAOs?*, *Are there gender differences in levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations) among CAOs?* and *Is there a relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) and CAO's annual pay?* Using qualitative research methods, the second phase explored similarities and differences among male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions. In this phase, the study addressed the question, *What are the similarities and differences of male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions?* Utilizing a mixed methods approach helped me capture and understand a broader sense of the job-related experiences of male and female CAOs while also delving deeper into individual-level analysis to trace factors that shape the career development of the study population.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2 brings together literature on the definition and operationalization of work authority, along with a discussion on the dimensions of work authority and factors that predict it. This chapter also presented a discussion on the costs of work authority inequality in the workforce. Finally, the literature review in Chapter 2 identified the knowledge gap in our understanding of how self-selection, particularly the career choices that men and women make in the workforce, shape career paths.

The literature review began with an examination of how past studies identified and operationalized work authority. Prior studies argued that work authority is characterized by rightful relations that involve control and subordination of an individual in authority and those working as subordinates (Elliot & Smith, 2004; Smith, 2002). Those studies also noted that this authority/subordinate relationship is one that is officially granted. Within the context of managerial leadership, work authority may grant an individual the right to make decisions on human resource, finance, policy, and other organizational operations (Wright, Baxter & Birkelund, 1995; Kluegel, 1978; Wright et al., 1995; Zeng, 2011). Managerial or hierarchical authority separates itself from non-managerial or non-hierarchical authority in that the former involves supervision and subordination while the latter does not (Kluegel, 1978; Smith, 2002).

While past studies have operationalized work authority using one or more of the aspects mentioned above, the present study adopted two dimensions of work authority: sanctioning authority and decision-making authority (Muller et al., 1989; see also Moore & Shakman 1996; Rosenfield et al., 1998; Selden et al., 1999; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). The two dimensions of work authority represent different aspects of work

authority based on an organization's functions and work processes. The first dimension, sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations), relates to legitimate authority that an individual is granted to supervise and make decisions related to human resource (personnel) operations (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Bygren & Gahler, 2012; Huffman, 1995; Klugel, 1978; Selden et al., 1999; Smith, 2001, 2002; Wright et al., 1995; Zeng, 2011). The second dimension, decision-making authority (control over formal operations), relates to manager's authority to make decisions over monetary and non-monetary resources—as well as policies that influence the work processes of an organization (Moore & Shakman, 1996; Rosenfield et al., 1998; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995).

In addition to identifying dimensions of work authority, Chapter 2 provided a discussion on predictors of work authority. Overall, the study framed predictors of work authority using Smith's (2002) theoretical framework, which organizes the discussion around micro-, meso- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority. Micro-level predictors address individual factors, individual demographics, and human capital characteristics (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Baxter, 1997; Jaffee, 1989, Smith, 1997, 2002; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979; Wright et al., 1995). Meso-level predictors address societal perceptions, attitudes, and biases that shape gender differences in levels of work authority (Kanter, 1977; Klugel, 1978; Muller et al., 1989; Smith, 1999, 2002). Meso-level predictors are explained by concepts such as *homosocial reproduction* and *gender role socialization*, which shape opportunities that are accessible to individuals in the workforce (Kanter, 1977; Klugel, 1978; Muller et al., 1989; Smith, 1999, 2002). Last, macro-level structural predictors speak to organizational and external factors that predict

work authority attainment in the workforce. Included here are regional characteristics (Elliot & Smith, 2004; Smith, 1997, 1999, 2002), population size (Smith, 1999, 2002), and regional economic contexts (Elliot & Smith, 2004; McGuire & Reskin, 1993; Smith, 1999, 2002). The theoretical framework developed for the first phase of this study incorporated micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority.

Past studies have attributed work authority to yielding financial rewards to individuals that exercise it. One of the most cited rewards of work authority is economic return for those that possess it (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Elliot & Smith, 2004; Halaby, 1979; Hoffman & Cohen, 2004; Jaffee, 1989; Parcel & Mueller, 1983; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995; Zeng, 2011). Aside from economic benefits, other studies have established that work authority yields social position and job satisfaction benefits (Kanter, 1977; Jaffee, 1989; Smith, 2002; Elliot & Smith, 2004; Zeng 2011). The problem with gender disparity in work authority is that when work authority is accessible to individuals based on factors other than job associated skills, it establishes economic inequality among those who have access to it and others without access. While this study primarily aimed to investigate the relationship between CAOs' gender and their levels of work authority, it also aimed to investigate if the two dimensions of CAOs' levels of work authority are associated with their compensation (pay).

