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The Impact of Evangelical Gender Roles on College Females' Vocational Aspirations

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THE IMPACT OF EVANGELICAL GENDER ROLES ON COLLEGE FEMALES' VOCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the impact Evangelical gender roles have on college females' vocational aspirations. The participants were divided into two groups based on common Evangelical gender roles, Complementarianism and Egalitarianism. Groups were determined by the participants' responses to a gender role ideology inventory that was completed prior to qualitative interviews with the researcher. The research was guided by one research question:

1) How do Evangelical gender role perspectives impact college females' vocational aspirations?

The study was rooted in grounded theory; therefore a core story emerged from participants: Evangelical college females heard conflicting messages and internalized contradicting expectations, which led to compromise in future vocational aspirations involving career, education, and motherhood. The core story was further supported by the major themes that emerged including: the influence of family, confusion over the roles of a woman, the influence of Evangelical culture, and the resulting impact on vocation of career, education, motherhood, and civic engagement. Implications for practice include suggestions on how to better prepare women for the balance of career, motherhood, and civic pursuits.

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Lord, give us hearts of hospitality that we may rush to welcome guests into our daily lives, so that, somehow, we may welcome Jesus…

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Forty years have passed since one of the most impactful events in American heritage: the Women's Rights Movement. While much progress has been made since this pivotal time period, the modern woman still faces many challenges. The metaphorical glass ceiling that only allows women to achieve a certain level of authority has often deterred female power and prestige. Eagly and Carli (2007) said, "The glass ceiling metaphor conveys a rigid, impenetrable barrier, but barriers to women's advancement are now more permeable" (p. 1). While the glass ceiling may no longer be as evident, a gendered culture still creates challenges and obstacles to women's success. Women have made great advances in academia, professionalism, and the workforce but there remains a fairly strong gender divide in the career world (Evans, 2009; Hakim, 2006; Kleinfeld, 2009).

In the field of higher education, females are continuing to graduate at higher rates than their male counterparts. Kleinfeld (2009) found this trend to be true across ethnic groups. While women are surpassing men in college enrollment and graduation, gender specific majors continue to dominate the college culture. Typically female-dominated fields include: foreign language, education, sociology, psychology, and English. Traditionally male-dominated fields include: physics, chemistry, economics, computer science, and accounting/finance (Bryant, 2003). While these majors are gradually

becoming less gender specific, there is still a noticeable difference in the ratio of males and females in these typically gender-specific majors.

Choice of career is based on a variety of factors. A study done by Phillips and Imhoff (1997) indicated, "women's vocational aspirations can be traced to both individual and social factors, including race, class, and gender" (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010, p. 339). These findings indicate that females' aspirations for post-college are founded in pre-existing factors, already in effect before a female enters college. These factors have the ability to influence the choices that women make regarding majors, interests, and extracurricular involvements.

Purpose of Study

Life aspirations develop over time and are influenced by many different factors. Instead of individual and separate variables, researchers have found that a multidimensional model best describes the career and life aspirations of females. A meta-analysis by Colaner (2008) suggested that the factors that make up the model of female aspiration development include: dating relationships, social networks, parental upbringing, ethnicity, and intellectual capability. While women have the same access as men, females may be restricted by the expectations placed upon them by others or expectations they may put on themselves. These expectations can develop from personal experiences or external experiences and individuals. Mary Ann Baenninger (2011), president of the College of St. Benedict, said, "Women have access to just about every educational opportunity and every career. But access doesn't guarantee outcomes. A gendered culture, mostly in unconscious ways, limits women's expectations for themselves and our expectations for them" (p. 2)**.** While females may be told they can

achieve anything they desire, pressures of work, family, appearance, and success demand much of the twenty-first century woman.

Evangelical Christian subculture adds another dimension to the already complex model of aspiration development. Rather than clearly defined roles, gender role perspectives within evangelical communities are often based on perceptions regarding the genders (Colaner, 2008). The perceived truths, which are based on Biblical principles and teachings, often define the roles of males and females, resulting in expectations regarding future aspirations. Breaking from these accepted Biblical gender roles can be seen as unacceptable behavior (Bilezikian, 2006). In Evangelical Christian subculture, the expectation of balancing a career and a strong faith-based family structure can be a difficult lifestyle to navigate.

For the purpose of the present study, vocational aspirations include the pursuit of a career as well as the pursuit of motherhood. While all women do not have aspirations of both, it is important to recognize that both are equally important and valued. One study found that women who desire to pursue a career and have aspirations of a family are limited to careers that "accommodate compromised allegiance" (Larson, Butler, Wilson, Medora, & Allgood, 1994, p. 80). If women feel that their future needs to be compromised to achieve multiple aspirations, this may directly affect the choices that are made at the college level.

As women identify aspirations for the future, a schema of what is culturally appropriate as female develops. Gender roles are learned often through one's environment, modeled to children from an early age through the family unit and other societal surroundings. The perceived ideas of what is appropriate for males and females

continues to grow and develop as time progresses. Religious beliefs can also play a significant role in the perspectives that develop in relation to gender roles. Evangelical Christian theology informs the roles of men and women in the church and in the home. The Scriptures are often perceived as truth and interpreted differently by varying religious sects.

Within Evangelical Christian communities, there are often two main viewpoints in relation to gender roles, Complementarianism and Egalitarianism. The Complementarian perspective holds a more conservative, traditional view of women's roles. This view is based in the belief that while male and female are created equally, the male's role is to be responsible over the female as she submits to the leadership of her husband. The other viewpoint, Egalitarianism, is considered to be a more modern, liberal view of gender following the view that as male and female are equal in all areas, both should be given equal responsibility (Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, 2012). Colaner and Warner (2005) found that college aged women who came from an Egalitarian viewpoint tended to have higher career aspirations than women of Complementarian thought. In another study, Colaner (2009) found that women from the Complementarian background had higher aspirations of motherhood, particularly that of becoming a homemaker, than women who came from Egalitarian backgrounds. The potential tension of aspirations of a career and motherhood may cause conflict for Evangelical college-aged women (Colaner, 2009).

Evangelical Christian female college students may be internally and externally limited in the ability to pursue specific careers due to the gender role perspectives established before college. The present study explored how these preconceived gender

roles impacted a female's long-term aspirations and the impact on her actions and decision-making while in college. In addition to understanding the impact, the study offers suggestions regarding how universities may better prepare women by encouraging them to think about the full spectrum of options that are available to them including majors, internships, extracurricular opportunities, and potential careers. The study could benefit higher education through the identification of gender role perspectives of senior females and the examination of the process that formed vocational aspirations (Creswell, 2008). Higher education institutions have great potential to positively impact these perspectives with programming and interventions to guide women in making informed decisions regarding vocational aspirations.

Research Question

The purpose of the study was to examine how preconceived gender roles impacted college females' vocational aspirations and the identity formation that occurred in relation to such aspirations.

