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Perceived Organizational Support for Women's Advancement and Turnover
Intentions and Career Advancement Aspirations.
The Mediating Role of Job and Employer Satisfaction.

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Dissertation approved by the committee on July 16th, 2021

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy and Administration at Virginia
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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine whether the lack of organizational support for women's advancement decreases female supervisors and managers' aspiration to advance their careers and increases their turnover intentions and, the mediating effect of job satisfaction and employer satisfaction on the relationship between support and advancement aspirations and turnover intentions.

The antecedents of turnover intentions have been widely studied in the literature, while the antecedents of career aspirations, especially women's, have not been a focus of much scholarly attention. Based on a review of the literature and drawing upon social exchange theory, and social cognitive theory, it is expected that perceived organizational support of women's advancement would negatively affect turnover intentions and positively affect career advancement aspirations of women who hold supervisory and managerial roles within the federal government.

This study employs secondary data analysis of survey data provided by the U.S. Federal Government, Merit Principle System, 2016 data. Ordinal regression analysis supported the relationship between support and career advancement aspiration and a stronger mediating effect of employer satisfaction, which partially mediated the relationship. The relationship between support and turnover instead was found to be non-significant.

Women who perceived their organization as supportive of their advancement are encouraged to do so and are more likely to advance their careers by aspiring to achieve executive roles within the organization. Job and employer satisfaction influence women's career advancement aspirations. Employer satisfaction had, as hypothesized, a more substantial mediating effect.

Perceived organizational support for women's advancement is a newer construct used in the literature, more relevant to women in middle management, such as supervisors and managers, than perceived organizational support. Also, employer satisfaction is a newer construct, which this research suggests further testing in future investigations.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Research Motivation

Women make up the majority of the U.S. labor force, 51 percent of the American population is female (Warner and Corley, 2017). Yet, women are still underrepresented in management, especially in senior management roles (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Indeed, women in management positions represent a small proportion of those in senior roles (Linehan, 2002) and, despite women having a desire to advance their careers, few achieve a higher status within organizations compared to their male counterparts (Meyerson and Fletcher, 2000; Wellington et al., 2003).

Many factors within the workplace limit the opportunities of women to reach higher ranks of management, including white male predominance (Kossek et al., 2017), absence of women mentors (Allen et al., 2004), slower promotion tracks, and fewer opportunities for promotion compared to men (Joshi et al., 2015; Ryan and Haslam, 2007), restricted access to advancement opportunities (Heilman, 2012), career interruptions (Powell and Mainiero, 1992), stereotyping and bias in the treatment of women (McKinsey & Company 2018), less recognition for their work (Treviño et al., 2015), lack of supervisor support (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007; Goodman et al., 2003; Wellington et al., 2003).

Given these factors, it does not come as a surprise that women in middle management positions, such as supervisor and manager, often experience frustration when trying to move up the managerial ladder and, lose interest in advancing their careers (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007;

Powell, 1999; Powell and Mainero, 1992) or, those who attempt to move up, and have not been successful, may move out of the workplace altogether (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006; Belkin, 2003). As a result, major gaps between men and women in the top levels of the workforce remain (The Hamilton Project, 2017).

Indeed, women progress in their careers at a different pace than men do, if women do progress at all. Research suggests that, when organizations fail to support the advancement of their female employees, it increases turnover intentions (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006; Belkin, 2003; Goodman et al., 2003; Indvik, 2001), fewer studies have speculated that, lack of organizational support for women's advancement reduces their (women's) interest in career advancement opportunities (Kossek et al., 2017; Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007), and a paucity of studies, have tested the effect of perceived organizational support for women's advancement on their career advancement aspirations. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to contribute to the empirical evidence on perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover and examine whether such a lack of organizational support inhibits women's career advancement aspirations.

Lack of Women in Senior Management Positions

During the last decade of the 20th century, women significantly advanced in any professional field in the United States. The wage gap has narrowed, gender segregation at work has declined, and the percentage of women reaching higher managerial roles has risen steadily (Warner and Corley, 2017). Yet, the progress has since slowed, the number of women in senior management ranks has steadily declined and recently has stalled (Ely and Padavic, 2020; Warner and Corley, 2017). As a result of such slow progress and stalling, there are still significant

differences between the career progression of women and men, and women have yet to match the success of their male counterparts.

A senior manager within an organization refers to an individual who sets long-term priorities, decides how to allocate resources based on those long-term priorities, and efficiently utilizes the organization's resources to achieve the organizational goals (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007). Even though 52 percent of management jobs are held by women, they are significantly absent from senior management positions in most fields (Kephart and Schmacher, 2005). For example, while 45 percent of women are associates in the legal profession, only 23 percent are partners, and although 40 percent of physicians are women, just 16 percent are deans of medical colleges. Women are 44 percent of the S&P (Standard & Poor's) labor force, 36 percent are first or mid-level managers, but only 25 percent of women hold senior managerial positions (Warner and Corley, 2017).

If this trend continues, organizations will miss out on the competitive advantages women in senior management positions bring (Jawahar and Hammasi, 2006). Organizations benefit from having gender diversity among their senior managers. Gender-mixed senior management teams are more creative and innovative and can be more effective at problem-solving (Ellemers, 2014). Women leaders are more often highly skilled, excellent at soft skills, and have high emotional intelligence. Boyatzis and Goleman (2017) found that women scored higher than men in competencies like emotional self-awareness, conflict management, and empathy, which are all effective managerial skills. Indeed, women score far higher than their male counterparts in most senior management skills, women tend to look for learning and improvement opportunities throughout their entire careers (Zenger and Folkman, 2019) demonstrating resilience and a growth mindset, skills that companies today increasingly seek in their managerial workforce

(Huogaard et al., 2020, Moss Kanter, 2013). Litzky and Greenhaus (2007) found that organizations led by women experience positive financial and ethical outcomes and suggest that underrepresentation of women at the top could translate into adverse outcomes for organizations. Research shows that organizations that have more women in senior management are more profitable and socially conscious, among several other benefits (Post et al., 2021). Post et al. (2021) found that, when women hold senior management positions, organizations become more open to change and less inclined to seek risk, and that organizations shift their strategy more towards internal research and development to build knowledge rather than buying knowledge from the outside, and lastly, that the impact of women in senior management increases as women are well-integrated in the management teams since women are positively influenced by whether there are already female senior managers in the organization.

Despite the overall paucity of women in senior managerial roles, more women than ever hold managerial positions. Their journey towards senior management, and their experience in senior management roles, often are not as rapid or smooth as men's. This phenomenon of women missing from upper management has been attributed to several workplace factors. For example, to white male predominance (Kossek et al., 2017), to the absence of women mentors (Allen et al., 2004), to slower promotion tracks and fewer opportunities for promotion compared to men (Joshi et al., 2015; Ryan and Haslam, 2007), to restricted access to advancement opportunities (Heilman, 2012), to career interruptions (Powell and Mainiero, 1992), to stereotyping and bias in the treatment of women (McKinsey & Company 2018), to the fewer recognition women receive for their work (Treviño et al., 2015), to the lack of supervisor support (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007; Goodman et al., 2003; Wellington et al., 2003).

When women reach senior management positions, they often experience a glass cliff. The glass cliff is a workplace phenomenon obviously related to the glass ceiling. The glass ceiling refers to the set of invisible obstacles that women experience at work when trying to achieve senior management roles (Zenger and Folkman, 2020). Specifically, the glass cliff refers to the concept that when organizations are in trouble, a woman is chosen to save it. Hence, the opportunities women are presented with are often less interesting or more precarious and make it more difficult for them to succeed as senior managers (Zenger and Folkman, 2020; Ryan and Haslam, 2007).

Women report a significant lack of confidence in reaching higher professional levels given the absence of role models and encouragement to do so within the organization. In a study that interviewed female executives, over half of respondents mentioned many barriers to their career advancement, including lack of support by senior management and hostile organizational cultures (Wellington et al., 2003). Women also report more stress when considering advancing their careers (McKinsey and Company and Lean In, 2015), they also report less career satisfaction and longevity (Metz, 2011), and that they receive less recognition for their work (Treviño et al., 2015). Also, Joshi et al. (2000) report that women and men with the same set of experiences and performance received different pay and promotions, mostly in high-paying fields. Such bias in performance assessments may be perceived as an obstacle that discourages women from advancing their careers within their organizations. Companies tend to overestimate men's job performance and underestimate women's performance, which leads women to believe, not only that their performance is not as good as their male counterparts, but also that their opportunities are limited, with fewer promotions, and fewer chances to get a raise and, advance their careers.

In certain fields, women may find themselves alone, and being the only woman may translate into a tough workplace environment, where women are held to higher standards, increasing the pressure to excel (Kossek et al., 2017). In predominantly male organizations, women can be the target of microaggressions, everyday episodes of sexism, and racism. Microaggressions can be subtle, such as assuming a job level according to sex. Still, these episodes, nonetheless, negatively define women's workplace experience and increase their likelihood to leave their jobs by 1.5 times (McKinsey & Company 2018, p. 14).

The Working Mother Research Institute conducted a study, the Gender Gap at the Top (2018), which aimed to understand why, despite programs and initiatives to increase women in leadership positions, the percentage of women rising to the top is stagnant. They found four main gaps accountable for such stagnation: lack of knowledge and awareness of how to advance their career; inability to network successfully; lack of confidence in their ability to take on leadership roles and take risks; and the persistence of organizational cultures that have yet to commit to creating career advancement opportunities for women fully. As a result of these four gaps, only six percent of women holding a first-level manager position reported being inspired to reach the highest managerial role within their organization, and only 14 percent of women were encouraged to consider higher responsibility roles, versus 46 percent of men (The Gender Gap at the Top, 2018).

The Working Mother Institute's (2018) report stresses the importance of organizational support for the advancement of women. Support, at the organizational level, means creating awareness and a clear path to leadership tailored for women, as they found that only 15 percent of women had received clear details on career development. Support also entails networking, mentoring, and sponsorship opportunities, all dynamics that have a significant effect on women's

career development. Most importantly, the study reports that only 40 percent of women aspire to higher managerial positions. These results are supported by a McKinsey & Company (2018) study, in which 33 percent of women responded they are less interested in being a leader, compared to 45 percent of men.

Indeed, given the factors that characterize the organizational environment that women experience, it is not a surprise that women may lack aspiration to advance their careers, and climb the executive ladder (Kossek et al., 2017; Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007), or move out of their organization (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). When exploring the career trajectories women choose to take, it is important to consider that these choices they make are influenced by the social context in which they happen (Kossek et al., 2016) and that such social context, the organization, is characterized by several barriers; therefore, organizational support for women's advancement is of fundamental importance for women's career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions.

Perceived Organizational Support

The literature is quite unanimous on how employees' perception of support, or lack thereof, from their organization, can increase their loyalty or, on the contrary, their turnover intentions (Maertz et al., 2007), as well as increase their aspiration to advance their careers or simply stagnate (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007). Organizations express support for their employees through their organizational culture. Robbins and Coulter (2005) defined organizational culture as the set of values, beliefs, or perceptions shared within an organization. Staniland (1985) defines organizational culture as a belief that creates assumptions about how employees should behave in the workplace. Leaders behave and lead according to specific

organizational core values, creating an alignment between the behaviors of leaders and employees, which set the foundations for a strong and established organizational culture (Tsai, 2011).

Often organizational cultures reflect conscious and unconscious biased behaviors, routines, and policies (Miller, 1998); therefore, some organizations may be characterized by barriers that stop some employees from utilizing all their skills, ideas, and energies to the success of the organization. Organizational cultures may prevent entire segments of their workforce from utilizing all their potential by supporting, and therefore value, only a certain group of employees, rather than the entirety of their workforce, unaware of the perception of lack of support that others experience.

The barriers, unsupported employees encounter, are often perceived as “demeaning, discouraging, and insurmountable” (Miller, 1998, p. 152). Miller (1998) reminds that such barriers can be as concrete as blocked access to disabled people or a “men” only bathroom on an executive floor, or subtle as guessing the pronunciation of someone's name and, as a result, the organization may experience a loss of people and their important and unique contributions. Mor Barak (2015) clearly explains the effect of such barriers on the career and overall contribution of those who are not supported by the organization, stating that employees often felt excluded from social and informational networks and decision-making processes, and therefore not supported in their pursuit of higher managerial roles.

Ely and Padavic (2020) state that, most of the time, the majority of people associate the lack of women in higher management positions with the requirements of these positions, such as long hours that make it impossible for women to fulfill and also be devoted to their families. The authors call this explanation the “work/family narrative” (Ely and Padavic, 2020, p. 60). But as

Ely and Padavic kept investigating, the data told a different story. The reality was that women were not held back because of the requirements of high-level positions and the demands of their families, but simply that organizations encourage women to take accommodations, part-time, or different roles that would eventually hold back their career advancement. Lack of support for women's career advancement was what was hampering women's careers. The research suggests that the failure of organizations to support women's progression into senior positions leads experienced and qualified women to leave the workforce (Morrison and Von Glinow, 1990; Indvik, 2003; Goodman et al., 2003; Belkin, 2003), and to develop less interest in pursuing career advancement opportunities (Kossek et al., 2017; Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007).

Perceived organizational support (POS) was introduced by Eisenberger (2011) and is defined as the perception of employees regarding their contribution and interest in the organization (Xiang et al., 2017). Ling and Tian (2013) divide POS into three categories: employees' perception of support from the organization; support for their work; and whether the organization's values and interests agree with the values and interests of the employees, POS, by satisfying the psychological needs of employees, posits that employees evaluate the organization's support based on their feelings and, reciprocate the support of the organization with their commitment (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Based on social exchange theory, when employees perceive that the organization supports their work, they return to the organization and commit to working harder. In fact, according to social exchange theory, when the employee perceives support from their organization, it generates a feeling of obligation to the organization, which increases employees' engagement at work (Eisenberger and Stinglham, 2011) and decrease their turnover intentions (Dawley et al., 2010; Maertz et al., 2007; Allen et al., 2003; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

Rich et al. (2010) found that when organizations value the contributions and concerns of their employees, employees perceive the organization as trustworthy, and this perception will also cause an increase in work engagement. Employees with higher levels of perception of support from their organization can also achieve more recognition for their work, as they feel as though the organization is paying attention to them and, as a result, will try to repay the organization (Xiang et al., 2017).