Past studies that investigated gender differences in work authority suggested that persistent gender differences in level of work authority may be partly explained by women self-selecting themselves from career opportunities in the workforce (England et al., 1999; Reskin & Padavic, 1994; Smith, 2002). Concepts such as *compensation differentials* (Filer, 1985, Jacobs & Steinberg, 1990; Smith, 2002) and *mommy track*

(Ehrlich, 1989; Smith, 2002) have been used to explain choices women make during years of family formation that may adversely impact their career advancement—including attaining work authority. Past research on self-selection has suggested that women in the workforce may self-select themselves from positions of authority either because of role conflicts at home and at work (Reskin & Padavic, 1994; Sapienza, 2010; Smith, 2002; Wright et al. 1995) or because they fear that positions of authority are challenging and difficult to maintain (Baron, 1987; Smith, 2002). Studies that investigate women's career choices in relation to gender role socialization have identified the possibility that unequal division of labor and lack of support could result in women selecting themselves into certain occupations, positions, or possibly time out of the workforce (Baxter, 1997; Jaffee, 1989, Hopcraft, 1996; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995). To identify the role that gender role socialization and family formation plays in female CAOs' career development, the present study explored and compared male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions.

Using the literature review presented in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 introduced research questions, hypotheses, and the theoretical frameworks adopted in this dissertation. Here, this chapter outlines the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority and the two dimensions of work authority that are included in the dissertation. In addition, this chapter predicts the relationship between individual, human capital, organizational, authority, and external factors and CAOs' annual pay. Finally, the chapter introduces the two conceptual frameworks in this dissertation: predictors of work authority and predictors of pay.

In Chapter 4, two phases of the study are introduced. The first phase, using a quantitative research method, addressed the first three research questions listed below. The second phase utilized a qualitative research method to address the fourth research question listed below:

Phase one research questions:

Research Question 1: Are there gender differences in levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) among CAOs?

Research Question 2: Are there gender differences in levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations) among CAOs?

Research Question 3: Is there a relationship between CAOs' level of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) and CAOs' annual pay?

Phase two research question:

Research Question 4: What are the similarities and differences in male and female CAOs career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions?

Following an introduction of the two phases, Chapter 5 provided details on the first phase, including the data, analysis, and findings from this phase. Here, survey data was collected from 236 male and female CAOs from across five states (Virginia, Florida, Wisconsin, Utah, and Illinois). Using survey data, this research essentially explored the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors of work authority and CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making authority). Nevertheless, the focus of this phase was to identify the relationship between the two

dimensions of work authority and CAOs' gender. Following that, this phase identified the relationship between the two dimensions of work authority and CAOs' annual pay.

Key findings from the first phase are three threefold. First, Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression analysis predicts that CAOs' gender (being a female CAO) has a statistically significant and negative relationship with the first dimension of work authority: CAOs' level of sanctioning authority. Hence, this finding confirmed the hypothesis that CAOs' gender is associated with their levels of sanctioning authority. The study finds that—despite controlling for micro- and macro-level structural predictors, including individual's marital status, number of children under the age of 18, human capital factors, and organization factors—compared to male CAOs, female CAOs have lower levels of sanctioning authority. The second OLS regression, on the other hand, failed to predict a link between CAOs' gender and levels of decision-making authority. Instead, here, the OLS regression analysis finds that marital status (being married or cohabitation), form of government (mayor-council), and regional factors predict CAOs' levels of decision-making authority. This result suggests that CAOs' gender does not influence elected officials' approval of policy and budgetary recommendations put forward by CAOs. This could be explained by the fact that several political factors shape policy and budgetary decisions—thus, leaving little room to exercise gender bias. Third and last, as initially hypothesized, the third OLS regression analysis reports that CAOs' level of sanctioning authority has a positive and statistically significant relationship with CAOs' annual pay. However, here, the OLS regression analysis also fails to predict a statistically significant relationship between CAOs' level of decision-making authority and CAOs' annual pay.