The study sought to answer the following question:

1) How do Evangelical gender role perspectives impact college females' vocational aspirations?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Scholars have produced different theories of potential significance in the area of gender development and vocational aspiration. Bem's (1981) gender schema theory was one model that could explain the influence of gender on an individual's college major choice. Bem's theory suggested that children come to understand the definition of what is masculine and what is feminine through social interaction and experience. College students are taught through experience what is considered to be masculine and feminine in terms of major and career choices, which can result in students entering college with predetermined notions regarding gender-appropriate majors (Evans et al., 2010). Gender schema theory would indicate that gender interactions including majors, faculty engagement, career planning, and student life reinforce students' preconceived perceptions and continue to shape the gender schemas previously established (Evans et al., 2010).

Gilligan's (1982) theory of moral development attempted to explain how women develop moral reasoning. Her theory suggested that women move from selfish to sacrificial as they develop more fully. The first stage of Gilligan's model, preconventional, focuses on a person's survival with self-care of the utmost importance. In the second phase, conventional, a woman shows responsibility and care for others,

typically demonstrated through the role of wife and mother. In the third phase, post conventional, an individual demonstrates care for self and others. Gilligan's theory speaks to a woman's understanding of her role, and therefore her place, in society.

Characteristics of American College Females

A study by Kleinfeld in 2009 researched the gender gap in higher education. Kleinfeld found that more high school women than men are encouraged to attend college by significant family members and other persons of importance in their lives. College is often portrayed to females as the most important post-high school goal, clearly demonstrated in the number of women receiving bachelor degrees. Among white students in 2006, women obtained 57 percent of bachelor's degrees, while among black students, women receiving bachelor's degrees made up 66 percent of college graduates. The Hispanic population demonstrated a similar trend as 61 percent of Hispanic college graduates were women (Kleinfeld, 2009). Women are not lagging behind in graduation rates; rather, they are ahead of men.

Females also report higher levels of involvement than their male counterparts (Baenninger, 2011). Men consistently spend more time on leisurely activities than women do, which might result in skewed views in the workforce. While men are taught that they do not need to work hard to obtain success, women are taught that they must work constantly, both in the workplace and home, in order to display the most basic amounts of success (Baenninger).

A large survey by the American Council on Education (2001) compared responses of college freshmen from religious and nonsectarian schools. The results showed that women entering both religious colleges and secular institutions answered

similarly to questions regarding career goals (Schaefer, 2003). While schools may vary on their views of women in leadership depending on theological perspectives, it is important that men and women are treated equally. This is not always the case. Mock (2005), a professor at George Fox University, shared her views about her students' futures:

> I worry about my own female students, who are excited by their calls to various vocations but also are constantly reminded by the predominating cultural ethos that, once they get married and have children, God does not expect them to work outside the home. (p. 3)

The unstated expectations that are placed on Evangelical women may be further supported by the modeling or lack thereof that takes place on college campuses.

Society's gendered culture is somewhat evident in higher education faculty. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) found that only 42 percent of full-time faculty members are women. While this number is significantly higher than it has been in past decades, it has been a very slow process to get to this point. Interestingly enough, women are highly represented in contingent faculty positions and graduate student fellowships (Curtis, 2005). Even though women are well represented in the overall institution, men are still more strongly represented in positions of power and prestige.

Christian higher education further supports the impact of a gendered culture in an Evangelical setting. According to a survey taken of the members of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU), women make up only 38% of faculty members. In addition to being less represented, CCCU females are behind their male

counterparts in several different areas. Men possess more doctorates as their highest degree and women publish less frequently than their male colleagues (Joeckel & Chesnes, 2009). While this may be attributed to other factors beyond gender, college students may interpret a lack of equal representation as a message about the roles of men and women.

Another factor that greatly impacts the futures of female college students is a top-to-bottom structural issue present in higher education and in the outside world. Males continue to hold the majority of high-level positions in the workforce as well as in academic settings. Women continue to break the glass ceiling by filling high-level positions, but female college students still encounter more males in academic leadership**.** Gendered major selection is still very prevalent with men pursuing careers in science, engineering, and business, and women pursuing careers in education, social service, and administrative support (Evans & Diekman, 2009). Despite the perceived pressure to choose a traditionally female major, there are still many females choosing traditionally male majors and careers. As students continue to break gender stereotypes, professors need to be affirming and supportive of students who do not fit the mold of the traditional gendered student for a specific major. Sax (2008) stated, “Feeling dismissed by faculty members in the classroom has negative consequences for women’s long-term academic aspirations, confidence in math, and even physical health” (p. 2). Furthermore while professors may strive to treat both genders equally, they must realize how the two genders internalize those relationships (Sax, 2008).

Gender Roles: Defining What Is Culturally Acceptable

In order to understand gender roles, it is important to distinguish gender from sex. Sex is defined by one's biological classification while gender is defined by culturally appropriate behaviors. There are many differences between genders, yet there is also great variety within gender resulting in a broad understanding of what it means to be male or female. Expectations of what is accepted and what is avoided are modeled for individuals starting at a young age and continuing through one's adult life. Gender role perspectives consist of many different facets or levels that make up what is acceptable. These differences include: geographic location, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, ethnic heritage, and political stance. Therefore, it is difficult to define what is culturally acceptable in American culture during the twenty-first century.

Family structure and upbringing are critical elements in one's identity development and gender perspectives. A family's understanding of gender can cause a whole family structure to display gendered qualities that can be classified as masculine or feminine.

> Masculine families teach boys to be assertive, ambitious, achievement or task-oriented, domineering, and tough while girls learn to be nurturing, modest, and relationally-oriented. In feminine families both boys and girls learn to be caring and concerned with both facts and feelings as well as to be consensus-oriented. (Lidzy, 2005)

The differentiation between masculine and feminine family structures is just one subset of a gendered culture.

In the Evangelical Christian spectrum, gender ideologies can be a source of conflict as religious gender ideologies can seem incongruous with those of the secular sphere (Bryant, 2009). Individuals outside evangelical circles can be critical of Evangelical Christians gender role ideologies. Conflicts over gender roles even arise within Christian circles, as the role of women in the church is a common, yet difficult topic to clearly define. Colaner (2008) suggested:

> The life aspirations of women are complex due to various pressures placed upon them in society. This may be particularly true within Bible believing communities. Evangelical gender role ideologies are defined not as actual roles but ideals based on perceived truth concerning all women and men that can be supported through the Bible.

How a woman interprets Scripture plays a significant role in her perception of gender.

The most widely known perspectives on gender roles within Evangelical Christian groups are Complementarianism and Egalitarianism. With regard to Complementarianism, the more conservative perspective, the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood stated that while male and female are created equally, the male's role is to be responsible over the female while she gladly submits to the headship of her husband (CBMW, 2012). Their view is supported through Biblical passages such as Ephesians 5:22-21, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior" (ESV). Another verse that supports the Complementarian stance is 1 Peter 3:7, " Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing

honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered" (ESV).