In addition to social exchange theory, social cognitive theory can help explain how the perception of support may increase the career advancement aspirations of certain segments of the workforce. More recently, the literature on career choices has focused on how the environment affects career choices and argued that social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) might better explain women's career development (Tharenou, 1990). The interaction between internal expectations, derived by individual characteristics, such as gender, and situational factors of the environment, such as the organization, is believed to influence career attitudes (Tharenou, 1990). Women are more likely to consider themselves inadequate in the workplace as a result of social cues, which may translate to women choosing traditional career paths (Tharenou, 1989).

Research on women's career development has shown a significant and positive relationship between women's career advancement aspirations and environmental and social factors (Fitzgerald and Betz, 1983; Alban Metcalfe, 1985; Betz and Fitzgerald, 1987). When employees perceive that the organization is supportive of their careers, this feeling can enhance their confidence (Ragins et al., 1998) and optimism (Friedman, 1998), and confidence and optimism may encourage employees to engage in the pursuit of higher managerial positions. As perceived by women, advancement support may increase the perception that higher managerial roles are achievable if one intends to achieve this goal (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2006).

Given the persistent scarcity of women in senior management positions, and the recent interest of the literature in perceived organizational support for women's advancement, this study aims to answer the following research question: does a higher perception of organizational support for women's advancement decrease their turnover intention? Does a higher perception of organizational support for women's advancement encourage women to aspire to pursue senior management positions, as women believe that the organization would value them as a senior manager? Are there other workplace factors that may strengthen the effect of perceived organizational support for women's advancement?

Drawing upon social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), this study argues that perceived organizational support (POS) for women's advancement will decrease turnover intentions of women, in supervisory or managerial roles employed by the Federal Government, and, in addition to social exchange theory, drawing upon social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), POS for women's advancement will increase women's career advancement aspirations. Second, this study explores whether employer satisfaction, construct introduced by and Jawahar and Hammami (2006), is related to turnover and career advancement aspirations more strongly than job satisfaction and whether employer satisfaction has a stronger mediating effect on the relationship between POS and turnover intention, and between POS and career advancement aspirations than job satisfaction.

Scope of the Study

The lack of support that women experience in the workplace may account for the underrepresentation of women in senior managerial roles (Kossek et al., 2016). The organizational context, and the factors that characterize the experiences of women in the

workplace, affect the choices women make about their careers. When these factors translate into a perception of lack of support for the advancement of women, women may feel as though the organization does not value their work and may decide to stall in their careers or leave their jobs altogether (Kossek et al., 2016). The perception of support for their advancement, on the contrary, by valuing women's work, creates an obligation to reciprocate the organization with loyalty and commitment, decreasing women's turnover intentions, and, at the same time, it may enhance women's confidence and encourage them to aspire and pursue senior managerial roles, by informing their perception of the attainability of senior managerial roles.

Despite several studies that emphasize the importance of perceived organizational support, there is a paucity of research on women's perception of organizational support for their advancement in relation to their turnover intentions (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006; Kephart and Schumacher, 2005; Indvik, 2001; Meyerson and Fletcher, 2000), and even fewer have tested its effects on women's career advancement aspirations (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Employer satisfaction, a construct introduced by Jawahar and Hemmasi (2005), as a mediating variable needs further empirical testing.

This study will contribute to the growing empirical literature on women who hold some managerial responsibility in their organization, and on their career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions and, since the organizational approaches to increasing the presence of women in senior management, as the current literature and ongoing discourse emphasize, have not led to an increase of women in higher managerial positions, it will identify and suggest strategies that will encourage women to continue their careers, rather than giving them up, and pursue career

paths that lead to senior managerial roles, rather than stalling, which will allow organizations to address the uneven career progression to senior management of men and women.

Importance of this Study

Women make up half the workforce, and yet they are almost absent from higher managerial roles within their organizations (Wellington et al., 2003). Women who, to some extent, already hold managerial positions experience several barriers when trying to move up the career ladder. These barriers are causing women to have less interest in career advancement (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007), leave the workplace to create their own opportunities (Indvik, 2001), or leave the workforce (Belkin, 2003). This phenomenon of career stalling and voluntary turnover of professional and experienced women cannot be ignored any longer.

Organizations fail to utilize the talent represented by women and unintentionally form the basis for growing inequalities among their workforces. It is still not clear whether this disparity between the career progression of men and women is due to women not taking charge of their careers or persisting against the obstacles that hold back their career advancement (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). While several studies have focused on understanding what factors lead women to quit their careers, or what factors lead women to stall in their careers, this study aims to understand the interconnection between environmental factors that characterize the organization, and how those affect women's career choices since what seem to be women's choices are instead shaped by the social environment in which they are made.

Policy Implications

The United States government is prioritizing the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. President Obama indeed stated, “communities that give their daughters the same opportunities as their sons, they are more peaceful, they are more prosperous, they develop faster, they are more likely to succeed” (President Barack Obama, July 25, 2015). Under the leadership of Obama, the United States started working against discrimination and, among other objectives, focused on supporting and empowering women economically and politically. Despite this national focus on gender equality, little progress has been made, especially in the workplace where women still earn less than men, still occupy job roles and fields that are low-paying and low-skilled, and ultimately women still leave their job at higher rates than men do.

Organizations have yet to realize the cost of turnover and career stalling of their employees. Voluntary turnover of professional employees is usually detrimental to organizations when considering the replacement costs (Hellman, 1997), which adds to the organization’s failure to take advantage of half of its workforce and places it (the organization) at a competitive disadvantage (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Understanding how organizational support for women’s advancement may affect women’s turnover and their career advancement aspirations is compelling. This understanding may lead to practical implications and aid in designing more effective interventions than the current organizational strategies, which may lead to equality in the workplace.

The policy implications from this study may indicate that, for organizations to ensure that its entire workforce advances their careers at the same rate, regardless of their gender, and feels as though the opportunity to advance to senior management is available to and suitable for them, they may need to manifest their support for the careers of their female employees. To this end,

organizational strategies may need to focus on ad hoc training, sponsorships, mentorship opportunities tailored to the needs of their female employees that emphasize how much the organization values their work and presence.

Following the general outline of this dissertation, chapter one introduced the problem and purpose of this study. Chapter two will present a review of the literature on POS, career advancement aspirations, turnover intention, job satisfaction, and employer satisfaction. This review will lead to the development of the hypothesis that will lead to answering the research questions. In chapter three, the research design will be described and justified. Chapter four will present the findings, and finally, in Chapter five, the findings will be briefly summarized, the conclusions will be presented, and the final recommendations will be made.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter two briefly states the problem, then the independent variable perceived organizational support for women's advancement, the dependent variables, turnover intentions, career advancement aspirations, the mediating variables, job satisfaction, and employer satisfaction, then the research framework, and finally the proposed model.

The following section provides a detailed description of studies examining factors that might influence career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions for women. Occasionally the literature may refer to career advancement aspirations of employees in general.

Lack of Women in Senior Management

Despite the literature agreeing that gender diversity in senior management benefits organizations (Ellemers, 2014), women are still underrepresented in the upper echelons of management (Kossek et al., 2017). At the beginning of their careers, the gender ratio is quite equal, but as time goes by, the career development of women and men diverges (Einarsdottir et al., 2018). Men are more likely to follow a traditional vertical career path that leads to senior management positions, while women are more likely to follow a horizontal career path (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005). Indeed, these findings are quite puzzling since the literature also reports that, at the beginning of their careers, women and men aspire to senior management positions equally (Eagly, 2013; Su et al., 2009).

Women who hold middle-management positions, such as supervisory and manager roles, do not feel that they receive the same advancement opportunities that men do and are not as appreciated as men (Cooper and Jackson, 2001). In fact, despite their skills, education, and performance, they rarely achieve higher management positions at the same pace men do. Men managers earn higher salaries, advance faster, hold higher management positions, and overall, their path to seniority is not as hard as women's (Hansen, 2009), resulting in a paucity of women in senior management positions.

Researchers have looked at the path of women who successfully reached higher management positions (Einarsdottir et al., 2018). These women report having faced several workplace barriers to their advancement, such as masculine culture, stereotype, bias, and lack of confidence (Holton and Dent, 2016). Their way to overcome these barriers was adopting and accepting a masculine idea of senior management. Women who have reached higher management roles admit to enhancing their masculine agentic behaviors (Holton and Dent, 2006); and to self-inviting to men-only network events (Baumgartner and Schneider, 2010). Women in senior management also suggest that having a career plan would help women in middle management (Holton and Dent, 2006), and women usually have one, which crumbles as they adjust to the organizational environment (O'Neill et al., 2008).

What women in senior management suggest doing to overcome workplace barriers to advancement is in line with what the literature commonly suggests. Women speak up, lean in, act like a man, demand your worth (Einarsdottir et al., 2018). This approach has been rightfully criticized as it emphasizes that women should be fixed rather than the workplaces (Kolb, 2009). Indeed, women who have reached senior management positions, often either already possess masculine traits, or make a conscious decision to adopt masculine characteristics (Baumgartner

and Schneider, 2010), and what the current literature is asking women to do is exactly that, to lean into the masculine culture that surrounds senior management, which simply means that to overcome the barriers to advancement, women should join in and reinforce them.

Given the persistent paucity of women in senior management positions, which signals that the current approach focused on fixing women is not successful at increasing the number of female senior managers, it may be useful to shift the focus towards fixing the workplace. Such a shift would involve addressing the organizational barriers that prevent middle management women from achieving senior management roles and understanding how organizations can promote their advancement.

Organizational Barriers to Women's Advancement

Women stuck in middle management positions is a phenomenon well documented in the literature, and it has been collectively referred to as the effect of a glass ceiling that characterizes organizations (Igbaria and Wormley, 1992; Melamed, 1995; Morrison et al., 1987). The organizational environment in which women form and strengthen their career choices is often characterized by barriers that affect women's career choices (Fitzgerald and Crites, 1980), resulting in the low representation of women in higher-paying positions and fields. Rauhaus and Carr (2020) argue that the workplace is characterized by "invisible challenges" (p. 33), which are subtle obstacles that women encounter and that may contribute to women's underrepresentation in senior managerial roles. In fact, previous work on gender in the workplace emphasizes how workplace factors and dynamics, at both the organizational and individual level, affect women's career advancement aspirations (Kossek et al., 2017) and their turnover intentions (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006).

The literature has extensively reflected on the barriers that women experience when trying to achieve senior positions in their professional lives. Rauhaus and Carr (2020), in their study on the challenges women in higher education face, argue that the workplace is “filled with systematic barriers to women’s equality, such as organizational structure, policies, practices, norms, and presumptions, that appear gender-neutral but in reality, have gendered effects that promote men’s careers or hurt those of women” (p. 33). The literature indeed has coined the term “glass ceiling,” which refers to the barriers only women and other minority groups need to overcome to reach senior management roles (Ayman & Korabik, 2010), and that tend to affect women’s perception of their professional status, their confidence and motivation in the workplace (Rauhaus and Carr, 2020) which in turn creates a sense of awareness of how gender affects career advancement and of the challenges associated with it and harms their confidence.

The glass ceiling manifests itself through overt sexist and or racist attitudes and less evident dynamics that create hostile organizational environments over several instances and throughout the entirety of a woman’s career (Watts et al., 2014). Given this multitude of factors that interact, some scholars have renamed the glass ceiling and instead refer to it as a labyrinth (Eagly and Carli, 2007). The reality that women face when trying to advance their careers resembles a labyrinth, the workplace is often characterized by many complex networks of factors that oppress women and minorities throughout their professional life (Watts et al., 2014).

The literature on the glass ceiling has advanced several primary explanations as to why women’s careers often are stuck in middle management: a male-dominant organizational culture (Annelies et al., 2002); a stereotypical vision of senior management that associates the role with masculinity (Tharenou, 1999); attitudes and bias in the organization that discourage women from advancing their careers (Wirth, 2001); discrimination, limited access to career advancement

opportunities (Knorr, 2014), to mentors from key senior managers (Ragins and Cotton, 1991), to networking opportunities and lack of support (Lyness and Thompson, 2000; Tharenou, 1999); lack of confidence in women (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). All of the barriers women face within the workplace, which taken together, the literature refers to as the glass ceiling, result from a series of concatenating factors. Masculine cultures perpetrate gender bias and stereotypes, limiting women's access to career opportunities, harming women's confidence in the workplace.

Masculine Organizational Culture, Male Dominance, Bias and Lack of Self-Confidence

D'Agostino et al. (2020) argue that women managers face particular dynamics in the workplace that men don't. Women who intend to advance to senior management face invisible barriers that arise from cultural beliefs about genders in addition to structures, practices, and workplace dynamics that favor the advancement of men over women. Indeed, Ellemers (2014) also argues that organizations tend to support men over women. Although this seems unrealistic given equal rights laws and criteria of success that appear gender-neutral, organizations' expectations, performance evaluations, and overall treatment of men and women may vary. Indeed, policies and strategies that aim to avoid discrimination in the workplace may not be successful at preventing gender stereotyping and bias. The literature argues that the barriers to women's advancement may originate in the organizational culture (Ellemers, 2014).

Scholars have proposed that organizations are gendered (Rauhaus and Carr, 2020) meaning that they are filled with images, practices, and hierarchies that reflect masculine ideals of professionalism, management, values that advantage men while creating and exacerbating inequalities. The literature refers to the gender bias that underlines women's workplace experiences as second-generation gender bias (D'Agostino et al., 2020). Ibarra et al. (2013)

argue that second-generation gender biases create powerful, subtle, and invisible obstacles for women. They result from cultural assumptions, organizational structures, practices, and dynamics that benefit men over women. Understanding second-generation bias is of fundamental importance to explain the lack of women in senior managerial roles without relying on stereotypical explanations that blame women; such explanations would argue that women don't achieve senior managerial positions because they "don't ask" or "opt-out" (D'Agostino et al., 2020). Second-generation biases, carried on by masculine organizational cultures, affect and shape several practices and dynamics within the workplace, such as job descriptions, evaluations, and performances (Ely and Meyerson, 2000).