The conclusion drawn from the first phase of the study is that gender matters. Findings from this phase reinforce arguments and conclusions made by prior research that report gender as a significant factor predicting individuals' levels of work authority (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Baxter, 1997; Jaffee, 1989; Smith, 1997, 2002; Wright et al., 1995; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). In addition, it confirms prior research that established work authority as an important way in which individuals are financially rewarded in the workforce (Alkadry & Tower, 2011; Elliot & Smith, 2004; Halaby, 1979; Hoffman & Cohen, 2004; Jaffee, 1989; Parcel & Mueller, 1983; Smith, 2002; Wright et al., 1995; Zeng, 2011).

Chapter 6 explored similarities and differences among male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions. At this stage, the dissertation aimed to identify if gender role socialization and opportunity structure systematically shape female CAOs career paths differently than their male counterparts. Semi-structured interviews with 20 male and female CAOs from the State of Florida revealed that, indeed, gender role socialization—including household related responsibilities—have heavier weight and impact on female CAOs' career-related decisions than for male CAOs. The study finds that female CAOs play the double duty of providing family caregiving while performing roles as executive administrators. In addition to the impact of gender role socialization, this phase also reports that female CAOs' career-related decisions are shaped by the opportunity structure, including mentorship opportunities, institutional support, and social support network.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Findings from the two phases offer several theoretical and practical implications. This dissertation uncovers new forms of gender-based workforce inequality. While unwrapping forms of gender-based inequalities, it extended the discourse beyond issues of overt disparity in gender representation. The theoretical implication of this study is that gender-based disparities continue to manifest in new forms, hence demanding systematic ways of investigating them. Findings from this dissertation also call for public organizations to strive to level the field for women in the workforce. This study informs public administration education that training must prepare the next generations of public administrators by equipping them with critical socio-cultural competency skills that will enlighten them about the ways that workplace inequalities manifest and evolve. Below, a discussion is presented on each of the three areas of implication of this research.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this study are twofold. First, gender-based workplace inequalities persistently manifest in new forms in the workforce. Inequalities in the workforce are further perpetuated when researchers maintain that the managerial function is a gender-free construct, even though empirical research repeatedly shows otherwise. The assumption of a “universal worker” and that managerial functions have similar outcomes for men and women in the workforce is deeply embedded in a managerial paradigm that recognizes institutional process, culture, and structure as gender neutral (Rees & Garnsey, 2003). The present study, however, reveals that the managerial process and its function are not “gender free” or “gender neutral.” Management research that is framed around a “gender free” or “gender neutral” narrative

will continue to reinforce traditional ways of thinking of the managerial process—failing to recognize inequalities that are being reinforced in the system. Second, this study highlights the need to extend our quest against gender-based workplace inequalities beyond issues of gender representation. Because doing so will gravely mislead our perception and understanding of lived experiences of women in the workforce.

Practical Implications

There are multiple practical implications of this study, which can be categorized under two overarching themes. The first set of practical implications speak to organizations—specifically, how organizations implement policies and processes while also cultivating a culture that is responsive to existing gender biases in the workforce. The second set of practical implications speaks to the role that public administration education plays in equipping and preparing future administrators with culturally competent skills, which will help them be responsive to ways in which gender disparities manifest and perpetuate in the workforce.

Leveling the Field

This set of practical implications speaks to the role that organizations can play in levelling the field for women in the workforce. Within the context of local government leadership, elected officials that are responsible for crafting and instituting policies must be educated and aware of how gender-based disparities are perpetuated in the workforce. This research informs organizations to be vigilant in crafting policies and programs that are responsive to establishing gender equal employment opportunity in the workforce. Policies that are responsive to work/life conflict issues are critical to closing the gap for those navigating dual roles of family and work responsibilities. In addition to

implementing gender responsive policies, the findings from this study imply that soft skills, such as formal and informal mentorship programs, help prepare female leaders in organizations. Therefore, instituting mentorship programs that establish pipelines to prepare women for leadership positions such as CAO will help recruit and prepare women for the role. Third, gender differences in work experience, identified at both phases of this study, suggest that work relations between elected officials and CAOs are a critical factor that shape CAOs' work experience. Therefore, it is necessary to educate elected officials about how gender disparities are manifested and maintained in the workforce. Finally, findings from this research inform institutions such as the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) that work to close gender gap in managerial representation (ICMA) and tackling gender-based employment discrimination in the workforce (EEOC). The present study informs these organizations about how gender-based disparities manifest beyond the glass ceiling phenomenon.