Another widely held view amongst Evangelical Christians is Egalitarianism, a less traditional perspective. The Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood's position on Egalitarianism is equality among the genders, and because male and female are equal in all areas, both are given equal responsibility. Those who support this viewpoint refer to Galatians 3:28, which says, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (ESV). This view does not differentiate based on gender as it sees all humans as holding equal status regardless of whether one is male or female. The stance of the Christians for Biblical Equality explained Egalitarianism in more practical terms:

> In the Christian home, husband and wife are to defer to each other in seeking to fulfill each other's preferences, desires and aspirations. Neither spouse is to seek to dominate the other but each is to act as servant of the other, in humility considering the other as better than oneself. (Council for Biblical Equality, 1989)

Egalitarianism sees equality as of the utmost importance.

Evangelical Christian females are often raised to follow one of these two viewpoints. Through the meshing of family values, core church beliefs, and interactions among one's church congregation, Evangelical Christian females are taught what it means to be a Christian female. The socially taught gender roles have potentially large impact on the path a female might pursue in her future. Colaner (2009) stated:

> Evangelical gender role ideologies are not defined in terms of functional roles but rather as ideals based on perceived truth supported through the Bible. These

> ideologies do not necessarily define what is properly considered masculine and feminine but rather the roles that are appropriate for men and women to fulfill. In this sense, gender roles stem from gender role ideologies. (p. 100)

As men and women learn what is expected of them because of these ideologies, behavior is shaped by these expectations.

Pursuing the Future: Vocational Aspirations and Identity Formation

For the purpose of the present study, vocational aspirations included career pursuits in the workforce as well as family aspirations. Evans and Diekman (2009) supported such a view: “From a role congruity perspective, the internalization of gender roles leads people to endorse gender-stereotypic goals, which then lead to interest in occupations that afford the pursuit of those goals.” As females plan for their futures, the belief in perceived gender roles may impact the goals toward which they aspire.

Career choice in the workforce is one potential implication of such perceived gender roles. In 1987, Hartman found that while men and women did not differ on indecisiveness over their career choice, women perceive more external barriers than men. In response to the external barriers, women desired more support in making career decisions (Larson et al., 1994). One distinguishing factor between men and women’s career choice is why men and women tend to choose careers. A male’s career choice is often an isolated decision compared to a female's choice, which is a dichotomous decision (Larson et al., 1994). Better explained, men tend to choose a career based on their ability to provide and be financially stable. This decision is often not hindered by a need to be the nurturer in the family structure. On the other hand, women are often presented with two roles that do not always go hand in hand. Perceived as the main

nurturer, women who are fully engaged in the workplace are often seen as weakening the home structure. For women, the roles of nurturer and career woman do not always appear to go together; rather, they may be in conflict with one another (Larson et al., 1994). Pohlman (2001) found women's life goals tended to be more communal in nature focusing on attributes such as intimacy, affiliation, and altruism. On the contrary, men placed a higher significance on agency characteristics including power, achievement, and seeking new experiences. While both men and women valued communal and agency attributes, the significance placed on the respective domains differed among the genders (Evans & Diekman, 2009). Gilligan's (1982) theory of women's development also supported such a dualistic role as women's desire to care for others can conflict with the desire to survive and thrive on one's own merit.

In a study relating to Evangelical Christian female career aspirations, Colaner (2005) found differences in aspirations between women who ascribed to the Egalitarian and the Complementarian positions. She stated, "Women who view themselves as equal with men are more willing to adapt their lifestyle around career goals. Women who identify with the Complementarian ideology are still working, but are not aspiring" (Colaner, 2005, p. 27). On the contrary, she found a positive correlational relationship among women with an Egalitarian perspective: "Therefore, there is a highly significant relationship between Egalitarianism and employment that offers financial gain, satisfaction, advancement, and authority" (Colaner, 2005, p. 27). Furthermore, a study by Greenglass and Devins found that women who desired to pursue a career and had aspirations of a family were limited to careers that "accommodate compromised

allegiance" (Larson et. al, 1994, p. 80). Females' career decision-making processes are often more complex than that of their male counterparts.

Gendered career limitation is very present in the American workforce. While women are limited vertically, men are limited horizontally. Explained more clearly, women have more breadth in career choice but are limited in their ability to grow upward. Men, on the other hand, are more limited in what careers they choose, but their ability for growth often seems higher. The gender differentiation that occurs in the workplace is often absent during the college years when women tend to surpass men in leadership positions, engagement, and academic performance. While women tend to move up the ladder quickly in student life and leadership positions, they are unlikely to experience the same outcomes in the workplace.

Female college students face a complex and weighted decision when it comes to choice of career. When aspirations of a family are included in career plans, females may experience conflict over aspirations for the future. Societal expectations from a gendered culture teach men and women unique gender roles from an early age. These roles continue to be reinforced throughout childhood and into adolescence resulting in perceived truths and altered behavior (Evans et al., 2010). Within Evangelical communities, gender role perspectives based on Biblical teachings can greatly influence a female's view of gender. A female's understanding of gender based on Biblical teachings can impact her understanding of appropriate male and female roles, both in the church as well as in the workplace.

The present study sought to discover the connection between females' understanding of gender and the impact that gender had on vocational aspirations. While

some research has been done relating to this area, gaps remain in the literature. The hypothesis of the study was that females with an Egalitarian perspective would be more likely to aspire to a vocation than their Complementarian counterparts.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Grounded theory methodology was used in the study as the findings were grounded in the data collected. Grounded theory allowed the researcher to identify influences, experiences, and philosophies of college females' vocational aspirations. According to Creswell (2008), grounded theory research is defined as a systematic, qualitative approach used to generate a theoretical explanation for a process. As this was a process theory, it best fit the research question as the researcher sought to discover how a series of events and life experiences impacted vocational aspirations. It was useful in understanding how aspirations develop over time. This type of research uses coding as a means to categorize the data, which leads to the development of a theory. By using this design, the researcher was able to discover a core story, or central phenomenon, that emerged through the qualitative interviews (Creswell).

Participants

The participants for the study consisted of senior females at a small, private, Midwestern, Evangelical institution. The student body population was made of 56% females and 44% males (Profile, n.d.). The participant pool included all senior females enrolled at the university. While over 300 women were contacted to participate in the research study, only seventeen women responded. Out of the seventeen who responded,

ten women were selected to participate in qualitative interviews with the researcher. One participant did not show up, resulting in nine participants.

Instruments/Measures

As the focus of the study was on the impact of gender roles, all participants were asked to complete a quantitative assessment on gender role perspectives. The assessment, The Gender Role Ideology Assessment (see Appendix A), was developed by Endicott, and later modified by Colaner (2005). The original instrument was used to measure Evangelical attitudes toward gender roles. In a similar study, Colaner also used this assessment (2005). The quantitative tool was slightly modified from a Likert scale with the sole purpose of stratifying participants into two groups. Scores could range from 0 to 15 with 0 being strongly Complementarian in beliefs and 15 being strongly Egalitarian in beliefs.