Second-generation bias is likely to thrive in a masculine organizational culture which has been found to be a plausible explanation for the persistence of barriers to women's advancement (Rauhaus and Carr, 2020; Annelies et al., 2002). The literature agrees that organizations are characterized by norms and beliefs that more likely men than women adhere to (Annelies et al., 2002). Stivers (2002) indeed argues that public administrations are masculine in nature. Images of public administrations, professionalism, management, and values, are traditionally associated with masculine qualities, limiting and devaluing women's contributions. Indeed, masculine cultures are characterized by assumptions, norms, principles, and practices that emphasize stereotypically masculine forms of communication, self-identity and imagery, conflict management, values, success, and overall management style (Rauhaus and Carr, 2020; Maier, 1999; Powell, 1999). Given that most senior managers and executives are male, and men are more likely to adhere to masculine values, the literature argues that management is still dominated by such masculine norms and principles (Annelies et al., 2002). A masculine culture is then a core element of barriers that prevent women from advancing to senior management.

A masculine organizational culture reinforces gender-role perceptions that affect women's career choices by limiting the types of jobs and roles they perceive as appropriate to their gender (Eagly and Karau, 2002). The literature on gender roles in the workplace argues that roles can be divided into two behavioral categories: agentic and communal (Frame et al., 2010; Pratch and Jacobowitz, 1996). Agentic behaviors (i.e., dominance, self-promotion, assertiveness) are associated with qualities such as independence and task-orientation which are also referred to as masculine qualities; communal behaviors (i.e., modesty, politeness, caring) are associated with what society has prescribed to be feminine qualities, such as relationship or social orientations (Watts et al., 2014).

Roles and jobs within an organization are often associated with agentic and communal behaviors, which demand individuals display the behaviors associated with their roles. A woman in a senior management position is not perceived as effective as a man because senior managers ought to display agentic behaviors. An organization and sometimes the majority of its workforce may prevent women from advancing to senior management due to the valuation of agentic behaviors among managers and the associations of women with communal behaviors (Sy et al. 2010; Frame et al., 2010; Giscombe and Mattis, 2002; Pratch and Jacobowitz, 1996).

Having a majority of men in senior management positions may pose a barrier to women's advancement since it emphasizes to women the lack of similar identities in senior managerial roles, which in turn discourages women from advancing to those roles (Cianni and Romberger, 1995). The mere absence of women in senior management roles may also be interpreted by women as though the organization does not value the contributions of women in those positions. Lent et al. (1994) argue that women's career choices are influenced by the perception that their female identity is not valued within the workplace.

The predominant masculine organizational culture, which characterizes most organizations, forms a barrier that perpetuates mechanisms that prevent women from advancing their careers. These mechanisms are biases and prejudices that negatively influence the evaluation of women as senior managers (Lyness and Thompson, 1997) and discourage their career advancement. D'Agostino et al. (2020) argue that the subtle biases and prejudices that characterize women's work experiences include the assumptions associated with the role of senior manager, the legitimacy associated with the title, and the emphasis given to certain skills over others. These biases and prejudices tend to affect all employees, and while they may have a benign effect on the careers and job experiences of some, they are detrimental to others. White male managers maintain the majority of power and determine the organization's hiring, salary distribution, and performance evaluation policies (Blum et al., 1994). The overrepresentation and determining power of white men in senior managerial roles hinder the advancement of women. Men tend to value the contributions of men more than those of women (Nieva and Gutek, 1980), thus providing men higher performance ratings (Drazin and Auster, 1987) which impede women's pursuit of senior management positions (Ng and Burke, 2005).

As public administrations are more likely to be gendered (Stivers, 2002), meaning that it defines performance, success, and overall abilities according to masculine archetypes, women assess their self-confidence on such models (Einarsdottir et al., 2018). Gender role stereotyping indeed not only affects men's perception of female managers' effectiveness, in fact, women also tend to perceive female managers as less effective than their male counterparts (D'Agostino et al., 2020). In fact, women tend to absorb the sexist rhetoric that devalues their contribution and competence, which eventually harms their self-confidence and contributes to their self-limitation and self-deprecation (Rauhaus and Carr, 2020). Societal norms of gender and relative appropriate

behaviors and roles are transferred to the workplace, which influence women's work choices and behaviors, pressuring them to be "less," less assertive, and less confident for example (Rauhaus and Carr, 2020) and that, consequently, harm their career progression.

Benabou and Tirole (2002) argue that self-confidence is the belief in a person's own merit, which encourages them to accomplish their goals. Women state that self-confidence is a necessary requirement to achieve senior management positions, yet they report low self-confidence levels. Sixty-seven percent of women say that they need support to build their self-confidence enough to advance their career to senior management (Einarsdottir et al., 2018). Given masculinist stereotypes and biases associated with senior management roles that harm women's self-confidence to advance toward those positions, women are, in fact, found to believe they are less competent than men (Gneezy et al., 2003).

Public administrations are masculine in nature, reflecting societal gender roles to which women are not new. Women perceive barriers to their presence and advancement in the workplace even before they enter it. These perceptions affect their confidence to overcome the obstacles they face once they begin their careers (Watts et al., 2014). Women report expecting already to experience obstacles in the workplace such as "sex discrimination, lack of confidence, multiple-role conflict, a conflict between children and career demands, inadequate preparation, decision-making difficulties, and dissatisfaction with career" (Swanson et al., 1996, p. 233-234). Women who work in male-dominated organizations are even less confident, reporting a lack of support and encouragement (Gneezy et al., 2003). When women are asked to perform the same task as men, they report to anticipate less success, and if they do consider being successful, they attribute their success to luck (Crampton and Misha, 1999).

Lack of Organizational Support

The barriers women experience in the workplace have led many to move out of the organization (Belkin, 2003) or stall in their middle-management positions and ponder on whether to engage in career planning (Cardoso and Moreira, 2009) to move up to senior management, resulting in women being a minority in senior management roles. Several scholars have reported that the failure of organizations to support the advancement of women has led to their turnover (Belkin, 2003; Goodman et al., 2003) and lack of aspiration to advance their career (Morrison et al., 1987). Litzky and Greenhaus (2007) suggest that women receive less support for their advancement than men do. Indeed, when employees perceive less support, they are more likely to engage in withdrawal behaviors, such as having less interest in career advancement opportunities and consequential planning (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007) and having higher turnover intentions (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006).

Burke et al. (2006) argue that support is necessary to the advancement of women to senior management roles. As organizations have started implementing support strategies for the development of managerial women, they have reported an increase in the number of women in senior managerial positions. Indeed, women make their choices regarding their careers within the organizational environment, and these choices are informed by perceptions of support for their advancement from the organization (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Therefore, particular attention is given to perceived organizational support (POS) as a factor affecting turnover intentions (Maertz et al., 2007), and career advancement aspirations of women (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007; Morrison et al., 1987).

Perceived Organizational Support for Women's Advancement

A significant factor contributing to women's retention and advancement within organizations is the creation of supportive environments (Catalyst, 1998). Scholars investigating employees' organizational performance have recognized the relevance of creating supportive organizational cultures and climates (Davis et al., 2020). This concept has its roots in the research of Mary Parker Follet (1927), Charles Barnard (1938), and James McGregor (1960) in the field of the human relations movement (Davis et al., 2020). During the past forty years though, scholars have explored how organizational support affects positive employee behaviors (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). The scholarship is interested in understanding support, and its effect on positive organizational outcomes is rooted in social exchange theory and perceived organizational support (POS), which emphasize the importance of positive workplace dynamics (Davis et al., 2020).

Positive workplace dynamics lead to decreased workforce turnover, absenteeism, higher commitment, and better organizational performance (Davis et al., 2020). Schmidt and Duenas (2002) state that if organizations want to stay competitive, they should pay attention to the issues that characterize their organizational environment and incorporate strategies and practices that would support both their female and male employees. Morrison et al. (1987) also argue that organizational support facilitates women's advancement. A supportive organizational system, Morrison et al. (1987) argue, would emphasize promotion opportunities, including women's opinions in decision-making processes, and respect.

The organizational culture is a factor that plays a central role in the creation of a supportive organizational environment (Lobel, 1999), as organizations are characterized by norms, beliefs, assumptions that affect organizational practices, tacit norms, and principles

(Knorr, 2014). Organizations characterized by cultures that are supportive of women's values, needs, and career goals, pose fewer barriers to women's career choices and are, in fact, more successful at retaining and advancing their careers (Kossek et al., 2017). Indeed, organizational cultures that promote equity have an increasing number of women in senior management positions (Bajdo and Dickson, 2002).

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) is based on the idea that an employee forms their judgment about the extent to which their organization values their contribution, and is interested in their well-being, according to their perception of how willingly the organization rewards their job performance and meets their social and emotional needs (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Since its introduction, POS and its antecedents and consequences have been widely tested. Some antecedents of POS include supervisor support (Jin and McDonald, 2017; Setton et al., 1996), organizational justice (Ambrose and Schminke, 2003), and participation in the decision-making process (Allen et al., 2003).

Jin and McDonalds (2017), in their study on supervisor support, POS, and employee engagement, explain that three processes underlie the relationship between POS and its outcomes. These three processes are reciprocity, employees who perceive support from their organizations feel the need to reciprocate; fulfillment of socio-emotional needs, the perception of support fulfills employees' needs for esteem and affiliation, which leads to organizational membership that in turn increases the employees' well-being; and finally, readiness to reward, the perception of support helps employees gauge the organization's readiness to reward the effort the employee has made towards the organizational mission.

Jin and McDonald (2017) also specify what POS is not as they find that the literature often misinterprets POS as involving any type of exchange that happens between organization

and employee. They specify that for POS to be relevant to the employee, it should involve organizational actions that emphasize the contributions and the specific evaluation of a given employee, rather than involving actions that involve the entirety of the workforce, such as retirement benefits, as opposed to more discretionary actions such as a salary increase.

POS develops through several dynamics between employees and employers (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Positive consequences of POS include increased employee performance (Stewart and Johnson, 2009), job satisfaction (Eisenberger et al., 1997), commitment (Hochwarter et al., 2003), employee engagement (Jin and McDonald, 2017); and decreased turnover intentions (Allen et al., 2003). A high perception of POS is believed to generate trust, long-lasting obligations, and identification between the employee and the organization (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Indeed, POS strengthens employees' engagement in the workplace. Jin and McDonald (2017) reveal POS to be a critical channel between supervisor support and work engagement. As individuals generally respect the norm of reciprocity (Buunk et al., 1993) and reciprocate the same type of effort (Sherony and Green, 2002), employees who perceive organizational support are more likely to reciprocate the organization with the same kind of support (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

POS is a construct that generally refers to all employees. As this study is interested in understanding how organizations may affect the career choices of their female workforce, it adopts a specific construct, POS for women's advancement (Jawahar and Hammasi, 2006). This construct aims specifically to capture female employees' perceptions of their organization's support for their advancement, which the organization exerts through its policies, practices, and programs, since, as the literature reports, organizations have instead shown a lack of such support.

Despite the specificity of this construct, the same mechanisms that clarify how POS affects workplace outcomes, are going to explain the effects of POS for women's advancement and the same workplace outcomes (Jawahar and Hammasi, 2006). For example, women who perceive that their organization supports and values their advancement are more likely to reciprocate the effort by feeling encouraged, and by planning to pursue senior management positions (Diekman et al., 2010; Nye et al., 2012; Burke et al., 2006; Morrison et al.), as opposed to women who feel as though their organization is not supporting their advancement, who will not feel any obligation to reciprocate, and will not feel encouraged to pursue senior-level management positions. Research suggests that failure of organizations to support women's progression into senior positions leads experienced and qualified women to leave the workforce (Morrison and Von Glinow, 1990; Indvik, 2003; Goodman et al., 2003; Belkin, 2003), and to develop less interest in pursuing career advancement opportunities (Kossek et al., 2017; Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007).

Conceptualization of Women's Career Advancement Aspiration

Women stalling in their careers, meaning not planning to advance to senior roles, has not received much attention in the literature. Indeed, the antecedents of career advancement aspirations of women have not been the center of attention in the literature, especially regarding career progression (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007), which represents a knowledge gap that should be further investigated.

Career advancement aspiration is defined as an individual's desire to pursue a senior management path (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007). Desired aspirations, which refer to the extent of one's aspiration to become a senior manager, are attitudinal characteristics of individuals' pursuit

to reach senior management, and they generate a motivational drive that sustains individuals' efforts and persistence in reaching their goal (Tharenou and Terry, 1998). Litzky and Greenhaus (2007), in their study on gender and aspirations to senior management, provide a sample item to measure senior management aspirations, this item is "I would like to advance to a position where I can have a greater influence on policy decisions" (p. 645). Therefore, career advancement aspirations are individuals' desires to achieve a higher position within the organization (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007).

Women not aspiring to achieve senior management positions are less likely to engage in actions that lead to senior management careers (Miller et al., 2005). There is not much evidence in research about why women are less likely to aspire to senior management, and that is unfortunate as senior management aspirations lead to the achievement of senior management roles (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007). Organizations in which women are absent from senior management may experience negative outcomes, as opposed to organizations with female senior management, which, instead, have positive financial (Catalyst, 2004) and ethical (Bell et al., 2002) results.

Conceptualization of Turnover Intentions

For decades, employee turnover and its antecedents have been the main research topic (Dawley et al., 2010; Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). *Turnover* can be defined as voluntary, involuntary, functional, or dysfunctional (Watrous et al., 2006), and depending on the kind of turnover, its effect on the organization varies. Turnover intention is defined as "a deliberative willfulness to leave the organization" (Liao and Sun, 2020) and is considered the last stage of withdrawal behaviors.

Voluntary turnover, which refers to the voluntary decision of the employee to leave their job (McPherson, 1976), is often dysfunctional and damaging to the organization (Mobley, 1982). Abbasi and Hollman (2000) state that it is usually “the smartest and most talented employees” (p.333) that are more prone to leaving. When employees leave the organization, they take their experience, knowledge, and talent, which delays performance and produces organizational dysfunction (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Involuntary turnover, instead, refers to when the organization considers whether an employee should stay or leave (McPherson, 1976). In this case, the organization proceeds to remove under-performing employees, and this process is usually referred to as functional (Wang and Sun, 2019; Watrous et al., 2006).

When employees leave voluntarily, there tend to be negative consequences for the organization (Watrous et al., 2006). Abbasi and Holman (2000) calculated that organizations face about \$11 billion in turnover cost every year. Financial consequences are not the only downside of turnover. Turnover affects relations with customers, efficiency, and morale (Abbasi and Hollman, 2000), and the organization’s overall performance (Watrous et al., 2006).