Public Administration Education

Findings from this study suggest that female CAOs thrive in organizations that appear to provide institutional support and mentorship opportunities—hence implying that leadership that is responsive to the needs of its workforce help close the gender gap in access to opportunities. In contrast, “gender blind” or “gender neutral” management practices that fail to recognize the unlevel field in which women perform, further compound existing gender disparities in the workforce. Here, it is argued that public administration education, particularly concentrations on human resource management, should incorporate cultural competency skill training. Equipping public administrators

with culturally competent skills that have gender components should be an integral part of the education process. Such programs should also educate public administrators with skills, knowledge, and understanding to effectively identify and address biased practices that perpetuate gender disparities in the public sector workforce.

Limitations and Opportunities for Future Research

There are a number limitations in this research that provide opportunities for future investigations. First, research design limitations are discussed. Second, theoretical framework limitations are discussed that provide readers with potential areas of improvement for future research. Third, a general discussion is provided on issues that go beyond the scope of this dissertation but are potential areas of future research.

Research Design

The research design limitations of this study relate to issues surrounding reliability of measurement of the main variable of interest, work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority), and survey response rate. In the survey (phase 1), the questions allowed CAOs to identify their levels of work authority related to control over personnel and formal operations. The challenge here was to control for over- or under-reporting of CAOs' level of work authority, which could potentially compromise overall reliability of the dependent variable measurement. Future research should consider new ways to further ensure reliability of measurement of the dependent variable (levels of work authority). Doing so will improve accuracy in measurement of the variable of interest. Second, conducting surveys and semi-structured interviews with the CAO population was challenging. Even though three rounds of email invitations were sent out to member CAOs from five states, the survey response rate (26%) was lower

than I had anticipated. A challenge for future research will be developing ways to engage the CAO population to yield a higher response rate.

Theoretical Framework

The next limitation and potential area of future improvement is further developing the theoretical framework, which was adopted in this research. The literature review on predictors of work authority identified three levels of predictors of work authority (micro-, meso-, and macro-level structural predictors). While the theoretical framework adopted in the first phase of this research incorporated micro- and macro-level structural predictors, it did not incorporate meso-level predictors of work authority. This was due to challenges associated with measuring meso-level predictors of work authority. Meso-level predictors include societal perceptions, attitudes, and biases that shape gender differences in levels of work authority (Kanter, 1977; Klugel, 1978; Muller et al., 1989; Smith, 1999, 2002). Finding ways to incorporate meso-level predictors in the theoretical framework would strengthen the analytical framework that is used to predict the relationship between gender and levels of work authority in the study population. A second limitation of this study—that provides an opportunity for future research—is further exploring the unexpected results from the statistical analysis. The analytical model that predicted the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors and the dependent variable decision-making authority failed to identify gender as a statistically significant predictor. Additionally, the interview sessions with CAOs suggested that political nature and relational dynamics between CAOs and elected officials drive the extent to which CAOs participate in policy and budgetary decisions. This suggests that analytical frameworks predicting work authority related to CAOs’

control over personnel operations may look different than a framework that predicts authority involving policy and financial decisions. Future research should, therefore, consider possible differences in the factors that predict different types of work authority.

Future Research

In academic research, the quest to answer one question often leads to many more unanswered questions. Here, some future research ideas that surfaced during the process will be discussed. While this study explored the relationship between micro- and macro-level structural predictors and CAOs' levels of work authority, an important area of future investigation is to identify how the political nature and relational dynamics between elected officials and appointed administrators shape CAOs' level of work authority.

Second, although findings from the qualitative analysis suggest that female CAOs often take within organization career paths and male CAOs often take across organization career paths, future research can investigate whether certain institutions seek stable and longtime committed individuals within their workforce and other institutions seek fresh insight from outsiders. Therefore, researchers can explore the possibility of selection at the institutional level that may attract female candidates for CAO positions. Future researchers can also explore whether female candidates tend to seek organizations that provide the support and flexibility they need when performing dual roles at home and at work.

Third, although this study only considers gender disparity in work-related outcomes, there is no doubt that gender and race intersectionality issues shape work-related outcomes differently (Browne & Misra, 2003). This dissertation was limited in

that, survey data respondents constitute of 2 racial minority female CAOs compared to 42 non-minority female CAOs. Hence, limiting my ability to investigate disparities in work-related outcomes among racial minority and non-minority female CAOs. Taking intersectional issues into consideration, future research should explore how workforce disparities are manifested and maintained among the study population.