Procedure

All of the senior females were contacted by the researcher via email (see Appendix B). Interested students were asked to respond to the researcher expressing their interest. The researcher replied to the inquiries with an electronic informed consent form (see Appendix C) and the Gender Role Ideology Assessment (Appendix A), which was used to determine participant's gender role ideology. The participants then returned the informed consent and the assessment to the researcher and results were quantified to produce a final score ranging from 0-15. Those receiving a 0-5 were classified as Complementarian; 6-10 were classified as Moderate; 11-15 were classified as Egalitarian. From those groupings, the researcher used selective sampling to choose a smaller number of participants from the participant pool. The top five scores and the bottom five scores

were selected to complete qualitative interviews. While the scores were divided into groups according to the highest and lowest scores, it is important to note that there was a wide range of scores within gender role groupings. Participants within the Complementarian group could have scored up to five points differently and still been grouped together.

Prior to official interviews, a pilot interview was conducted to assess the validity and clarity of the interview questions. The pilot interview was not used in the final results but was helpful in improving the questions that were asked to participants. Slight modifications were made to the original questions to bring more clarity to questions. The participants were asked a series of questions with some follow up questions (see Appendix D). While all of the interviews varied in length, they averaged 40 minutes.

Data Analysis

All interviews were recorded by the researcher and then transcribed by an outside transcriber. The researcher analyzed the data using open coding which produced themes (Creswell, 2008). After codes were identified, main categories were developed and a core phenomenon emerged. The core story helped explain how gender roles impact college females' vocational aspirations.

Chapter 4

Results

The present study aimed to discover if there was a correlation between females' gender role perspectives and the vocational aspirations held for the future. The findings of the study included thoughtful and rich discussion on upbringing, cultural expectations of women, career and mothering aspirations, and perceived limitations on females. Out of these topics discussed, the participants pointed to several factors that contributed to their gender role formation. These included: strong family influence, Evangelical culture influence, and a Biblical understanding of gender. These themes are discussed in greater detail below and include subthemes of note. In addition to themes, in which gender role ideology formation was influenced, themes emerged regarding short- and long-term aspirations. In order to clearly see the similarities and difference between the two participant groups, the results were divided thematically and findings from both participant groups discussed. Participants seemed enthusiastic to discuss these issues and the overall tone of the interviews was positive.

The Gender Role Ideology survey was a guiding and contributing force in questions posed and the responses participants offered. In order to process the questions more fully, the researcher asked participants to expand on their survey responses in more depth. This led to further discussion and the emergence of additional themes. The

researcher then asked a series of questions to the participants (see Appendix B). The following themes emerged from the interviews.

Influence of Family on Gender Role Perspectives

The participants were asked to discuss family background and the gender roles that were present in their family structure. All of the women from the Complementarian group came from dual parent homes. In discussing parents' careers, all four women came from families where the father was the main provider. Three of the participants' mothers were full-time stay-at-home mothers. Though all three mothers worked a limited amount of hours outside the home for personal interest or extra finances, their main occupation was clearly motherhood.

The fourth participant's mother worked full time. While this last participant differed from her counterparts in this area, she did not speak of her parents' careers at length. Instead, she spoke more about her maternal grandparents and pointed to them as strong influences in her upbringing: "I love how they have modeled marriage, even more so than I think my parents have, which is interesting. That has been an influence on how I see gender roles."

The participants from the Complementarian group spoke favorably of their parents' marriages. All of the participants mentioned their fathers as the leader and their mothers as the follower. One participant spoke explicitly about the expectations placed on the women in her family:

> Early marriage is something that my family very highly values. I am already behind on that so I think that has had a big impact on what my, like, sister and my mother and my grandmothers have all done. I guess as far as careers go.

This participant explicitly expressed the strong influence her family has had on her desires for familial aspirations and implicitly, through her body language and tone of voice, seemed to express a sense of failure at not achieving marital status as a college student.

The family structures of the Egalitarian group were much more varied than the Complementarian group. Out of the five participants, two came from single parent homes, both participants raised by single mothers. The other three participants came from dual parent homes, each differing in structure. All three participants' fathers were the main financial provider. One participant's mother was a trained zoologist and a science teacher. Another participant's mother stayed at home but was very involved in leading and training other women in a non-profit, religious organization. The last participant's mother was a full-time stay-at-home mother who was "expected to be a stay at home mom."

One participant from the Egalitarian group was adopted, and this was also the only participant from the Egalitarian group whose mother was a full-time stay-at-home mother with no other career avenues. She attributed her difference in aspirational desires and expectations partly to her adoption: "Because I'm not related to any of them, so I don't have a lot of the same desires that they do."

Maternal influence. While the researcher did not pose any questions specifically about the role of the mother, the majority of participants spoke of their mothers' influence in both implicit and explicit ways. The researcher noted implicit tones that varied between the two participant groups. The Complementarian group spoke well of their mothers, but none of them spoke of their mothers' purpose or value in terms of

career. Participants used descriptive words including: compassionate, kind, very hard worker, nurturing, gentle, and loving. The implicit tone through the Complementarian interviews was that their mothers did not express a desire to work outside the home.

Contrasting this tone, women from the Egalitarian group used much stronger words to describe their mothers including: reserved, stoic, strong, feminist, involved, and independent. Participants expressed their mothers' value explicitly:

> She was a stay home mom, but she was never just a mom and we all know that…So there is always a sense that mom was a stay home mom and that it was important and valuable but that she was more than that because she just really invested in all of the people that she interacted with.

The Egalitarian women described their mothers' roles as something greater than just the role of caretaker or homemaker.

Complementarian women also spoke differently of their mothers' influential roles in their career aspirations. One participant, who scored a 0 on the gender role ideology survey (meaning she held to a strongly Complementarian view) said, "And she [mom] has like basically raised me to be a like stay at home mom or housekeeper. She has trained us well in domesticity." While this was the most extreme of perspectives, other participants commented on the influence of mothers in training them in domestic skills:

> She would serve us so much. I mean she made our lunch all the time, she wrote us notes, she made our beds, cleaned the house, um but was just strong in that she had – I think it was just how she loves. That is what made her strong.

Women from the Complementarian group defined their mothers' strength in more gentle terms than their Egalitarian counterparts and also spoke of maternal influence in motherhood aspirations.

Egalitarian participants spoke of the strong influence their mothers had on them in terms of potential. One participant shared, "I grew up with a single mother so that obviously has a super big factor in how I grew up…a very female friendly household so that definitely influenced me a lot growing up with just seeing what women can do." Several women from the Egalitarian group were inspired to do more vocationally because of their mothers' influence.

Influence of extended family. Seven of the nine participants mentioned the opinions of extended family and the resulting impact of those comments. Both Egalitarian and Complementarian women spoke of the influence of extended family in negative and positive terms.

Three of the four participants from the Complementarian group mentioned extended family members. All three of these participants spoke of their grandparents as having very traditional marriages with the male in authority over the female. Participants used the words submissive, dominant, and ultimate authority to describe their grandparents' relationship. Two of the three participants expressed hesitation on the topic of submission, one attributing the power structure in her grandparents' marriage to personality types rather than gender roles. She mentioned only recently seeing it as a gender role issue rather than a personality issue. The third participant who spoke of extended family spoke of submission as a strength in the relationship.