Indeed, traditionally employee turnover has been linked to negative organizational performances (Wang and Sun, 2019). Employee turnover has a direct cost on the organization, replacement and training costs, and indirect costs. Such indirect cost refers to the loss of knowledge and skills that are closely related to the organization that takes a longer time to replace as they are developed through experience; the literature argues that for such reason, turnover has exponential negative effects on organizations (Wang and Sun, 2019). Turnover of managers is a particularly important subject of research in the public sector. Turnover of managers in public administrations can lead to uncertain and inconsistent outcomes (Liao and

Sun, 2020). Managerial turnover can have an effect on policies, and it can be an indicator of unstable leadership (Liao and Sun, 2020).

Theoretical Framework for Women's Career Advancement Aspirations and Turnover

Intentions

Social Exchange Theory

The social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the rule of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) lay out the theoretical foundation for the understanding between POS for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations and between POS for women's advancement and turnover intention. Social exchange theory posits that relationships that provide more benefit than costs will turn into reciprocal trust and attraction (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). These social dynamics entail both material and psychological benefits such as loyalty and approval. The idea of unspecified obligation is central to the theory of social exchange and the norm of reciprocity, meaning that when one party, involved in the social dynamic, does a favor to the other, an expectation of a future favor in return is expected (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). This unspecified obligation may result in increased commitment to the relationship, and, in the long term, as a pattern of reciprocity develops, it increases the perception of balance between parties involved in the social dynamic that the relationship represents (Blau, 194; Gouldner, 1960).

This exchange dynamic with the organization is very meaningful to the employee. Within the workplace, unspecified obligations generate through the employee's perception of support received from the organization (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). POS develops through several dynamics between the employee and the organization and refers to the extent to which the employee perceives that the organization values their work, respects them, and is interested in

their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) found that high levels of POS produce feelings of trust, long-lasting obligations, and identification of the employee with their organization. These feelings are going to generate unspecified obligations, and given that individuals respect the rule of reciprocity, employees who perceive organizational support are more likely to reciprocate with increased commitment and decreased turnover (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). When the employee, instead, perceives a lack of support, unspecified obligations are not going to be generated, they are going to engage in withdrawal behaviors, such as turnover (Wayne et al., 1997).

Social Cognitive Theory

Traditionally psychologists explain gender differences in advancement aspirations and behaviors related to career achievements with a person-centered approach (Tharenou, 1990). Lack of women in senior management positions has usually been explained as a cause of “internal psychological characteristics” (Tharenou, 1990, p. 364), women would experience fear of success, low self-confidence and as a result, they would learn that they are not suitable for managerial roles. More recently, instead, the theory has focused on how the social context rather affects individual factors to understand women’s careers. This more recent school of thought argues that social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) may better explain women’s career development (Tharenou, 1990).

As Bandura started conceptualizing his theory on social human learning, he developed his social cognitive theory that posits that individuals learn in social contexts via dynamic and reciprocal interactions between the individual, the environment, and behavior. Learning is then the result of dynamic and reciprocal interactions between the individual and the environment, and this perspective considers the interaction of individual characteristics, such as gender, and

environmental factors, such as the organizational culture, in which women may learn about their role within the organization, learning that in turn may inform their careers' aspirations.

Research has reported that internal characteristics, leadership styles, fear of success poorly explain why women do not aspire to senior managerial positions (Riger and Galligan, 1980). Riger and Galligan (1980) offer an answer that instead emphasizes that the characteristics of an organization determine the likelihood of women becoming managers. Deaux (1985) also states that the situation, social cues, in particular, is of central importance to understanding the relationship between individual characteristics and career behaviors. The interaction between internal expectations, derived by individual characteristics, such as gender, and situational factors of the environment, such as the workplace, is believed to influence career attitudes (Tharenou, 1990). Women are more likely to consider themselves inadequate in the workplace as a result of social cues, which may translate to traditional job advancement aspirations (Tharenou, 1989).

Research on women's career development has shown a significant and positive relationship between environmental and social factors and women's career advancement aspirations (Fitzgerald and Betz, 1983; Alban Metcalfe, 1985; Betz and Fitzgerald, 1987). Bandura (1982, 1986) proposes that environmental factors are the strongest predictor of behavior. Evidence shows that individual factors such as beliefs and self-percepts are weaker predictors of women's choices and behaviors than environmental factors (Deaux, 1984; Wallston, 1987; Freedman and Phillips, 1988; Riger and Galligan 1908).

When an organization fails to support the career development of women, it represents a barrier to their advancement (Kossek et al., 2017). It is important to reiterate that these organizational dynamics affect everyone within the workplace, regardless of gender but, given

the persistent bias and stereotyping that characterizes the organizational environment in which women develop their career aspirations, only women's career choices are limited to prescribed norms.

According to these theoretical perspectives then, when organizations, through their policies, practices, and programs, fail to support their female employees, by not valuing and encouraging them, women may engage in withdrawal behaviors that negatively affect their careers, as the perception of lack of support may decrease their career advancement aspirations and increase their turnover intention. Instead, perceiving organizational support for their advancement may lead women to commit to their organization and not quit, but also to be encouraged and plan to advance their careers within the organization and achieve senior managerial roles.

Taken together the literature above suggests that Social Exchange Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, would predict that when organizations fail to support the careers of women who hold supervisory and managerial positions, women's aspiration to advance their careers to senior management within the organization may decrease, and their turnover intentions may increase. Therefore, this study contends that:

H1a: Perceptions of organizational support for women's advancement will be positively related to career advancement aspirations.

H1b. Perceptions of organizational support for women's advancement will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most analyzed and most essential work factors in organizational behavior (Jin et al., 2016; Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Job satisfaction is defined as an employee's cognitive, affective, and evaluative response to their job (Greenberg and Baron, 1997). Locke (1984) explained job satisfaction as to when employee's needs and outcomes match. Jin et al. (2016) state that job satisfaction entails similarity between what the employees want for their job performance and what they receive. Cranny et al. (1992) refers to job satisfaction as a mix of cognitive and affective responses to the difference between what an employee receives and what they desire. The relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention has received wide scholarly attention and is solidly established (Jin et al., 2018; Spector, 1997). The effect of job satisfaction on turnover is of fundamental importance since the literature reports that public service is experiencing the loss of high-quality employees due to job dissatisfaction (Jin et al., 2016).

Mobley et al. (1978) found that job dissatisfaction leads to several withdrawal reactions. The employee analyses the cost and benefit of quitting their job, and ultimately job dissatisfaction leads to turnover. Hom et al. (1992) confirm Mobley et al.'s findings. Hellman (1997) reported a correlation between job satisfaction and turnover. Jin et al. (2018) report that job satisfaction leads to a decreased turnover intention, confirming Vroom's (1964) findings that high job satisfaction produces a lower turnover.

Given the interest of the literature in job satisfaction, it is quite established that job satisfaction affects career choices (Halcomb et al., 2018). Still, as mentioned, the literature has focused chiefly on turnover intentions and not on career advancement aspirations. It seems fair to

assume that as job satisfaction positively affects women's turnover intentions, it may also entail that such satisfaction may lead women to stay in the organization to take on more responsibilities within the same field.

The relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention has not been investigated as much in an all-female sample, that is why job satisfaction is being included in this model, but also, this study contains job satisfaction because it lays the foundations for its following hypotheses:

H2a. Job satisfaction will be positively related to career advancement aspirations.

H2b. Job satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

This study also asserts that job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between POS for women's advancement and women's career advancement aspirations, and it will mediate the relationship between POS for women's advancement and turnover intentions. Women who do not perceive support for their advancement from their organizations are expected not to be satisfied with their jobs, which is expected to lead to withdrawal behaviors such as lack of interest in advancing their careers, and ultimately turnover intentions.

H3a. Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations.

H3b. Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions.

Employer Satisfaction

Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006), in their study on POS for women's advancement and turnover intentions, introduce a newer construct, employer satisfaction, and state that job satisfaction should be discerned from employer satisfaction. They contend that standard measures of job satisfaction (Job Diagnostic Survey, Job Descriptive Index, for example) measure satisfaction with certain aspects of the job, such as pay, job security, working conditions, job environment. However, organizations also supply several other benefits that are not peculiar to just one job. These benefits may be fair policies, flexible work settings, employment benefits, opportunities and access to mentoring, family-friendly policies, and wellness programs. These organization-wide benefits are hypothesized to increase employees' satisfaction with their employers.

Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006) contend that employer satisfaction is a wider construct than job satisfaction and that employees appreciate the benefits provided by the employer, and consequently, employees' satisfaction with their employers decreases their turnover intentions, as the employees would not want to renounce such benefits. Employees who perceive that their employer provides fair policies and benefits to them may engage in career planning behaviors. Employees who perceive that career advancement opportunities are available to them, and indeed attainable (Hall, 1976), also assume they will encounter less stress in achieving senior management positions, therefore they are more likely to engage in career advancement behaviors (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007), as the employer, through their policies and strategies, shows support for such endeavor. Therefore, it seems sound to assume that satisfaction with benefits and policies provided by the employer, such as fair policies, may also increase women's aspirations to advance their careers.

H4a. Employer satisfaction will be positively related to career advancement aspirations.

H4b. Employer satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

Women who intend to achieve senior management positions are then expected to appreciate the support for their advancement from their organizations. Perception of support then will lead to employees' satisfaction with their employer, and employer satisfaction has an effect on turnover intentions and career advancement aspirations. Therefore, employer satisfaction is sound to propose, may mediate the relationship between POS for women's advancement and turnover and between POS for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations.

H5a. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations.

H5b. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions.

A larger organization provides the opportunity for lateral movement of employees. When an employee is not entirely satisfied with their job, for instance, the job does not give the employee the opportunity to utilize their full potential, the employee may decide to move to another role within the same organization if the employee is satisfied with the employer. On the contrary, an employee who is not satisfied with their employer does not have the same option, and consequently, they may consider quitting. According to Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006), this assumption suggests that employer satisfaction may have a stronger relationship with turnover and career advancement aspirations than job satisfaction may have.

H6a. Employer satisfaction will be more strongly related to career advancement aspirations than job satisfaction.

H6b. Employer satisfaction will be more strongly related to turnover intentions than job satisfaction.

Finally, it is argued that POS for women's advancement will have a stronger relationship with employer satisfaction than job satisfaction, as this kind of support cuts across certain jobs. And, as it was already argued, employer satisfaction will have a stronger relationship with career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions. Therefore, it is suggested that employer satisfaction has a stronger mediating effect on the relationship between POS for career advancement and career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions than job satisfaction.

H7a. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations more strongly than job satisfaction.

H7b. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions more strongly than job satisfaction.

A Research Framework for Women's Turnover Intentions and Career Advancement Aspirations

The double standard dynamic within the workplace, that is, the different value organizations may attach to the contribution of women and men, is a subtle process that maintains and reinforces a system of gender inequality (Foschi et al., 1994). Understanding the

barriers women face during their careers is essential, and what is of pivotal importance is understanding the mechanisms through which an organization's environment affects women's career choices (Hackett, 1981). A focus on these organizational mechanisms may, not only, help understand how more men than women advance their careers but, it may also shed some light on why it is more likely men than women who engage in career planning to advance their careers, as their organization is more likely to support the advancement of men rather than the advancement of their female counterparts.

The literature has found women to perceive a lack of support for their careers from their organization (Cox, 1994; Ibarra, 1993; Morrison and Von Glinow, 1990; O'Leary and Ickovics, 1992), and this perception, and experience, was found to negatively affect job opportunities, delays in career advancement and job retention (Morrison and Von Glinow, 1990; O'Leary and Ickovics, 1992; Tsui et al., 1992). The failure of organizations to support women harms them and the organization itself (Mor Barak, 2000). An organization characterized by supportive strategies and practices creates a thriving environment for both women and the organization. A supportive organization encourages and facilitates the advancement of all its workforce by valuing the contribution of all segments of it. By reinforcing women's perception of organizational support, an organization may encourage women and lead them to commit to the organization and pursue careers that otherwise would be perceived unattainable.

Proposed Model

A review of the literature reveals that, as disparities between men and women in the workplace persist, it may be helpful to understand how the organizational environment may increase the likelihood of women making career choices that, due to social roles, may seem atypical for women. Lack of confidence in achieving senior management positions within the

organization may represent a barrier that affects career behaviors (Harmon, 1977), in addition to workplace characteristics, dynamics, and cultures that also contribute to the reinforcement of such belief, by devaluing the contribution of women in the organization.

Sabharwal (2014) specifies that the real challenge for today's organizations is to support and value the entirety of its workforce as a real asset to the organization to produce positive outcomes. It is not a matter of letting women into the workforce anymore, and it is a matter of creating an environment where women are supported, through policies and strategies that emphasize the value of their contributions, to dismantle organizational barriers that prevent women from advancing their careers (Mor Barak, 2000, 2014). Drawing on this body of work, this study examines factors that may affect women's career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions.