Finally, further investigations are needed to determine if gender role socialization, and its impact on the career choices of male and female CAOs, is different for younger generation CAOs. The hypothesis here is that, for younger generations where gendered roles at home and at work are blurring, the challenge of career choices may similarly cross gender lines.

Concluding Remarks

This dissertation has established that—even after controlling for human capital, organizational, and external factors—gender still predicts level of sanctioning authority exercised by Chief Administrative Officers. The research also showed that disparities in level of sanctioning authority establish economic inequality among the study population. The qualitative investigation in this dissertation revealed that, compared to male CAOs, the career paths of female CAOs are significantly shaped by gender role socialization processes and opportunity structures. Compared to male CAOs, female CAOs play dual roles at home and at work—thus, as they navigate the two worlds of “production” and “reproduction,” they depend heavily on social and institutional support.

Over the course of this research, it became clear that barriers to equal employment opportunity for women in the workforce continue manifesting in new forms. Even after women have broken the glass ceiling, they still face additional barriers that prevent them

from having equal work opportunity that is similar to their male counterparts. Structural inequalities in the workforce perpetuate in systems that recreate hierarchies preserving opportunities for the few. Persistent gender gaps (in representation, authority, and pay) in local government leadership sets back the public sector that strives to lead by example through embracing values of social equity and justice. Despite efforts made by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and initiatives by organizations such as the International City/County Management Association, the results from this dissertation reveal the long road yet left for us to travel before gender equity becomes a reality. This dissertation calls for future collaborative efforts involving public management research, practice, and education to uncover ways in which inequalities manifest in old and new forms. Most importantly, it calls for bold steps toward transferring the knowledge produced from research to inform the ways in which policies and organizational practices are framed in public organizations.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Executive Summary

Background

Previous research has repeatedly reported that gender disparities are persistent in the workforce. Disparities manifest in the form of position segregation or the glass ceiling, as well as occupation and agency segregations. Workforce inequalities are also linked to economic, social, and physiological costs to society. This dissertation adds to the literature by investigating disparities in level of work authority as a new form of the glass ceiling in local government administration.

Objective

In 2016, female Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) represented about 16% of the total CAO population across the United States (ICMA 2016, unpublished demographics data). In 2012, ICMA instituted the *Task Force on Women in the Profession* to investigate the status of women in local government management. In a published report, the Task Force highlighted that women are underrepresented in administrative positions and reported that, at best, women become assistant CAOs or mid- and entry-level managers. This dissertation adds to our understanding of the status of women in the profession by focusing on underrepresentation in the CAO population. The main goal of this research is to uncover new forms of the “glass ceiling” in local government leadership. It aimed to investigate if female CAOs, who comprise 16% of the CAOs in the United States, have levels of work authority that are similar to their male counterparts. Additionally, the study aimed to explore similarities and differences in male and female CAOs’ career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions.

Method

The study implemented a two-phase mixed methods research design. The first phase, using online survey data, investigated gender differences in level of work authority among CAOs from five states across the United States. Survey participants are ICMA state chapter member CAOs from Virginia (VLGMA), Florida (FCCMA), Wisconsin (WCMA), Illinois (ILCMA) and Utah (UCMA). The second phase, utilizing semi-structured interview data from 20 CAOs from the State of Florida, examined differences and similarities in male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions.

Phase One Research questions:

R.Q. 1. Are there gender differences in levels of work authority (sanctioning and decision-making) among CAOs?

R.Q. 2. Is there a relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) and CAO's pay?

Phase Two research question:

R.Q. 3. What are the similarities and differences in male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions?

Findings

Findings from the first phase report disparity in levels of sanctioning authority¹ among male and female CAOs that participated in the study, which suggests that gender disparities in levels of sanctioning authority manifest as a new form of the glass ceiling.

¹ Sanctioning authority in this study is defined as CAOs' authority to appoint and remove as well as set work content and salary of department directors.

Most importantly, the same way that the glass ceiling bears economic costs for women that face barriers to management positions, disparities in levels of sanctioning authority also bear economic costs for female CAOs in the study.

Findings from the second phase reveal that professional and social roles shape male and female CAOs' career paths differently. Compared to their male counterparts, female CAOs in the study play the dual role of professional and family care duties. Thus, because of social role expectations, female CAOs' pursue their profession on an un-level field. The study also finds that career paths of female CAOs with family responsibilities are significantly influenced by the presence of mentorship and institutional and social support. Moreover, while male CAOs appear to take across organization mobility career paths, female CAOs often take promotions through organizational hierarchies.