Four of the five women from the Egalitarian group spoke about the influence of extended family. Participants spoke more negatively of their experiences with extended family on the issue of gender roles. “We didn’t spend as much time with dad’s family because my other grandmother was a very traditionally you know Martha Stewart, Julia Child, you have your nice house with your nice meal on your nice china.” Participants felt pressure coming from extended family members that contradicted their aspirational desires, which felt limiting:

> My dad’s side is very typically gender roles. I can’t go to my dad’s side of the family without hearing why haven’t you settled down? Why haven’t you gotten married? Oh, how about you be a teacher. Why have you given up being a nurse?

The pressure to pursue specific gendered careers was mainly attributed to generational differences by participants.

Generational differences were also attributed to positive experiences that participants recounted. While there were more shared negative experiences from the Egalitarian group, participants also shared positive, encouraging experiences with extended family:

> There was a lot of instilling of wanting to be a woman who had a personality – that was something that was kind of important enough that it was instilled but that we have this inheritance of woman who are not going to be quiet and sit there and say ‘yes dear.’

Egalitarian participants expressed a sense of being loved by extended family but also hurt by the negative comments that they had experienced.

Understanding the Role of Womanhood

As the study was on gender roles, the topic of male and female roles came up frequently throughout the interviews. When asked to discuss their understanding of male and female roles, several reoccurring subthemes emerged including cultural femininity and feminism. Only two of the participants were currently in a relationship; one engaged, the other in a dating relationship. Despite the low number of participants currently in a relationship, women spoke about their understanding of the roles of men and women in a hypothetical sense.

Cultured femininity. The influence of culture was evident throughout the participants' responses. One participant from the Complementarian group said,

> From a cultural standpoint, I would say that we have developed cultural norms for roles such as women are gentle and are supposed to be beautiful and loving and men are supposed to be strong and insensitive and masculine. But I wouldn't say that is necessarily how we were created or designed, but that is how things have happened.

This response summed up some of the dissonance in participants' responses between how men and women are designed and how cultured gender roles are played out. Another woman from the Complementarian group said:

> I feel like roles can be dictated – they are malleable and I think that oftentimes people get stuck in like 'Oh the role of the man is only to be a leader and the role of woman is only to be a follower or, like, only to do certain vocations.'

There was an overwhelming agreement that males and females had different roles but a lack of understanding on what those roles actually were.

The Egalitarian group also spoke of culture's influence. One participant said, "I think that people nowadays are trying to adjust that with their kids – like, trying to make them not either gender. I'm not sure if that confuses kids more or it, like, helps them in their development." Similar to the Complementarian group, Egalitarian participants felt confusion on what the culture says about male and female roles.

Feminism. Six out of nine participants mentioned feminism. There was not a clear difference between participant groups on this issue. Participants expressed one of two extremes. The majority of participants who mentioned feminists expressed a desire to not be labeled as such. One woman shared, "But I also don't want to be a feminist because I feel like they have a bad reputation." The other extreme was represented by the very few women who mentioned their position as a feminist. "I would definitely probably label myself as a feminist." More women expressed a desire to avoid feminist characteristics and labels. Even more than an avoidance of the label, there was a lack of understanding in defining feminism, as evidenced through one participant's comment: "I guess I'm a feminist in that way but not, like, in a radical way…I don't know, I have always been gung-ho for rights of populations but never that gung-ho about women's rights." Feminism by definition does not mean radical, and women were quick to assume that being labeled a feminist equated to radicalism.

Evangelical Cultural Influence

While there were no questions asked by the researcher directly pertaining to the influence of Evangelical culture, several of the participants explicitly spoke of Evangelical cultural influence when discussing their understanding of gender roles. One clear distinction that several participants made was the difference between Evangelical

culture's portrayal of gender roles and the Biblical portrayal of gender roles. One Egalitarian participant shared, "You think of Christian culture and what that dictates and then you have to like defer back to the Bible, like, what that dictates and how it is not 100% clear just because a lot of the culture."

Women from the Complementarian group did not explicitly mention Evangelical influence, but the majority of women from the Egalitarian group did explicitly mention Evangelical culture's expectations on women. Egalitarian women expressed more concern and hesitation with the teachings that they had received from Evangelical circles. For example, "It saddens me to hear that there is a perpetuated stereotype about what is expected of women by God and what is the ministry field that they can have if they are married." Another participant shared:

> Growing up, I was sort of not explicitly but implicitly taught that the best Christian woman is a stay at home mom who has 2.5 kids and two cars and the dog and all of that…but that is not really what I want.

There was an implicit expectation that participants shared about what was expected of the ideal Christian woman and many of those expectations came from Evangelical culture.

Submission and headship. Another dominant subtheme was the topic of submission and how that played out in the context of marriage. As two women out of nine were in relationships, and none of the women were married, the majority of participants discussed how they hoped submission would play itself out in marriage.

Women from the Complementarian group expressed a resounding desire to be a helper to their husbands. Some attributed this desire directly to Biblical instruction while others attributed it to familial influence. One participant spoke on the topic of

submission: “I believe that is Biblical. Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord. I think that is the way God designed humans to be.” While some of the Complementarian woman expressed some uneasiness with the idea of submission, they presented it as an expectation for their future marriage.

In the Egalitarian group, the word submissive was used in comparison to harsher words including: subservient, abusive, and dictator. One participant said, “I’m expected to be submissive, but I think we have turned the word submissive into subservient.” Another participant spoke similarly of submission, “I will definitely be partners and while I think that my husband is the head of the household, I don’t really believe in a dictator sort of relationship.” Participants expressed a desire to submit but a strong discomfort to being walked over and oppressed. There was a distinct difference in perspective on submission between the two gender role groups.

Impact on Aspirations

While the aforementioned themes pertained to the formation of gender role perspectives, the following themes are focused on participants’ life aspirations. Participants’ aspirations included three main areas: career and educational aspirations, familial aspirations, and civic-minded aspirations.

The researcher inquired about several different elements of aspirations. Participants were asked what they aspired to as a young person. The next question pertained to high school aspirations. Following, participants were asked what they aspired to as a college freshmen and if those aspirations had changed at all while in college. Lastly, participants were asked to describe their ideal life in five-year increments beginning with a five-year goal, a ten-year goal, and a fifteen-year goal. These questions

allowed the researcher to understand the implicit patterns and changes in the participants' vocational aspirations. When asked what participants would like to do with their lives, they provided varied responses between both groups. Participants' responses are categorized in Table 1 and 2, below. While life aspirations included much more detail, these tables summarize the general desires of the participants.