Figure 1

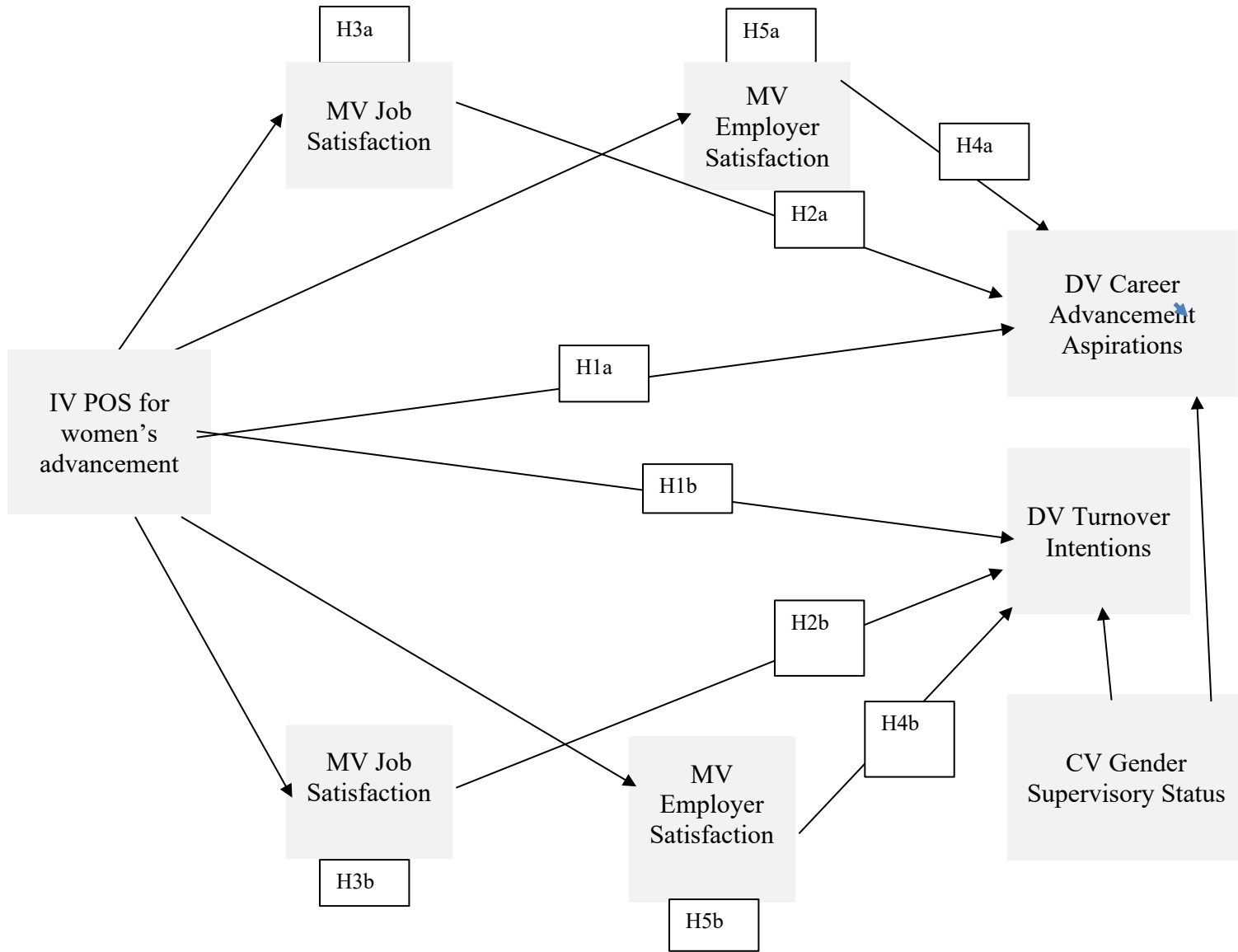


Figure1: Mediated model of the relationship between POS for women's advancement and Turnover, and Career Advancement aspirations of women. The numbers next to each path correspond to the respective hypothesis. Labels for mediating hypotheses H6 and H7 are not shown.

The model examined in this research (Figure 1) shows the mediating process by which POS for women's advancement affects career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions.

This research expects that women in supervisor and management positions who perceive

organizational support for their advancement hold lower intentions to turnover and higher aspirations for career advancement. Respectively, this research expects that the perception of support for their advancement generates a perception of trust, long term obligations, and identification of the employee with the organization (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), which produces an obligation in women to reciprocate and that will translate in their lower turnover and higher organizational commitment, furthermore, the perception of organizational support for women's advancement emphasizes the organizational acceptance and adequacy of women in senior management roles which increases the likelihood of women to aspire to advance their career and achieve senior management positions (Tharenou, 1990).

Moreover, this research expects women to hold even lower turnover intentions and higher career advancement aspirations because of their higher job and employer satisfaction. Indeed, as women value and appreciate the support the organization shows for their careers, it is expected that women hold high satisfaction with their job and employer, which is expected to lower their turnover intentions further and increase their career advancement aspirations.

Finally, this research expects women to have the lowest turnover intention and highest career advancement aspirations because of their higher employer satisfaction. Women unsatisfied with their job have the possibility to move to a different job within the same organization, women who are not satisfied with their employer do not have the same option, therefore employer satisfaction has a stronger relationship with turnover intentions and career advancement aspirations. The perception of support for their advancement from their organization enhances women's satisfaction with their employer more than it enhances their satisfaction with their job and that is because support cuts across jobs, that is why it is expected

that women hold the lowest intention to turnover and highest aspirations to advance their career as a result of high satisfaction with their employer.

Using the above conceptual framework, this study attempts to answer the following research questions: does a higher perception of organizational support for women's advancement decrease their turnover intention? Does a higher perception of organizational support for women's advancement encourage women to aspire to pursue senior management positions, as women believe that the organization would value them as senior managers? Are there other workplace factors that may strengthen the effect of perceived organizational support for women's advancement?

The following section provides operational definitions for the dependent variables, independent variable, and the two mediating variables in the framework and explains how they are hypothesized to affect women's turnover intentions and career advancement aspirations.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Brief Review of Previous Chapters

Despite the literature agreeing that gender diversity in senior management benefits organizations (Ellemers, 2014), women are still underrepresented in the upper echelons of management (Kossek et al, 2017). Women who hold middle-management positions, such as supervisory or manager positions, do not feel that they receive the same advancement opportunities as men do and are not as appreciated as men (Cooper and Jackson, 2001). In fact, despite their skills, education, and performances, they rarely achieve higher management positions at the same pace men do. Men managers earn higher salaries, advance faster, hold higher management positions, and overall, their path to seniority is not as hard as women's (Hansen, 2009), resulting in a paucity of women in senior management positions. Given the persistent paucity of women in senior management positions, it may be useful to examine how the organizational environment affects women's career choices and address the organizational barriers that prevent women in middle management to achieve senior management roles and understand how organizations can promote their advancement.

Today organizations need to expand their approaches to the needs of their workforce and focus on creating an environment that supports the advancement of all the segments of its workforce by creating an environment where women feel valued for their contributions. This type of environment, while dismantling an organizational system that obstacles the career advancement of women (Mor Barak, 2000, 2014), may decrease the turnover intentions of women who hold a supervisor and managerial position and encourage them to aspire to advance

their careers to reach senior management positions, that will eventually result in more women in senior managerial roles.

Research Design

Most studies found in the literature review use quantitative research designs (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006; Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007; Ellinas et al., 2018; Dawley et al., 2010) to examine the relationships between the variables of interest. These studies collected data through a cross-sectional survey while, although this study also employs a cross-sectional design, it is using secondary data collected by the Federal Government in 2016.

Cross-sectional research is largely used in social science, including public administration. Cross-sectional research is, in fact, appropriate to examine and understand causal effects of one or multiple independent variables on a dependent variable at a specific point in time (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2008), therefore considering that this study aims to examine the relationship between POS for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions, this research design is appropriate.

This study employs a cross-sectional, descriptive, secondary data analysis design. The U.S. Merit System Protection Board periodically administers a survey, the Merit Principles Survey (MPS), to assess the health of Federal merit systems. The U.S. Merit System Protection Board is an independent, quasi-judicial agency, part of the Executive branch that aims to preserve the Federal merit systems. Given this scope, the Merit System Protection Board grants employees the opportunity to appeal specific personnel actions and conducts studies of merit procedures in the Executive branch (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, MPS 2016 Fact Sheet for Federal Employees).

The Merit Principles Survey (MPS) is a survey distributed Governmentwide to Federal civilian employees that aims to measure the health of the Federal merit procedures and advancement in establishing a workplace that is clear of prohibited practices among employees. This survey has been distributed periodically since 1983. This survey usually contains core items for longitudinal use and items that serve a specific purpose within the study (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, MPS 2016 Data and Methodology). The survey assesses employees' perspectives on workplace fairness, personnel practices, certain aspects of the work experience and work conditions, and human resources management. This survey is different from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, also administered by OPM in several aspects, including a focus on merit system principles and civil service issues; its administration every few years and not annually; and finally, a smaller sample size.

Truman (1945) details the uses and benefits of surveying public administrators and employees for better results. According to Truman, survey data can be used to study, systematize, and remodel organizations, which is vital for people inside and outside the government (Resh et al., 2021).

Data and Sample

The target population is female employees at the Federal government institutions, who also hold the supervisory status of supervisor or manager.

The MPS survey contains three different surveys called paths, Path 1, Path 2, and Path L administered to individuals in management positions. For this study, only Path 1 was used as each path contains different items. Employees were sent only one version of the survey to reduce time demands on those selected to participate. For this study, Path 1 was identified, as it contains

the majority of items of interest, such as POS for women's advancement items, found in the Fairness: Equality section of the survey. In addition to fairness, Path 1 contains employee engagement, work environment, career entry and interest, preventive measures and complaint resolution, workplace violence, workplace aggression/harassment, sexual harassment, and demographic items.

The sample, drawn in 2015, a year before the survey was distributed, includes 126,000 full-time permanent employees and managers from 24 Federal agencies. Employees were selected randomly using a sampling technique designed to generate a statistically significant measure of employees' opinion (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, MPS 2016 Fact Sheet for Federal Employees). In July 2016, the survey was administered electronically to employees who had not left the agency and had a valid e-mail address via the internet, and employees were asked to complete the survey via a personal link. Email invitations were sent to 114,000 of the 126,000 employees sampled, the e-mail specified that participation was voluntary and confidential. The MPS ran from July 2016 through September 2016. For Path 1, the response criterion was the completion of a minimum number of non-demographic questions, about 10 percent. For Path 1, 37,452 employees were identified as eligible, and 14,515 accepted the invitation for a final response rate of 39 percent.

Given the purpose of this research, the final sample size is 5048, 35 percent of total respondents, as that is the number of female employees who accepted the invitation. Among the female respondents, 678, 14 percent of total respondents, reported holding a supervisor or manager position.

Measures

This section provides an explanation of the measures used for the dependent variables, the independent variable, and mediating variables. To test the hypotheses, this research employs several survey items. This study utilizes measures already established in the literature. Path1, one of the surveys distributed to Federal employees, contains questions about employee's career aspirations, their perception of equality and of access to advancement opportunities, satisfaction with their job, and with their employer, in addition to demographic questions. Except for demographic questions and for job satisfaction, which was measured on a five-point Likert satisfaction scale, where a value of 1 corresponds to "very dissatisfied" and a value of 5 corresponds to "very satisfied," the rest of the variables were measured on a five-point Likert agreement scale, where a value of 1 corresponds to "strongly disagree" and a value of 5 corresponds to "strongly agree." The measures for each variable are described in the following section.

As Jin et al. (2018) argue that one of the potential limitations of this research is that the measures are perceptual. Perception matters because they lead employees to interpret events and predict their outcomes, meaningfully affecting their behaviors (Jin et al., 2018). Indeed, organizational research has proven that considering subjective measures is more appropriate when studying an employee's behavior, and several studies in the field of organizational research support the meaningfulness of using employees' perceptions when explaining their behaviors (Jin et al., 2018)

Dependent Variables

Career Advancement Aspirations and Turnover Intentions

Based on the overall purpose of the study, which is to understand whether POS for women's advancement leads to certain career choices, and on a review of the literature, the two outcome variables of career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions were generated from the survey questions. Career Advancement Aspirations was found among the survey items that inquired about the employee's career interests, specifically their aspirations. This study defines career advancement aspirations as an individual's desire to pursue a senior management path (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007). Therefore, career advancement aspirations are individuals' desires to achieve a higher position within the organization (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007).

An item that corresponds to these operational definitions is found in the Career Interest: Aspirations section of Path 1, one of the survey paths distributed to Federal employees. The question asked about the level of agreement or disagreement on whether the respondent would like to: "take on senior executive responsibilities" (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, MPS 2016 Data and Methodology).

Turnover intention was also found in the career interest, specifically the aspirations section of the survey. The survey question inquired about the employee's level of agreement or disagreement with the following item "Would like to work outside the Federal Government" (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, MPS 2016 Data and Methodology). Turnover intent is not a perfect measure of actual turnover, yet the literature has shown that it is highly correlated with actual turnover (Jin et al., 2018).

Independent Variable

Perceived Organizational Support for Women's Advancement

As for the independent variable, this study also finds its measure in the literature. Path 1, one of the three surveys distributed to Federal employees, does have items that allow it to operationalize Perceived Organizational Support for Women's Advancement. In the literature POS for women's advancement is measured through questions that assess whether the organization supports the advancement of women through strategies, policies, and programs. Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006) measure POS for women's advancement through questions such as "sufficient opportunities exist in my organization for women to advance into senior management positions;" "women and men are respected equally in my organization;" "in my organization, women have to perform better than their male counterparts to be promoted to the same position (reverse coded)" (p. 648-649)

Therefore, the items of interest in the MPS survey can be found in the Fairness: Equality section, and precisely the questions that ask about the level of agreement or disagreement with: "In my organization, women, and men are respected equally;" "In my organization, the opinion and insights of women are often ignored or devalued" (reverse coded); "In my organization, standards are higher for women than men" (reverse coded); "My organization is reluctant to promote women to supervisory or managerial positions" (reverse coded) (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, MPS 2016 Data and Methodology).

POS is nearly identical to the one used by Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006). Furthermore, the four items were summed to compute the composite POS score (Cronbach's $\alpha = .917$). The obtained score, ranging from 4 to 20, indicates women's level of perception of organizational support for their advancement, a higher score indicates a higher perception of support. It is

important to note that POS is not a perfect measure of perceived support for women's advancement, which is often the case when scholarly research uses government surveys (Caillier, 2012). Interpreting results should proceed with caution. The goal was here to construct a variable that future research could expand and strengthen.

Mediating Variables

Job Satisfaction and Employer Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was measured through one item found in the Career Interests: satisfaction with current job and work environment. The respondent was asked to indicate the level of satisfaction with the following item: "Interesting work that I enjoy" (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, MPS 2016 Data and Methodology).

Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006) introduced the construct of Employer satisfaction. They measured satisfaction with the employer through items that aimed to measure the extent to which an employee would recommend their organization to others as a place to work and would enjoy working in this organization. Path 1 provides one such item in the Engagement section: "I would recommend my agency as a place to work" (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, MPS 2016 Data and Methodology).

Control Variables

This study uses demographic variables of gender and supervisory status as its control variables. The variable of gender, "Male," was coded as 1, and "Female" was coded as 2. Supervisory status was collected through the question "Supervisory status," and non-supervisor was coded as 1, team leader as 2, supervisor as 3, manager as 4, and executive as 5. As this study

is interested in understanding whether POS for women’s advancement increases the likelihood of women to advance their careers, it seems more appropriate to only include in the sample women who hold a supervisory or manager status, as they may have the opportunity to advance their careers, whether they plan on taking the opportunity or not.