Recommendations

Practical implication derived from this research are twofold. First, findings highlight that gender disparities (in representation, authority, and pay) persist among the CAO population. Therefore, it is recommended that local governments should:

- Equip both elected officials and administrators with culturally competent skills that help them understand and prevent ways in which gender disparities manifest and perpetuate.
- Integrate institutional (policies and services) and social (formal and informal mentorship programs) agendas to prepare and support women with interest in leadership and administrative roles.

Appendix B: Description of the Study

Title: *Gender and Authority in the Public Sector: The Case of Chief Administrative Officers in the United States*

Research Objective

In 2016, female Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) represented 16.6% of the total CAO population across the United States (ICMA 2016, unpublished demographics data). Most female CAOs are concentrated in smaller cities, overseeing less population and annual revenue compared to their male counterparts. The main objective of this dissertation is to uncover new forms of the “glass ceiling” in local government leadership. It aimed to investigate gender differences in levels of authority among male and female CAOs in the United States. The present study aimed to, first, identify individual, organizational, and external factors that drive differences in levels of authority among CAOs. Second, it aimed to investigate if gender disparities in level of work authority induce pay gap disparities among male and female CAOs. Using qualitative interview data from CAOs from the State of Florida, this dissertation then explores similarities and differences in male and female CAOs’ career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions. The goal is to inform public management practice, research, and education about how gender inequalities manifest and evolve within the local government workforce.

Research Questions

RQ 1: Are there gender differences in levels of sanctioning authority (control over personnel operations) among CAOs?

RQ 2: Are there gender differences in levels of decision-making authority (control over formal operations) among CAOs?

RQ 3: Is there a relationship between CAOs' levels of work authority (sanctioning authority and decision-making authority) and CAOs' pay?

RQ 4: What are the similarities and differences of male and female CAOs' career paths and the factors that shape their career-related decisions?

Data Collection

The dissertation utilized online survey and semi-structured interview data collection methods. An online survey was conducted with male and female ICMA state chapter member CAOs across five states in the United States: Virginia (VLGMA), Florida (FCCMA), Wisconsin (WCMA), Illinois (ILCMA), and Utah (UCMA). In the second phase, male and female CAOs from the State of Florida were invited to participate in one-on-one interviews.

Confidentiality

Data collected from both online surveys is fully anonymized; the researcher will not be able to identify individual participants. In addition, all information provided from one-on-one interviews will be kept fully confidential.

Research Outcome

In appreciation of your participation in my research, I offer to send a summary of my research findings to each participating ICMA state chapter. Additionally, I am willing to present my research findings to participating ICMA state chapters and/or at the ICMA annual conference.

Sebawit Bishu (PhD Candidate in Public Affairs)

Founding and Current President of Florida International University ICMA student
chapter

Email: sbish010@fiu.edu

Appendix C: Survey Instrument

SURVEY ON DISPARITIES IN LEVELS OF WORKPLACE AUTHORITY AMONG LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGERS/ADMINISTRATORS

This study investigates differences in levels of workplace authority among local government Managers/Administrators. In the context of this study workplace authority entails, autonomy over human resource management as well as autonomy over budget and policy recommendations. By proceeding, you grant us your consent to participate in our study.

WORK PROCESS QUESTIONS

Q1 Which of the following best describes your form of government?

- Council-Manager (1)
- Mayor-Council (2)
- Commission (3)
- Other (Please Specify) (4) _____

Q2 How is the mayor in your local government appointed?

- Mayor is appointed by the council/commission (1)
- Mayor is independently elected (2)
- Other (Please Specify) (3) _____

Q3 Which of the following best describes your role in appointing and removing department directors?

- Council makes decisions directly (1)
- Council makes decisions and confirms with Manager/Administrator (2)
- Manager/Administrator makes recommendations but council decides (3)
- Manager/Administrator consults with council before making decisions (4)
- Manager/Administrator makes decisions and informs council (5)

Q4 Which of the following best describes your role in setting salary rate and work content of department directors?

- Council makes decisions directly (1)
- Council makes decisions and confirms with Manager/Administrator (2)
- Manager/Administrator makes recommendations but council decides (3)
- Manager/Administrator consults with council before making decisions (4)
- Manager/Administrator makes decisions and informs council (5)

Q5 What percentage of your time per week do you spend communicating with the council on policy agendas?