Table 1

Long-Term Aspirations of Complementarian Participants

Participants	**Five-Year Goal**	**Ten-Year Goal**	**Fifteen-Year Goal**
1	Married Career	Family Stay at home	Volunteer Work
2	Master's Degree	Married Career	Work part time Stay at home
3	Married Work part time Volunteer work	Family Stay at home	Stay at home Volunteer Work
4	Career	Married Family Stay at home Volunteer Work	Stay at home Volunteer Work

Table 2

Long-Term Aspirations of Egalitarian Participants

	Five-Year Goal	Ten-Year Goal	Fifteen-Year Goal
5	Career	Career	Career (No clear plans)
6	Master's Degree	Career	Married Family (No clear plans) Career
7	Career Master's Degree	Married Family Career (Part-time)	Career
8	Married Family Stay at home Part-time	Stay at home Career (Part-time)	Stay at home Career (Part-time)
9	Master's Degree	Married Career	Career Family (Stay at home for a short time)

Career and educational aspirations. Career aspirations ranged from teacher to politician. The participants had dreams to fulfill many different occupational roles. Four out of the nine participants desired to pursue further education, all aspiring to earn a master's degree. Eight out of nine participants spoke about career aspirations with plans to pursue a career for some time. The ninth participant was planning on using a career as a means until she could stay at home full time.

Women from the Complementarian group aspired to the following vocational areas: education, public relations, social work, and finance. Only one woman from the Complementarian group aspired to attain more education. Three of the four women hoped to be working at the five-year mark. The ten-year mark showed slightly different results. Only one woman (the one who aspired to earn a master's degree) aspired to still

be working full time in a career. At the fifteen-year mark, the same participant hoped to be working part time, while the other three women aspired to be at home full time.

The Egalitarian participants had different aspirations than their Complementarian counterparts. Women from the Egalitarian group aspired to the following vocational areas: politics, environmental science, gender studies, international relations, and art history. Three of the five participants aspired to pursue more education. Four of the five participants hoped to be working full time at the five-year mark. The fifth participant (who is engaged to be married) desired to be working part time because of family obligations. At the ten-year mark, three of the five participants hoped to be working full time. The other two participants hoped to still maintain careers but only be working part time. At the fifteen-year mark, three of the participants desired to be working full time in careers. The other two participants still desired to work part time in a career.

Familial aspirations. When inquiring about long-term aspirations, the researcher invited participants to include familial aspirations in their discussion. All of the participants proceeded to discuss familial aspirations at some length. In addition, they all mentioned a desire to have a family, albeit there were different levels of importance placed on familial aspirations.

The Complementarian group spoke about family as an expectation of what would happen. All four of the Complementarian participants desired to be married and have a family by the ten-year mark. Three of the four participants hoped to be full-time stay-at-home mothers by the ten-year mark, but they all mentioned a willingness to work if there was a financial need. All four participants discussed staying at home by the fifteen-year mark, with one participant explicitly mentioning continuing to work part time. The other

three participants did not mention work in their fifteen year plans and instead spoke of volunteer work, ministry, and raising children. All of the Complementarian participants discussed motherhood as an important aspiration. One participant shared, "I wanted to be a wife and a mother. That's been the main goal since childhood basically." While it was a notable aspiration for all participants, there was also an apprehensive attitude to express their familial aspiration to their peers:

> And rarely do I say that I want to be a mom because I don't want that to be what defines me. I'm not ashamed of it. I think it is an incredible calling and if that is what I do, that is great.

The Egalitarian participants also desired to experience motherhood. There was a clear desire to have children, but participants desired to pursue motherhood later on. There was also less of an absolute need to attain motherhood. This was evidenced through comments from participants: "At some point I might like to be married, have kids, be a mom. Adopt. Those sorts of ideas. But if that happens, great. If not, fine." There was also an apprehensive attitude about being reduced to the title of homemaker: "And I know it will be hard…to face the 'just a mother' conundrum. But I don't want to have to pull that out as my – I'm more than just a mom. Cause I think that is very limiting." The desire to fulfill more roles in life than only that of mother was noticeable in the Egalitarian group.

Civic-minded aspirations. The researcher asked participants what they hoped to accomplish in their lives. Seven of the nine participants expressed civic-minded aspirations. There was also a noticeable impact of faith in participants' aspirations. One participant shared, "I want to be able to impact people for Christ." Another participant

stated, “I want to be able to say that I loved every person I met with the ultimate goal of pointing them to Christ that they could see love, know that it is because God lives within me, and then want what I have.” There was no distinct difference between participant groups as both groups desired to make an impact on the world, as evidenced through one participant’s comment: “I would like to think that I would be able to make an impact on people.” The desire to make a difference was noticeable among the majority of participants.

Additional thoughts. While the themes discussed prior expressed the majority of participants, there were several other themes that emerged that were mentioned less frequently but were still of note. Several of the participants mentioned future limitations to their dreams including physical limitations, gender specific limitations, and limitations connected to marriage and motherhood. Several participants felt that they were given too much credit or not enough credit based upon their physical appearance. Participants also expressed concern over their safety as a female in certain situations, mainly traveling internationally. Lastly, several participants felt that marriage and motherhood might limit their career options or their choices in pursuing specific careers. While limitations were not a main theme or subtheme that emerged, the area could lend itself to future research. In a broader sense, limitations were present in the core story of the participants as limitations could easily be tied to the compromise that women feel they may experience.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Throughout the course of research, one core story emerged in both implicit and explicit ways: Evangelical college females were hearing conflicting messages and internalizing contradicting expectations, which could lead to compromise in future vocational aspirations involving career, education, and motherhood. There were several factors that seemed to be influencing women's understanding of Evangelical gender roles: family, secular culture, Biblical knowledge, and Evangelical culture. These factors all impacted how the participants came to understand their role as a female. As women internalized external expectations, one clear message emerged: Women wanted it all and were told explicitly that they could have it all. But the question remained: What does having it all mean? Research shows that "college women continue to face the superwoman syndrome even if they might not be fully cognizant of the tension between their academic and family aspirations" (Devos, Viera, Diaz, & Dunn, 2007, pp. 382-383). Until college, students who are defined by academic success may see their options as limitless. Once these academically successful women reach college, they may experience conflicting pressure to become successful career women while still balancing familial aspirations. The tension that results, combined with the implicit and explicit expectations from Evangelical culture, may cause Evangelical college women to feel that they have to compromise some aspect of their vocational aspirations. Regardless of how much women

are told they can have it all, there are still limitations present that cause women to experience vocational compromise.

The influence of family, secular culture, and Evangelical culture are all factors in the formation of females' gender role perspectives. While it was evident that roles of men and women were not clear, participants expressed a desire to continue seeking clarity in their understanding of gender roles. Participants also connected their gender role perspectives to their future aspirations with all participants explicitly or implicitly mentioning the influence gender roles had on their vocational aspirations. The significant findings are discussed below in connection to the literature.