Variables

Table 1
Variables and corresponding survey measurement items

Variable	Survey Items
DV – Career advancement aspirations	- CASP_05 Would like to take on senior executive responsibilities
DV – Turnover Intentions	- CASP_09 Would like to work outside the Federal Government
IV – Perceived Organizational Support for Women’s Advancement	- EQTY_01 In my organization, women and men are respected equally - EQTY_02 In my organization, the opinion and insights of women are often ignored or devalued (reverse coded) - EQTY_04 In my organization, standards are higher for women than men (reverse coded) - EQTY_06 My organization is reluctant to promote women to supervisory or managerial positions (reverse coded)
MV – Job Satisfaction	- CSAT_01 Interesting work that I enjoy
MV – Employer Satisfaction	- ENG_09 I would recommend my agency as a place to work
CV – Gender Supervisory status	- DEM_12 Male, Female - DEM_04 Non-supervisor, team leader, supervisor, manager, executive

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results and findings of the study using secondary data analysis of survey data of federal employees. The purpose of the study is to determine whether the perception of organizational support for women's advancement negatively affects women's turnover intentions and positively affects women's aspirations to advance their careers.

All data analyses were conducted using SPSS 27. An alpha level of .05 was used for all significance tests in this research. An ordinal logistic regression analysis (O'Connell, 2006) was conducted to assess the predictive relationship between POS for women's advancement and the ordinal criterion variables, career advancement aspirations, and turnover intentions. Ordinal logistic regression is usually used to predict the value of an ordinal dependent variable, and this study aims to predict the values of two variables, career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions, which are both measured at the ordinal level.

Ordinal logistic regression should be used under the assumption that the independent variable has the same effect at every cumulative split of the dependent variable. This assumption was tested through the test of parallel lines; when such a test is statistically non-significant the assumption is satisfied. Statistical significance is instead an indicator that the assumption is not satisfied. To determine the predictive features of the independent variable, POS for women's advancement, the chi-square likelihood ratio test was used (Cohen, et al., 2003); this test informs whether there is a significant improvement in fit for the final model, compared with the null model. This study uses one descriptive measure for the goodness-of-fit, the pseudo R^2 Nagelkerke (1991). The pseudo R^2 measures the success of the model in explaining the variance

in the data (Liu et al., 2009). The larger the R^2 is, the better the model fits. Parameter estimates were also considered.

Cronbach's Alpha was performed to check the reliability of POS as multiple Likert questions in the survey were used to compute a score. The construct reliability exceeded .90, and the cut-off value is usually .70 (Jin et al., 2016). The Cronbach's Alpha was .917, which indicates a high level of internal consistency for the POS score.

The first half of this chapter summarizes the results obtained from the descriptive data analysis for the demographic factors, supervisory status, perception of POS for women's advancement, career advancement aspirations, and turnover intentions. The second half of this chapter presents results from the ordinal regression analyses (O'Connell, 2006) conducted to examine the predicted relationship between POS for women's advancement and turnover intentions and career advancement aspirations and the mediating effects of job satisfaction and employer satisfaction of women employed by the Federal Government who already hold a supervisory and managerial position.

Descriptive Statistics

Using descriptive statistics methods, this section is going to answer the following questions: who are the women this study is focusing on? What characteristics do they have? What is the general perception of POS for women's advancement? What is the general level of career advancement aspiration and turnover intentions among them?

Table 2.1 shows the demographic characteristics of survey respondents. Women who hold a supervisory status of supervisor or manager constitute 14 percent ($n= 678$) of female respondents; of these, 10 percent hold a supervisor position ($n=470$), while four percent ($n=208$)

hold a manager role. It's worth noting that only 17 women hold an executive role, compared to 746 men. Most women hold a bachelor's degree 43 percent (n=291), followed by 41 percent (n=277) of women holding a graduate degree. The majority of women in supervisory or managerial positions are over 40 years old, 88 percent (n=599). Most women do not identify as a minority, 66 percent (n=445). Most of supervisor or manager women have been working with their current agency for more than four years 92 percent (n=626), and 16 percent (n=111) earn less than \$75,000, 31 percent (n=209) earn between \$75,000 and \$100,000, 40 percent (n=275) earn between \$100,000 and \$150,000, while only 12 percent (n=80) earn more than \$150,000. Women in supervisor and managerial positions mostly work in workgroups composed of the same number of men and women, 24 percent (n=164), followed by 43 percent of women working with mostly female coworkers (n=293).

Table 2.1

Frequency Table for Demographic Survey Items

Demographic Survey Items	N	Percent
Education level		
Less than AA degree	110	16%
AA or Ba degree	291	43%
Graduate degree	277	41%
Age group		
39 and under	75	11%
40 and over	599	89%
Ethnicity/RNO identification		
Non-minority	445	66%
Minority	227	34%
Years with current agency		

3 years or less	52	7%
4 years or more	626	92%
Salary		
\$74,999 or less	111	16%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	209	31%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	275	40%
\$150,000 or more	80	12%
Gender composition of work group		
About the same number of males and females	164	24%
Slightly more males than females	90	13%
Substantially more males than females	128	19%
Slightly more females than males	146	21%
Substantially more females than males	147	22%

Table 2.2 shows frequencies for the variables of interest, while table 2.3 shows descriptive statistics. Women working as supervisors and managers in the Federal Government enjoy their work; they report high rates of job satisfaction; in fact, 93 percent (n=634) report doing interesting work that they enjoy. They also would recommend their agency as a place to work, 71 percent (n=485). Women at the Federal Government agree that women and men are respected equally 60 percent (n= 407), that their insights and opinions are not ignored or devalued 60 percent (n=397), and that standards are not higher for women 54 percent (n=360); finally, they do not report their agency to be reluctant to promote women 69 percent (n=451); therefore women report a high perception of support for their advancement from the Federal Government. Most women who already hold a supervisory and managerial role within the Federal Government indeed aspire to take on executive responsibilities 46 percent (n=305), 20 percent are indecisive (n=135), while 33 percent (n=218) would not like to take on an executive

role; finally, only 18 percent (n=120) of women who hold supervisory and managerial roles, would like to work outside the Federal Government.

Table 2.2

Frequency Table for Survey Items

Survey Items	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Satisfaction Scale</i>	<i>Very Dissatisfied</i>		<i>Dissatisfied</i>		<i>Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied</i>		<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>		<i>Very Satisfied</i>	
Job Satisfaction										
CSAT_01 – Interesting work that I enjoy	7	1%	33	5%	33	5%	256	39%	348	51%
<i>Agreement Scale</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>		<i>Agree</i>		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	
Employer Satisfaction										
ENG_09 – I would recommend my agency as a place to work	27	4%	65	9%	101	15%	277	41%	208	31%
Turnover Intention										
CASP_09 – Work outside the Federal Government	222	35%	172	27%	126	20%	82	13%	38	5%
Career Advancement Aspirations										
CASP_05 – Would like to take on executive responsibilities	74	11%	144	22%	135	20%	142	21%	163	25%
Perceived Organizational Support for Women’s Advancement										
EQTY_01 – Women and men are respected equally	55	8%	103	15%	98	15%	273	41%	134	20%

EQT_02R – Opinions and insights of women are often ignored or devalued	34	5%	98	15%	131	20%	254	38%	143	22%
EQTY_04R – Standards are higher for women than men	35	5%	106	16%	154	23%	230	35%	130	20%
EQTY_06R – My organization is reluctant to promote women to supervisory or managerial positions	30	4%	52	8%	122	19%	279	42%	172	26%

Table 2.3 provides descriptive statistics for the dependent, independent, mediating and control variables in this study. The first column of the table shows a mean value for each variable. The table shows that all critical variables, career advancement aspiration, POS's items, job satisfaction and employer satisfaction, have a mean value that is above the midpoint of three, indicating, respectively, high levels of career advancement aspirations, perception of support, job, and employer satisfaction. A mean value of 2.28 for turnover intentions indicates that the sample population has, on average, low turnover intentions. When looking at the items considered for POS, EQTY_06R, a survey item that inquires about the organization's reluctance to promote women has a higher mean value (3.78) than the other POS items. EQTY_02R, EQTY_04R, and EQTY_06R were reverse coded, a higher mean score indicates a higher disagreement with the statement. Women who hold a supervisory and managerial role, on average disagree that their organization is reluctant to promote them.

Table 2.3

Descriptive Statistics

	M	SD	Min	Max
Dependent variables				
Career Advancement Aspiration	3.27	1.345	1	5
Turnover Intention	2.28	1.228	1	5
Independent variable				
POS for Women's Advancement scale	14.3397	4.06207	4	20
Equal Respect	3.49	1.210	1	5
Women's insights ignored	3.56	1.13527	1	5
Standards higher for women	3.48	1.13549	1	5
Org is reluctant to promote women	3.78	1.06383	1	5
Mediating variables				
Job satisfaction	4.34	.857	1	5
Employer Satisfaction	3.85	1.083	1	5
Control variables				
Gender	1.43	.495	1	2
Supervisory Status	3.31	.462	3	4

Bivariate Correlations

Correlations between the dependent variables, the independent variable, and mediating variables are reported in table 2.4. The independent variable, POS, and the mediating variables, job satisfaction and employer satisfaction, have negative and significant correlations with the dependent variable, turnover intention. The independent variable, POS, has a significant negative correlation with the dependent variable, career advancement aspiration, while the mediating

variables, job satisfaction and employer satisfaction, have positive and non-significant correlations with the dependent variable career advancement aspiration.

Correlation coefficients suggest that the variables in the model are not highly correlated; therefore, there is no multicollinearity. Serious multicollinearity does not exist when the coefficient is less than .7 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).

Table 3.1

Bivariate Correlations between Variables

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Career Advancement Aspiration	1				
2 Turnover Intention	.162**	1			
3 Employer Satisfaction	.059	-.255 **	1		
4 Job Satisfaction	.010	-.211**	.475**	1	
5 POS for Women’s Advancement	-.124**	-.220**	.371**	.278**	1

**Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Ordinal Logistic Regression with Hypothesis Testing

To examine the impact of Perceived organizational support for Women’s Advancement on turnover intention and career advancement aspiration, ordinal regression logistic regression was utilized since the dependent variables were ordinal, and consequently, they did not have a normal distribution. Ordinal logistic regression is appropriate in ordinal models when certain assumptions are not violated (Caillier, 2012).

To proceed with ordinal regression analysis, a composite score for the independent variable was computed. POS for women’s advancement is being measured using four items from the MPS survey, EQTY_01, EQTY_02 (reverse coded), EQTY_04 (reverse coded), EQTY_06 (reverse coded), the score was computed by summing scores from each item. Reliability of POS was assessed, and POS was indicated as reliable at a Cronbach’s Alpha score of .917, as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.2 shows a summary of findings.

Table 4.1

Reliability Test for POS for Women’s Advancement

Cronbach’s Alpha	N of Items
.917	4

Table 4.2

Summary of Findings

Hypothesis	Finding
<i>H1a. Perceptions of organizational support for women’s advancement will be positively related to career advancement aspirations.</i>	Supported
<i>H1b. Perceptions of organizational support for women’s advancement will be negatively related to turnover intentions.</i>	Not supported
<i>H2a. Job satisfaction will be positively related to career advancement aspirations.</i>	Not supported
<i>H2b. Job satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intentions.</i>	Not supported
<i>H3a. Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women’s advancement and career advancement aspirations.</i>	Supported

<i>H3b. Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions.</i>	Not supported
<i>H4a. Employer satisfaction will be positively related to career advancement aspirations</i>	Not supported
<i>H4b. Employer satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intentions</i>	Not supported
<i>H5a. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations.</i>	Supported
<i>H5b. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions.</i>	Not supported
<i>H6a. Employer satisfaction will be more strongly related to career advancement aspirations than job satisfaction.</i>	Not supported
<i>H6b. Employer satisfaction will be more strongly related to turnover intentions than job satisfaction.</i>	Not supported
<i>H7a. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations more strongly than will job satisfaction.</i>	Supported
<i>H7b. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions more strongly than will job satisfaction</i>	Not supported

H1a: Perceptions of organizational support for women's advancement will be positively related to career advancement aspirations.

H1a examines the relationship between POS for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations of women in supervisory and managerial roles. The results of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did not indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2(48, N = 678) = 44.396, p > .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between POS and career advancement aspiration, $\chi^2(16, N = 678) =$

35.676, $p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 35.676, the significance level is .003, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without POS is as good as the model with it can be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .058, indicating that the model supported a nonzero predictive function of POS. POS explains a six percent variance of the likelihood of women aspiring to advance their career (H1a), therefore providing support for *H1a*.

H1b. Perceptions of organizational support for women's advancement will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

H1b examines the relationship between POS for women's advancement and turnover intentions instead. The results of chi-square likelihood ratio test did indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2 (48, N = 678) = 102.261, p < .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between POS and turnover intentions, $\chi^2 (16, N = 678) = 56.764, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 56.764, the significance level is .000, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without POS is as good as the model with it can be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .095, indicating that the model supported a nonzero predictive function of POS. POS explains a nine percent variance of the likelihood of women to turnover (H1b). But as the parallelism assumption for ordinal regression was violated, this result cannot be taken into consideration, providing no support for *H1b*.

H2a. Job satisfaction will be positively related to career advancement aspirations.

H2a examines the relationship between job satisfaction and career advancement aspirations. The results of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did not indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2 (12, N = 678) = 9.338, p > .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did not support a nonzero predictive relationship between job satisfaction and career

advancement aspirations, $\chi^2 (4, N = 678) = 4.212, p > .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is of 4.212, significance level is .378 which indicates that the null hypothesis, that the model without job satisfaction is as good as the model with it, cannot be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .007. Job satisfaction (H2a) would have explained a .7 percent variance in career advancement aspirations, but it was not significant .378, providing no support for *H2a*.

H2b. Job satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intentions

H2b examines the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The results of chi-s-square likelihood ratio test did indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2 (12, N = 678) = 24.271, p < .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, $\chi^2 (4, N = 678) = 24.371, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 24.371, the significance level is .000, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without job satisfaction is as good as the model with it can be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .040, job satisfaction (*H2b*) would explain variance of four percent in turnover intentions, with a significance score of .000. But as the parallelism assumption for ordinal regression was violated, this result cannot be taken into consideration, providing no support for *H2b*.

H4a. Employer satisfaction will be positively related to career advancement aspirations.