_____ Percentage of time per week (1)

Q6 What percentage of your time per week do you spend communicating with the staff on policy concerns prior to policy adoption?

_____ Percentage of time per week (1)

Q7 On a scale of 1 to 5, how often does the council approve
Manager/Administrator's recommendations?

_____ Budget recommendations (1)

_____ Policy recommendations (2)

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS QUESTIONS

Q8 What is your sex?

Male (1)

Female (2)

Q9 What year were you born? (Please enter year in numerical value)

Q10 How would you describe yourself? (Please choose the group that best describes your
racial background)

American Indian or Alaska Native (1)

Black or African American (4)

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (5)

Asian (6)

White (8)

Multiple races (7)

Q11 Are you Hispanic/Latino?

No (1)

Yes (2)

Q12 What is your marital status?

- Single (1)
- Married (2)
- Divorced (3)
- Living with a partner (4)
- Widowed (5)
- Other (Please Specify) (6) _____

Q13 Which of the following best describes your field of study?

- Liberal Arts (1)
- Business (2)
- Economics (3)
- Public Administration (4)
- Urban/City Administration (5)
- Political Science (6)
- Engineering or Architecture (7)
- Other (Please Specify) (8) _____

Q14 What is your highest education level?

- High school diploma (1)
- Technical/vocational education (2)
- Some college (3)
- Associate degree (2- years college degree) (4)
- Bachelor's degree (4-years college degree) (5)
- Master's degree (6)

- Some doctoral level courses (7)
- Doctoral degree (8)
- Juris Doctor (JD) (9)
- Other (Please Specify) (10) _____

Q15 Do you have a professional certificate?

- No (1)
- Yes (please specify the type of professional certificate) (2)

Q16 Number of years as a Manager/Administrator in local government (County, City, Town or Village) administration? (Please enter number of years in numerical value)

Q17 Number of years of work experience in local government? (Please enter number of years in numerical value)

Q18 Total number of years in the workforce? (Please enter number of years in numerical value)

Q19 Are you a full-time Manager/Administrator?

- Yes (1)
- No (How many hours per week?) (2) _____

Q20 What is your current annual salary, in thousands?

_____ Annual salary, in thousands (1)

Q21 What is your total annual household income, in thousands?

_____ Total household income, in thousands (7)

Q22 Was the starting salary at your current job within the established personnel salary range for Managers/Administrators?

- No (5)
- Yes (6)

Answer If Was the starting salary at your current job within the established personnel salary range for city managers? No Is Selected

Q22-1 If your starting salary was not within the established personnel salary range, which of the below options apply to you?

- It was lower than the salary range (1)
- It was higher than the salary range (2)

Q23 How is your pay compared to people with a similar job but in other local governments?

- Much better (1)
- Somewhat better (2)
- About the same (3)
- Somewhat worse (4)
- Much worse (5)

Q24 Overall, how satisfied are you with your salary?

- Extremely satisfied (1)
- Somewhat satisfied (2)
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)
- Somewhat dissatisfied (4)
- Extremely dissatisfied (5)

Q25 How many children under the age of 18 do you have? (Please enter number in numerical value)

Q26 Does your workplace offer childcare assistance?

- No (1)
- Yes (2)

Answer If Does your workplace offer childcare assistance? Yes Is Selected

Q26-1 Do you utilize your workplace child care assistance?

- No (1)
- Yes (2)

Q27 On average how many hours do you spend on household responsibilities per week?

- Up to 2 hours (1)
- 2-4 hours (2)
- 4-6 hours (3)
- 6-8 hours (4)
- 8 hours or more (5)

Q28 Did you move more than 70 miles for your current job?

- No (1)
- Yes (2)

Q29 Have you held a Manager/Administrator position prior to your current job?

- No (1)
- Yes (2)

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS QUESTIONS

Q30 Which state do you work in?

- Florida (1)
- Illinois (2)

- Virginia (4)
- Wisconsin (5)
- Utah (6)
- Oregon (7)

Answer If Which state do you work in? Florida Is Selected

Q30-1 In which of the following county in Florida is your municipality located (for purposes of linking the results of the survey to Census data)?

- Miami-Dade County (1)
- Palm Beach County (2)
- Lake County (3)
- Duval County (4)
- Manatee County (5)
- Broward County (6)
- Volusia County (7)
- Orange County (8)
- Polk County (9)
- Monroe County (10)
- Hillsborough County (11)
- Pinellas County (12)
- Other (13) _____

Answer If Which state do you work in? Illinois Is Selected

Q30-1 In which of the following county in the state of Illinois is your municipality located (for purposes of linking the results of the survey to Census data)?