Females' Vocational Aspirations Require Compromise

In determining career path, women face a dichotomous decision compared to men's isolated decision. Men tend to determine career goals based on their ability to provide and be financially stable. Women's career decision is dichotomous as motherhood and career are often both seen as part of the future. Culturally perceived as the main nurturer, women may feel implicit expectations to factor motherhood into vocational aspirations. Women's dichotomous choice of mother and career woman may create conflict (Larson et al., 1994). Because of this dichotomy, women may choose careers based on their ability to mother. One Complementarian participant spoke to this conflict in career decision-making: "I wanted to go into sports broadcasting. But that is not conducive to having a family." This participant opted out of a career choice because it did not provide the solution to both of her aspirations, and she felt that family was a stronger aspiration than career.

Another study found that women who desired to pursue a career and had aspirations of a family were limited to careers that "accommodate compromised allegiance" (Larson et al., 1994). One participant expressed a similar tension in her vocational aspirations:

> Then what if I get married in that time. Will I be expected to give up or even after that – what about kids – will I be expected to give up? I have put a lot of hours into this…Which is hard cause then I think I don't even want to get married cause I don't want to have to give that up…regardless of what I do.

Colaner (2009) further supported the perceived tension women feel: "The potential tension of aspirations of a career and motherhood may cause conflict for Evangelical college aged women." Additional research done on undergraduate women self-knowledge found that "academic aspiration and the traditional role of motherhood are conflicting components of the implicit self-knowledge of undergraduate women" (Devos et al., 2007, pp. 381-382).

Familial Influence Shapes Gender Role Perspectives

It was clear that family had a significant influence on participants' understanding of gender role perspectives. Lidzy (2005) found:

> Masculine families teach boys to be assertive, ambitious, achievement or task-oriented, domineering, and tough while girls learn to be nurturing, modest, and relational-oriented. In feminine families both boys and girls learn to be caring and concerned with both facts and feelings as well as to be consensus-oriented.

This difference in masculine and feminine families shapes women's understanding of their role in society and the characteristics they are expected to exhibit.

Research further supported familial influence on females' career aspirations. Li and Kerpelman (2007) found:

> Mothers and fathers both appeared to play meaningful roles in their daughters' career aspirations, yet those roles differed. Thus, in day-to-day interactions with parents, daughters need to experience closeness with and support from their parents, but they also need permission to pursue their own ideas as they consider their career goals. (p. 113)

Bem's (1981) gender schema theory also supported familial influence on an individual's understanding of what is culturally appropriate for males and females. The theory suggested that children come to understand the definition of what is masculine and what is feminine through social interaction and experience. As the family unit plays a key role in social interactions and experience up until the time a child departs for college, Bem's theory supported the influence of family.

For the purpose of the present study, Evangelical gender roles were the main descriptor of gender role perspectives. As Evangelical gender role perspectives are often formed in Evangelical settings (e.g., church, Christian school, Christian family settings), parents play a key role in what type of gender role perspectives their children learn. Apart from the gender roles displayed in the household, parents also make the decision on what denomination the family joins, which also may impact how a child perceives the roles of male and female.

Perceived Gender Roles

The majority of participants expressed a lack of clarity in their understanding of gender roles as they play out in marriage, the church, and the workforce. While women

sought clarity and understanding, mixed messages on what was expected of women and what women could actually accomplish created confusion on actual gender roles. Research shows that there may be a discrepancy between ideology and practice. Colaner (2009) found that ideals and communication patterns might not coincide. While individuals might claim that the male is the head of the household as the Complementarian view holds, decision-making might lend itself to a more Egalitarian perspective. This confusion on what roles men and women should fill stretched into the secular world as well as the Evangelical world. Participants' understanding of their role as a female in a twenty-first century secular society might not align with what was being dictated to them from the Evangelical culture. Bryant (2009) supported this misalignment in her research, "In the Evangelical Christian spectrum, gender ideologies can be a source of conflict as religious gender ideologies can seem incongruous with secular gender ideologies."

The majority of participants expressed concern over what was expected of them from Evangelical culture. There was also some misunderstanding about Biblical gender roles and how that should impact their role as a female. One unique distinction that was made by several participants was the difference between what the Bible says and how Evangelical Christians widely interpret Scripture. The way in which gender roles play out and what is perceived might not always line up. Colaner's (2008) research found "Evangelical gender role ideologies are defined not as actual roles but ideals based on perceived truth concerning all women and men that can be supported through the Bible." As perceived truth is the way in which roles are defined, understandably there is

confusion on what the Christian church is saying about females' place in the church and in society.

Implications for Practice

The findings of the study, supported by research on female career and motherhood aspirations, reinforced the need to provide targeted support for college female students in career planning. As women discern calling and vocational aspirations, it is important to provide support that address career and motherhood. While all women do not have aspirations of both, creating space to discuss the balance of work and family could prove beneficial for college-aged females.

Another practical example for practitioners is highlighting female role models who are balancing career and family well. If women are not seeing strong female models who are achieving family and career success, it is difficult to help women believe this dream is possible. At CCCU institutions, only 38% of faculty members are female. In addition, the drastic disparity between males and females in CCCU senior level administrative roles is not providing many strong examples of females in leadership. While institutions must continue to hire competent, caring female faculty members, it is important to highlight the females that are successful within the institution.

There was a lack of understanding on what might be considered general terms within secular and Evangelical culture. Women did not have a grasp of what feminism really is and tended to shy away from the label because of negative associations with the word. Another term that was difficult for women to define was submission. Specifically in Evangelical settings, women and men need to understand what the Biblical concepts of submission and headship mean so that they can apply them correctly in the marriage

setting. Practically speaking, marriage roles should be discussed in greater depth in class settings (specific to classes in theology, gender studies, communication studies, and other relevant areas), chapel programming and gender-specific programming. Higher educational practitioners must engage men and women on the topic of Evangelical gender roles so that assumptions can be challenged and students can come to a better understanding of what they believe.

Lastly, it is important for higher education practitioners to create safe space for discussion with students on the topic of aspirations. Several participants expressed apprehension in sharing their desire to pursue motherhood because of what other people might think or say. By not allowing men and women proper space to discuss aspirations, students are being limited in their vocational planning. It is important to create safe space for students to process their own expectations for future family life and how that might interact with career aspirations.

Implications for Future Research

While the current study looked at some of the influential factors in shaping gender role perspectives, the main purpose was to determine if those preconceived gender roles impact future aspirations among college women. The research could be expanded in several ways.

It would be beneficial to do further research on how Evangelical females' gender role perspectives are formed. Participants mentioned Evangelical cultural influence many times throughout the course of the interviews as well as mentioning the strong impact of family, both immediate and extended. There is a gap in the research on the formative

factors in Evangelical gender role perspectives and this area would be of great benefit to those working in Evangelical settings.

Another important area of research would be the female's aspirational development throughout the pivotal college years. Gaining a better understanding of how women's aspirations change over the course of their college experiences would be beneficial to many different sectors of higher education. The college years were discussed by all participants at the prompting of the researcher and while there were some positive and negative emotions connected to their college years and the topics of gender role formation and aspirations, women did not discuss the topic as much as would be expected.