H4a examines the relationship between employer satisfaction and career advancement aspirations. The results of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did not indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2 (12, N = 678) = 8.961, p > .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did not support a nonzero predictive relationship between employer satisfaction and

career advancement aspiration, $\chi^2 (4, N = 678) = 4.314, p > .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 4.314, the significance level is .365, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without employer satisfaction is as good as the model with it cannot be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .007, employer satisfaction (H4a) explained a very small percentage of variance in career aspirations .7 percent, but it was not significant .365 providing no support for *H4a*.

H4b. Employer satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intentions

H4b examines the relationship between employer satisfaction and turnover intentions. The results of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2 (12, N = 678) = 102.064, p < .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between employer satisfaction and turnover intentions, $\chi^2 (4, N = 678) = 42.019, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 42.019, the significance level is .000, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without employer satisfaction is as good as the model with it can be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .067, employer satisfaction (H4b) would explain a seven percent of the variance in turnover intentions, significance level .000. But as the parallelism assumption for ordinal regression was violated this result cannot be taken into consideration, providing no support for *H4b*.

H6a. Employer satisfaction will be more strongly related to career advancement aspirations than job satisfaction.

H6b. Employer satisfaction will be more strongly related to turnover intentions than job satisfaction.

H6a and *H6b* compare the effects of employer satisfaction and job satisfaction respectively on career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions, predicting that employer

satisfaction would have a more substantial effect on both dependent variables. Hypotheses 6a was not supported, the relationship between employer satisfaction and career advancement aspirations and between job satisfaction and career advancement aspirations were both not significant, indicating that career advancement is not affected by either. Hypothesis 6b was also not supported; the parallelism assumption for ordinal regression was violated in both relationships between job satisfaction and turnover intention and between employer satisfaction and turnover intention; these results cannot be taken into consideration.

Mediation Analysis

Testing for mediation requires: the independent variable to be related to the mediator, the independent variable to be related to the dependent variable; the mediator to be related to the dependent variable; and finally, that the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is either non-significant (full mediation) or reduced (partial mediation) when the mediator is introduced (Baron and Kenny, 1986, Preacher and Hayes, 2004).

Job satisfaction. The first condition was met as POS was related to job satisfaction; POS explained a 10 percent variance. The results of chi-square likelihood ratio test did not indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2(48, N = 678) = 45.381, p > .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between POS and job satisfaction, $\chi^2(16, N = 678) = 58.933, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 58.933. the significance level is .000, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without POS is as good as the model with it can be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .101, indicating that the model supported a nonzero predictive function of POS.

Support, as previously stated, was related to career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions. Job satisfaction is also related to both dependent variables, career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions, which fulfills the third condition, although its relationship with career advancement aspirations was not significant, and it failed the parallelism assumption in relation to turnover intentions. To test the fourth conditions, job satisfaction was entered in step two of the ordinal regression analysis.

H3a. Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations.

H3a examines the mediating effect of job satisfaction between POS for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations. The results of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did not indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2(60, N = 678) = 58.951, p > .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between POS and career advancement aspiration mediated by job satisfaction, $\chi^2(20, N = 678) = 40.146, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 40.146, the significance level is .005, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without job satisfaction is as good as the model with it can be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .065, indicating that the model supported a nonzero mediating function of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction (*H3a*) explained an additional .7 percent of the increased variance in career advancement aspirations, significance .005, signifying an improvement of the model due to job satisfaction, therefore, providing support for *H3a*.

H3b. Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions

H3b examines the mediating effect of job satisfaction between POS for women's advancement and turnover intentions. The results of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2 (60, N = 678) = 106.532, p < .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between POS and turnover intentions mediated by job satisfaction, $\chi^2 (20, N = 678) = 68.267, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 68.267, the significance level is .000. Job satisfaction could not explain an increased variance in turnover intentions (*H3b*), as the parallelism assumption for ordinal regression was violated; this result cannot be taken into consideration, providing no support for *H3b*.

The increase of support's ordinal regression coefficient from 5.8 percent to 6.5 percent suggests that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between POS career advancement aspirations.

Employer satisfaction. The first condition was met as POS was related to employer satisfaction; POS explained a 15 percent variance. The results of chi-s-square likelihood ratio test did not indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2 (48, N = 678) = 41.575, p > .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between POS and employer satisfaction, $\chi^2 (20, N = 678) = 45.077, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 99.418, the significance level is .000, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without POS is as good as the model with it can be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .155, indicating that the model supported a nonzero predictive function of POS.

Support, as previously stated, was related to career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions. Employer satisfaction is also related to both dependent variables, career advancement

aspirations and turnover intentions, which fulfills the third condition, although its relationship with career advancement aspirations was not significant, and it failed the parallelism assumption in relation to turnover intentions. To test the fourth conditions, employer satisfaction was entered in step two of the ordinal regression analysis.

H5a. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations.

H5a examines the mediating effect of employer satisfaction between POS for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations. The results of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did not indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2(60, N = 678) = 57.428, p > .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between POS and career advancement aspirations mediated by employer satisfaction, $\chi^2(20, N = 678) = 45.077, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 45.077, the significance level is .001, which indicates that the null hypothesis that the model without employer satisfaction is not as good as the model with it can be rejected. The Pseudo R^2 was .073, indicating that the model supported a nonzero mediating function of employer satisfaction. Employer satisfaction (*H5a*) explained an additional one percent of the increased variance in career advancement aspirations, signifying an improvement of the model as a result of employer satisfaction, therefore, providing support for *H5a*.

H5b. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions.

H5b examines the mediating effect of employer satisfaction between POS for women's advancement and turnover intentions. The results of the chi-square likelihood ratio test did

indicate a violation of the parallelism assumption, $\chi^2 (60, N = 678) = 156.648, p < .05$; the result of the chi-square likelihood ratio test supported a nonzero predictive relationship between POS and turnover intentions, $\chi^2 (20, N = 678) = 81.318, p < .05$. The difference between the two -2 Log Likelihood is 81.318, and the significance level is .000. The Pseudo R^2 was .133, and employer satisfaction explained a four percent increased variance in turnover intentions (H5b), but as the parallelism assumption for ordinal regression was violated, this result cannot be taken into consideration, providing no support for H5b.

The increase of support's ordinal regression coefficient, from six percent to seven percent, with employer satisfaction, in the ordinal regression equation, suggests that employer satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between POS and career advancement aspirations.

H7a. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations more strongly than will job satisfaction.

H7b. Employer satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intentions more strongly than will job satisfaction.

H7a and H7b compare the mediating effects of job satisfaction and employer satisfaction between POS for women's advancement and, respectively, career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions, predicting that employer satisfaction would have a more substantial effect than job satisfaction. Indeed, these analyses show that employer satisfaction has a stronger mediating effect in the relationship between POS and career advancement aspirations, supporting H7a; employer satisfaction was found to have a non-significant effect on the relationship between POS and on turnover intentions, which cannot lead to the support of H7b.

Table 5.1*POS for women advancement effect on Career Advancement Aspirations Output*

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	285.799			
Final	250.122	35.676	16	.003

Pseudo R-Square	
Nagelkerke	.058

Test of Parallel Lines				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	285.122			
General	205.726	44.396	48	.621

Table 5.2*POS for women advancement effect on Turnover Intentions*

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	301.122			
Final	244.635	56.764	16	.000

Pseudo R-Square	
Nagelkerke	.095

Test of Parallel Lines				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign

Null Hypothesis	244.635			
General	142.374	102.262	48	.000

Table 5.3

Effect of Job Satisfaction on Career Advancement Aspirations

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	89.298			
Final	85.086	4.212	4	.378

Pseudo R-Square	
Nagelkerke	.007

Test of Parallel Lines				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	85.086			
General	75.748	9.338	12	.674

Table 5.4

Effect of Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intentions

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	121.603			
Final	97.231	24.371	4	.000

Pseudo R-Square	
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Nagelkerke .040

Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	97.231			
General	72.961	24.271	12	.019

Table 5.5

Effect of Employer Satisfaction on Career Advancement Aspirations

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	100.700			
Final	96.961	4.271	4	.365

Pseudo R-Square

Nagelkerke .007

Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	96.386			
General	87.425	8.961	12	.706

Table 5.6

Effect of Employer Satisfaction on Turnover Intentions

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
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Intercept Only	165.837			
Final	123.818	42.019	4	.000

Pseudo R-Square

Nagelkerke .067

Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	123.818			
General	21.755	102.064	12	.000

Table 5.7

Effect of POS on and Employer Satisfaction

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	320.855			
Final	221.437	99.418	16	.000

Pseudo R-Square

Nagelkerke .155

Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	221.437			
General	179.862	41.575	48	.732

Table 5.8*Effect of POS on and Job Satisfaction*

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	250.434			
Final	191.501	58.933	16	.000

Pseudo R-Square	
Nagelkerke	.101

Test of Parallel Lines				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	191.501			
General	146.121	45.381	48	.581

Table 5.9*Mediating effect of Employer Satisfaction on POS and Career Advancement Aspirations*

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	661.873			
Final	616.796	45.077	20	.001

Pseudo R-Square	
Nagelkerke	.073

Test of Parallel Lines				
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Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	616.796			
General	559.362	57.428	60	.570

Table 5.10

Mediating effect of Employer Satisfaction on POS and Turnover Intentions

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	693.029			
Final	611.711	81.318	20	.000

Pseudo R-Square

Nagelkerke .133

Test of Parallel Lines				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	611.711			
General	455.063	156.648	60	.000

Table 5.11

Mediating effect of Job Satisfaction on POS and Career Advancement Aspirations

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	578.598			
Final	538.452	40.146	20	.005

Pseudo R-Square

Nagelkerke .065

Test of Parallel Lines				
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Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	538.452			
General	479.501	58.951	60	.514

Table 5.12

Mediating effect of Job Satisfaction on POS and Turnover Intentions

Model Fitting Information				
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Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Intercept Only	578.018			
Final	509.751	68.267	20	.000

Pseudo R-Square

Nagelkerke .113

Test of Parallel Lines				
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Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sign
Null Hypothesis	509.751			
General	403.220	106.532	60	.000

Ordinal Regression Analysis Parameter Estimates

As demonstrated in table 6.1, there are two models analyzed in this research, one with career advancement aspiration as a dependent variable and the other with turnover intention. Although the R^2 for the models indicates that each is a good fit, explaining some of the variance, the model for turnover intention has failed the parallelism test, therefore its coefficients cannot be taken into consideration. An important note regarding the interpretation of Table 6.1 is that estimates, which are the ordered log-odds (logistic) regression coefficients, indicate the predicted change in probability of being in a higher category on the dependent variable. A positive value is positively related to probabilities of falling at a higher level of the dependent variable. Instead, a negative value is negatively related to probabilities of falling at a higher level of the dependent variable.

A score of 17 in POS for women's advancement is a significant positive predictor of career advancement aspiration. Women who hold a supervisory and managerial role, who scored a 17 (coefficient .743), which indicates a quite high level of POS, are more likely to indicate a higher aspiration to advance their careers. This result suggests that women who perceive that their organization is supportive of their advancement are encouraged to do so and are more likely to advance their careers by aspiring to achieve executive roles within the organization. These findings indicate that women's aspiration to advance their careers is influenced by whether their organizational environment is supportive of such aspiration. Hence, organizational support matters even more, organizational support that is specific to women who tend to aspire to advance their careers is of fundamental importance for their actual advancement.

Table 6.1

Results of ordinal Logistic Regression on Career Advancement Aspirations and Turnover

Intentions

	Career Advancement Aspiration		Turnover Intention	
	Estimates	SE	Estimates	SE
POS 4	2.323*	.701	1.703*	.600
POS 5	2.113*	.658	.217	.595
POS 6	1.191	1.049	.687	.963
POS 7	-.238	.489	1.590*	.516
POS 8	.648	.412	1.550*	.421
POS 9	.432	.431	.935*	.435
POS 10	.574	.378	1.293*	.382
POS 11	1.039*	.366	.335	.383
POS 12	.291	.304	.841*	.312
POS 13	.291	.400	.308	.436
POS 14	-.233	.378	-.500	.402
POS 15	.254	.360	.172	.368
POS 16	.266	.253	.105	.258
POS 17	.743*	.348	.272	.358
POS 18	.475	.549	-1.479*	.702
POS 19	.195	.338	.486	.348

POS 20

0

0

* Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 6.2 shows the two models analyzed in this research, one with career advancement aspiration as a dependent variable, and the other with turnover intention, and the mediating effect of job satisfaction. Although the R^2 for the models indicate that each is a good fit, explaining some of the variance, the model for turnover intention, has failed the parallelism test, therefore its coefficients cannot be taken into consideration. An important note regarding interpretation of Table 6.2 is that estimates, which are the ordered log-odds (logistic) regression coefficients, indicate the predicted change in probability of being in a higher category on the dependent variable. A positive value is positively related to probabilities of falling at a higher level of the dependent variable. A negative value instead is negatively related to probabilities of falling at a higher level of the dependent variable.

A score of 17 POS for women advancement is a significant positive predictor of career advancement aspiration. Women who hold a supervisory and managerial role, who scored a 17 (coefficient .759), which indicates a quite high level of POS, are more likely to indicate a higher aspiration to advance their careers. The increased coefficient, compared to the coefficient of the model without job satisfaction, indicates a partial mediating effect of job satisfaction. This result suggests that women, who perceive that their organization is supportive of their advancement and are satisfied with their job, report an increased aspiration to advance their careers and achieve executive roles within the organization. These findings indicate that women's aspiration to advance their careers is influenced by whether their organizational environment is supportive of such aspiration and is enhanced by higher satisfaction with their job. Hence, the perception of

organizational support specific to women who aspire to advance their careers matters for their actual advancement, and what increases women’s aspirations to achieve executive roles is a job that they enjoy.