- Cook County (1)
- Winnebago County (2)
- McHenry County (3)
- Madison County (4)
- Tazewell County (5)
- Jefferson County (6)
- Massac County (7)
- McLean County (8)
- Livingston County (9)
- Macon County (10)
- Grundy County (11)
- Alexander County (12)
- DuPage County (13)
- Other (14) _____

Answer If Which state do you work in? Virginia Is Selected

Q30-1 In which county in the state of Virginia is your municipality located (for purposes of linking the results of the survey to Census data)?

Answer If Which state do you work in? Wisconsin Is Selected

Q30-1 In which county in the state of Wisconsin is your municipality located (for purposes of linking the results of the survey to Census data)?

Answer If Which state do you work in? Utah Is Selected

Q30-1 In which county in the state of Utah is your municipality located (for purposes of linking the results of the survey to Census data)?

Answer If Which state do you work in? Oregon Is Selected

Q30-1 In which county in the state of Oregon is your municipality located (for purposes of linking the results of the survey to Census data)?

Q31 What is the population size of the (County, City, Town or Village) in which you serve? (Please enter numerical value)

Q32 Which of the following best describes your local government setting?

- Urban (1)
- Suburban (2)
- Rural (3)

Q33 Approximately, what is the previous fiscal year budget amount of your local government? (Please enter numerical value)

Q34 Approximately, how many employees (Full-time Equivalents) are there in your municipality/county? (Please insert numerical value)

Q35 How would you rate the following?

_____ Percentage of female council members (1)

_____ Percentage of minority council members (2)

_____ Percentage of female department directors (3)

_____ Percentage of minority department directors (4)

_____ Percentage of female employees (5)

_____ Percentage of minority employees (6)

Q36 Which of the following functions do you have in your administration?

- Code compliance (1)
- Human resources (2)
- Community and economic development (3)
- Real estate assets management (4)
- Finance (5)
- Fire-rescue (6)
- Information technology (7)
- Police (8)
- Parks and recreations (9)
- Planning and zoning (10)
- Public works (11)
- Procurement (12)
- Risk management (13)
- Solid waste (14)
- Buildings (15)
- Health and mental hygiene (16)
- Sanitation's (17)
- Consumer affairs (18)
- Homeless services (19)
- Transportation (20)
- Small business services (21)
- Environmental protection (22)

- Law (23)
- Housing (24)
- Cultural affairs (25)
- Others (please specify) (26) _____

Q37 Which of the following family-friendly policies does your administration provide for its employees?

- Paternal leave policy (2)
- Flexible work schedule policy (3)
- Lactation policy (4)
- Child-care and elder-care policy (5)
- Light duty during pregnancy (6)
- Other (Please Specify) (7) _____

Appendix D: Interview Guide

Career motivation

1. How did you end up in a career in government?
2. What motivates you to pursue the career in administration (management)?

Career path

1. What does your career history that leads to your current Manager/Administrator position look like?

Self-selection

Follow up questions:

1. If this is your first position as a Manager/Administrator what made you pursue this specific position?
2. If this is not your first position as a Manager/Administrator what factors made you change jobs?
 - Follow up question: Were there opportunities that were presented to you or did you pursue this specific position out of personal interest?

If the Manager/Administrator has family responsibilities:

1. What is your marital status?
 - Follow up question (has your marital status changed while you are a Manager/Administrator?)
2. Do you have children?
 - Follow up question (if you have children did you pursue the career manager track when your children were young?)

3. Do you have children under the age of 18 and/or elders that you have to care for currently?

- Follow up question (How do you think having to care for children or elder family member conflict with your career pursuits/decisions?)

- Follow up question (Have you had times of labor force interruption because of family or non-work-related responsibilities?)

4. On average how much time do you spend per-week on household responsibilities?

- Do you get help from family members or others?

- Follow up question (does your family responsibilities conflict with work responsibilities)?

- Are you the primary bread winner in your family?

5. Have you previously tried applying to other Chief Administrative Officer positions elsewhere?

- If yes, did you apply for a position with relatively similar level of responsibility?

- Follow up question (Why do you think you did not get the position?)

Additional input

Based on what we discussed is there anything you would like to add?

VITA

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PUBLICATIONS

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