For the purpose of the study, vocational aspirations included career and familial aspirations. In discussing these two areas, participants mentioned the idea of calling both to a career but more often to motherhood. According to Longman, Dahlvig, Wikkerink, Cunningham, and O'Connor (2011), calling can be defined in several different ways including a call to the work environment, a call to a specific lifestyle, and an embracing of purpose and meaning.

Limitations

All research is inherently limited and the present study had several limitations that may have affected the findings. The first limitation of the study was the small sample size. Only nine participants were interviewed, and while there was consistency within each participant group, as well as common themes that emerged from across the entire group of participants, a larger sample size could have resulted in richer findings.

A second limitation of the study was the personal bias of the researcher. While precautions were taken to prevent certain gender role biases from impacting participants' responses, there was no way to confirm that the bias of the researcher did or did not impact the participants' responses.

Lastly, the final limitation was the participant pool. All of the participants were from a small, Midwestern, faith-based institution. Specifically, the institution was Evangelical in nature, which would lead to the assumption that many of the students at the institution held Evangelical beliefs. Because the study researched Evangelical gender role perspectives, it might be difficult to apply these findings at an institution with a different religious orientation.

Conclusion

Individual's gender role perspectives are shaped by many factors including, but not limited to family, secular culture, Evangelical culture, and Biblical understanding. As women internalize these different influencing factors, misunderstanding can occur in defining the role of a Christian female. Whether there is confusion or clarity, Evangelical college females are feeling a pressure to compromise career aspirations with aspirations of motherhood and family. This internal conflict may lead young women to forego educational preparation in certain areas of interest due to a felt need to compromise their career goals even prior to marriage and family. As Christian higher education continues to develop students prepared to impact the world in a variety of fields, it is important to seek ways to better prepare women to make an impact in career and family settings.

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Appendix A

Gender Role Ideology Assessment

1. Ultimate authority is not necessary because my husband and I will reach consensus on decisions.*

2. My marriage will be a relationship of leader (husband) and follower (wife).

3. I will be a “helper” to my husband by using my gifts and abilities.

4. My husband will have the final authority in our home.

5. Ultimate responsibility and therefore authority over our family will be jointly held by me and my spouse.*

6. When my spouse and I disagree, I will yield to his leadership.

7. I expect to defer my goals and interests to support to my husband’s pursuits.

8. My husband and I will be mutually submissive to one another with no hierarchical order.*

9. My husband and I will bear equal responsibilities in leading the family spiritually.*

10. My husband will be the head of our home.

11. I will be primarily responsible for the domestic chores of the house.

12. I will decide how my income will best suit the family’s needs.*

13. My husband will ultimately have authority over our home.

14. I will express my wishes on when to have children, but my husband will make the final decision.

15. I will give my opinion concerning money matters, but my husband will have authority over our finances.

* Denotes Egalitarian-oriented questions

Appendix B

Email to Participants

Attention all senior females:

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled The Impact of Gender Roles on a Female's Vocational Aspirations. This study will be conducted by Amy Wilson, a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Higher Education program at Taylor University.

The purpose of this research project is to determine whether a female's understanding of gender roles has a potential impact on her lifelong aspirations. Senior females are eligible for this study, as the college experience will be discussed in the interview.

Participation will include: an initial brief survey that will be sent you via email. After the survey is completed, ten individuals will be selected to participate in a *45-60 minute* interview with the researcher. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the researcher, Amy Wilson (amy_wilson@taylor.edu).

I appreciate your consideration and hope that you will consider participating in this research project. If you are interested in participating, please email me at amy_wilson@taylor.edu and I will be in contact with you shortly.

Sincerely,
Amy Wilson

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

TAYLOR UNIVERSITY INFORMED CONSENT

The Impact of Gender Roles on a Female's Vocational Aspirations

You are invited to participate in a research study on how gender roles impact a female's vocational aspirations. You were selected as a possible subject because you are a senior female. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you many have before agreeing to be in the study.

The study is being conducted by Amy Wilson, a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Higher Education program.

STUDY'S PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to better understand how gender roles impact female's vocational aspirations.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

If you agree to participate, you will be one of ten subjects who will be participating in this research.

PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY

If you agree to be in the study, you will do the following things:
Participate in a 45-60 minute interview with the researcher. This interview will be recorded by audio and will be transcribed by a professional transcriber.

RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

While on the study, the risks are:
The risks of completing the survey are being uncomfortable answering the questions.
The risk of completing the interview could include an emotional response to the discussion questions.
There may also be side effects that we cannot predict.

While completing the survey, you can tell the researcher that you feel uncomfortable or do not care to answer a particular question.

If you experience any discomfort or distress during or after the interviews, please feel free to contact the Counseling Center to discuss these issues.

BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

There is no direct benefit to the subjects. Research that is collected from these interviews could potentially impact future programming directed towards female's vocational aspirations.

ALTERNATIVES TO TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

Instead of being in the study, you have the option to not participate.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Efforts will be made to keep your personal information confidential. We cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Your identity will be held in confidence in reports in which the study may be published. Tape recordings will be accessed by the researcher and the transcriber. After the project is completed, the audio tapes will be destroyed.

Organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis include groups such as the study investigator and his/her research associates, the Taylor University Institutional Review Board or its designees, the study sponsor, Carol Sisson, and (as allowed by law) state or federal agencies, specifically the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) etc., who may need to access your research records.

COSTS

There will be no costs to the participants.

PAYMENT

You will not receive payment for taking part in this study.

COMPENSATION FOR INJURY

In the event of physical injury resulting from your participation in this research, necessary medical treatment will be provided to you and billed as part of your medical expenses. Costs not covered by your health care insurer will be your responsibility. Also, it is your responsibility to determine the extent of your health care coverage. There is no program in place for other monetary compensation for such injuries. If you are

participating in research, which is not conducted at a medical facility, you will be responsible for seeking medical care and for the expenses associated with any care received.

FINANCIAL INTEREST DISCLOSURE

One or more individuals involved in this research might benefit financially from this study. The Institutional Review Board (an ethics committee which helps protect people involved in research) has reviewed the possibility of financial benefit. The Board believes that the possible financial benefit is not likely to affect your safety and/or the scientific integrity of the study. If you would like more information, please ask the researchers or study staff.

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

For questions about the study or a research-related injury, contact the researcher Amy Wilson at 765-998-53578. If you cannot reach the researcher during regular business hours e.g. 8:00AM-5:00PM), please call 973-919-3549.

In the event of an emergency, you may contact Amy Wilson at 973-919-3549.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. You decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with Amy Wilson.

Appendix D

Interview Questions

1. What is your major and what factors influenced your decision to choose this major?
2. Tell me about your family and how your family unit is structured? How do your parents approach gender roles?
3. What did you aspire to be as a high school student? College freshmen? Did your aspirations change throughout college?
4. What do you hope to become? Where do you hope to be in 5 years? 10 years? 20 years?
5. What are the most important things you hope to accomplish in your life?
6. What is your understanding of your role as a woman in your career? Family? Church?
7. Do you feel any limitations to reaching your dreams?