Table 6.2

Results of ordinal Logistic Regression on Career Advancement Aspirations and Turnover Intentions when Job Satisfaction is entered

	Career Advancement Aspiration		Turnover Intention	
	Estimates	SE	Estimates	SE
POS 4	2.453*	.724	1.238*	.621
POS 5	2.244*	.675	.063	.606
POS 6	1.166	1.063	.300	.984
POS 7	-.217	.491	1.415*	.520
POS 8	.726	.419	1.390*	.427
POS 9	.456	.434	.819	.437
POS 10	.722	.387	1.076*	.390
POS 11	1.068*	.368	.209	.385
POS 12	.405	.311	.668*	.318
POS 13	.291	.401	.252	.437
POS 14	-.212	.380	-.597	.406
POS 15	.317	.362	.075	.371

POS 16	.286	.254	.051	.259
POS 17	.759*	.349	.253	.359
POS 18	.507	.550	-1.505*	.703
POS 19	.235	.340	.427	.349
POS 20	0		0	

* Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 6.3 shows the two models analyzed in this research, one with career advancement aspiration as a dependent variable and the other with turnover intention and the mediating effect of employer satisfaction. Although the R^2 for the models indicates that each is a good fit, explaining some of the variance, the model for turnover intention has failed the parallelism test; therefore, its coefficients cannot be taken into consideration. An important note regarding the interpretation of Table 6.3 is that estimates, which are the ordered log-odds (logistic) regression coefficients, indicate the predicted change in probability of being in a higher category on the dependent variable. A positive value is positively related to probabilities of falling at a higher level of the dependent variable. A negative value instead is negatively related to probabilities of falling at a higher level of the dependent variable.

A score of 17 POS for women's advancement is a significant positive predictor of career advancement aspiration. Women who hold a supervisory and managerial role, who scored a 17 (coefficient .825), which indicates a quite high level of POS, are more likely to indicate a higher aspiration to advance their careers. The increased coefficient for POS 17, compared to its coefficient of the model without employer satisfaction, indicates a partial and more substantial mediating effect of employer satisfaction compared to the mediating effect of job satisfaction on

the relationship between POS and women’s career advancement aspiration. This result suggests that women who perceive that their organization is supportive of their advancement and are satisfied with their employer report an even higher aspiration to advance their careers and achieve executive roles within the organization, indicating also that employer satisfaction has a more significant mediating effect than job satisfaction. These findings indicate that women’s aspirations to advance their careers are not only influenced by the support received from the organization but also reinforced by higher satisfaction with their employer. Hence, it is not only organizational support that is specific to women who tend to aspire to advance their careers that matters for their actual advancement, but what also increases women’s aspirations to achieve executive roles is their satisfaction with their employer, which ultimately emphasizes the fundamental role that the organizational environment, its dynamics, policies, and procedures play in shaping the aspirations of women to advance their careers within their organization.

Table 6.3

Results of ordinal Logistic Regression on Career Advancement Aspirations and Turnover Intentions when Employer Satisfaction is entered

	Career Advancement Aspiration		Turnover Intention	
	Estimates	SE	Estimates	SE
POS 4	2.636*	.716	1.184	.615
POS 5	2.332*	.674	-.103	.608
POS 6	1.501	1.061	.102	.975

POS 7	.072	.499	1.036*	.527
POS 8	.968*	.426	1.148*	.432
POS 9	.667	.444	.547	.447
POS 10	.818*	.389	.912*	.392
POS 11	1.275*	.376	-.054	.393
POS 12	.486	.314	.531	.321
POS 13	.404	.404	.112	.442
POS 14	-.171	.380	-.659	.407
POS 15	.364	.363	.007	.373
POS 16	.347	.256	-.062	.262
POS 17	.825*	.351	.123	.361
POS 18	.490	.550	-1.480*	.702
POS 19	.318	.342	.314	.352
POS 20	0		0	

* Significant at the 0.05 level

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter concludes this research. First, it briefly describes the scope of this research, summarizes its main findings, and then proceeds by discussing theoretical, policy, and practical implications. This chapter ends by describing the limitations of the study and presenting some suggestions for future research.

Scope of research

Despite women being nearly half of the workforce, they are still not represented in senior management positions (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Out of frustration, women who already hold supervisory or managerial positions quit (Belkin, 2003) or simply stall in their careers, as they do not aspire to advance to senior management positions (Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007). Voluntary turnover of employees who already have experience in supervisory and managerial positions is not favorable to organizations, as it affects costs and workflow (Hellman, 1997), stalling of women at the supervisory and managerial level, is also detrimental to the organization, as women in senior management positions lead to positive financial (Catalyst, 2004) and ethical (Bell et al., 2002) results. This tenacious trend of underrepresentation of women in senior managerial roles was what prompted this research.

Summary of Findings

This research has tried to understand turnover intentions and career advancement aspirations of female supervisors and managers employed by the U.S. Federal Government. Specifically, this research has sought to achieve a better understanding of the relationship

between perceived organizational support for women's advancement and turnover intention and career advancement aspiration, by also considering the mediating role of job and employer satisfaction based on theoretical grounds by applying social exchange theory and social cognitive theory and empirical research that links the variables examined in this study.

Based on a review of the literature on women in the workplace, the obstacles women face in the workplace, public administration, and management, this study identified POS for women's advancement, turnover intention, career advancement aspiration, job satisfaction, and employer satisfaction as its main variables. POS for women's advancement was a new construct introduced by Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006) that borrowed its premises from the general construct of POS (perceived organizational support, Eisenberger et al. 1986) and was a less general construct since it captured how women perceive the efforts the organization makes to support their advancement, in terms of policies, practices, and programs. POS would posit that the perception of support would create an obligation in employees to remain loyal to the organization. The same assumption was considered regarding the relationship between POS for women's advancement and women's turnover intentions and career advancement aspirations, however the latter variable was less explored in the literature as an outcome of POS, and its relationship with POS for women's advancement mainly was deduced from the theoretical framework.

Employer satisfaction was also a newer construct as opposed to job satisfaction which has been amply studied in the literature (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Employer satisfaction was deemed of particular importance when exploring organizational support as it does not relate to specific jobs and work environments. Still, it refers instead to the wider organizational context, policies, practices, and programs, and for these reasons, it was hypothesized to have a direct and a more robust mediating effect on turnover intentions and career advancement

aspirations, if an employee is not satisfied with their job, they may be able to switch jobs and advance to a higher role within the same organization, if the employee is satisfied with their employer, the same option is not available to employees who may be satisfied with their job but not with their employer, their only choice may be to leave the organization and their chance to advance their career.

The perception of lack of organizational support for women's advancement is related to career advancement aspirations. However, the results of the analyses performed on the relationship between POS for career advancement and turnover intentions, mediated by employer and job satisfaction were found to be non-significant. Employer satisfaction and job satisfaction's effect on career advancement aspirations were both found to be non-significant. Employer satisfaction had a stronger mediating effect than job satisfaction, although both mediator variables were found to partially mediate the relationship between POS for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations. While the findings of this research emphasize the complexity of the relationship between the organizational context, its policies, practices, programs, and important individual organizational outcomes, it is essential to point out that the effect sizes of POS on career advancement aspirations are small.

Even though the effect size between these two constructs is small, the mediating effect of employer and job satisfaction is still valuable. This study still highlights the importance of organizational support for women's advancement, in terms of equal respect, of value for different perspectives and inputs, of standards the organizations may communicate to its employees in a clear or subtle manner, and finally in terms of actual promotion of non-traditional individuals to management positions. It also highlights the reinforcing effect of employer

satisfaction on women's career choices, especially those concerning their advancement into senior management roles.

Theoretical Implications

This research brings a significant contribution to public administration theory. First, this research used two new constructs introduced by Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006) perceived organizational support for women's advancement and employer satisfaction. According to Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006), POS for women's advancement is related to Eisenberger's (1977) POS, and for women to aspire to advance their career and not quit their positions, the perception of support from their organization will be more important than a general construct of support, therefore career advancement support affects advancement aspirations more strongly. Other studies instead have mainly focused on the general construct of POS as a key predictor of several organizational outcomes and particularly of turnover intention (Dawley et al., 2010, Maertz et al.; 2007), therefore this study contributes to the establishment of POS for women's advancement as an important construct in literature.

Job satisfaction is a widely studied factor in the literature (Spector, 1997). Job satisfaction mainly relates to characteristics of one's job (salary, benefits, workload, promotion) and the environment in which one performs their job (work team, management). Organizations also provide employees with a wide array of other factors that affect employees and generate certain reactions that are not influenced by their perception of their job. These factors range from flexible work arrangements, family-friendly policies, mentoring and sponsorship opportunities, wellness programs. Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006) construct of employer satisfaction is based on the perception the employee forms about these other organizational factors, and on their

consequential reactions to it, which this study has considered worth it to further investigate and consider as the aim is to understand how the organizational environment affects women's career choices. Employer satisfaction was indeed more strongly related to career advancement aspirations than job satisfaction was, and a stronger mediating effect was indeed encountered in the relationships between POS for women's advancement and career aspirations.

This study attempted to replicate Jawahar and Hemmasi's work (2006) and expand it by testing their assumptions and constructs on career advancement aspirations of women who hold supervisory and managerial positions, which is considered an important contribution to the theory because it narrows the scope of the research and aims to specifically understand the career aspirations of that part of female workforce who is found more likely to stall or quit their job.

Although the literature has extensively focused on the obstacle women face at work, especially when trying to advance their careers (Einarsdottir et al., 2018; Eagly and Carli, 2007), scholarship has not focused much on career advancement aspiration, especially of women in middle management positions, and particularly as an outcome of the organizational environment. This research has instead attempted to shift the focus of attention towards the characteristics of the organizational environment and their effects on women's career aspirations, and to this end, this research has borrowed Tharenou and Terry's (1998) concept of desired aspiration from their dual-faceted construct of managerial aspiration.

Despite the lack of interest in how the organizational environment may affect the career aspirations of women in Public Administration research, this research provides a logical framework based on literature review and an empirical examination of the model proposed. Although the relationship between POS for women's advancement and turnover intention was

not supported, the findings certainly emphasize the role of organizational support for women's career advancement aspirations, and they suggest greater importance of employer satisfaction.

Policy Implications

Although the United States government is prioritizing the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, little progress has been made, especially in the workplace where women still earn less than men, still occupy job roles and fields that are low-paying and low-skilled and leave their job at higher rates than men do. Federal and local government have engaged in efforts to increase transparency within the organization, Equal Pay and Transparency Protection are an example of those efforts. Federal and local efforts, unfortunately, lack concrete action against gender discrimination, agencies may be required to be transparent about their salary policy and distribution. Still, directions about how to report their salary data and increase transparency often are lacking, agencies should be required to report their controlled wage gap data, controlled by gender, race, experience, education, to name a few characteristics that may contribute to salary discrimination. A defined, carefully detailed, and uniform approach to report gender discrimination should be required by the Federal government.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg argued that for all to thrive freely, it was necessary to dismantle patriarchy. She particularly fought against patriarchy. In 1970, Justice Ginsburg represented a man who had been taking care of his elderly mother, who had been denied a tax deduction solely because he was not married. Justice Ginsburg proved that gender discrimination hurts both men and women and is a consequence of laws and policies written by men that reflect a patriarchal and stereotypical society. Women are often considered the caregiver in their

families, whether that is taking care of children, of parents, or even just of a partner, and that places them at a disadvantage, especially in the workplace as they are often asked, or expected to balance their career and their role as caregiver, to take on roles less demanding or to give up their careers to fulfill society's expectations.

Public administrations, government agencies are recommended to evaluate and revise their policies and assess whether they reflect a stereotypical vision of gender, whether these policies reinforce dynamics that place women at a disadvantage, or whether these policies in the first place create obstacles to women thriving in the workplace. It is not just a matter of having EEOs policies in place, policies that prevent organizations from discriminating against employees based on gender. It is a matter of understanding how the policies, strategies, and procedures that women navigate within the workplace affect their work experience and place them at a disadvantage. It is strongly recommended that organizations apply an intersectional lens when revisiting their internal policies, reviews of policies should consider the language used when describing the role of a senior manager for example, whether the description reflects masculinity or simply uses male pronouns; a policy review should also aim to understand whether they create different expectations for employees based on gender.

This study may provide a justification for public administrations and governments to dismantle the archaic patriarchal organizational system and instead focus on supporting the advancement of women, as the findings suggest that the perception of support positively affects their aspiration to advance to executive roles and that this relationship is mediated and enhanced by employer satisfaction. POS for women's advancement positively affects employer satisfaction which in turn positively affects their career advancement aspirations.

Given this positive mediating influence of employer satisfaction in the relationship between POS for women's advancement and career advancement aspirations which increase the effect of support, public administrations should consider creating ad hoc policies, strategies, and procedures that increase women's employer satisfaction. Organizations can enhance their support for women's advancement by targeting organizational procedures and dynamics that discourage women's advancement, as these dynamics often represent barriers to their career path.

It is then recommended that public administrations and government institutions emphasize their support for the advancement of women by creating and adopting policies, procedures, and strategies that address microaggressions, stereotyping, and bias which are all dynamics that characterize the workplace and that negatively affect the career choices of women, as they, in turn, emphasize a lack of organizational support for such endeavors. Public administrations are also recommended to engage in designing policies that focus on increasing the number of women mentors, creating career paths and career advancement opportunities tailored for women, which instead emphasize organizational support for and acceptance of women in senior management positions.

The underrepresentation of women in senior managerial roles represents a concerning trend. From an organizational perspective, the lack of women in senior management may represent a disadvantage, not only from a financial perspective but mostly from an equity perspective. Lack of support for the advancement of women translates into a devaluation of their roles and contributions within the workplace, leading women not to advance their careers and not to achieve higher-paying jobs. As the findings from this research emphasize, supporting the

advancement of women and enhancing their satisfaction with the employer may increase women's aspiration to advance to executive positions.

Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, this research provides some implications to public administrations that show to enhance women's aspirations to senior management, which would eventually aid in closing the gap between men and women in upper management. Career aspirations are believed to be also influenced by environmental factors (Tharenou, 1990; Riger and Galligan, 1980); therefore, public administrations are recommended to create and provide an organizational environment that would enhance women's aspirations to achieve senior management roles.

Given the positive and direct relationship between POS for women's advancement and senior management aspirations, this research recommends organizations to assess their support or lack of thereof since that is a crucial factor that may influence not only women's aspirations but also dismantle systemic processes that may represent barriers that women must overcome to reach senior management roles. Specifically, public organizations can develop and administer a yearly employee climate survey that includes the scale developed in POS for women's advancement studies to assess their female employees' perception of support.

In addition, public and governmental organizations are recommended to involve senior managers by providing ad hoc training on how to interact and support women's career advancement through the practice of inclusive behaviors, such as valuing women's insights and perspectives.

Also, as gender creates unique sets of expectations inside and outside the organizational environment, in both men and women, organizations are recommended to pay attention to workplace dynamics, culture, and climates that reinforce such expectations and be conscious of them and, to this end, provide tools that counteract the consequences of such expectations which in turn form barriers to senior management, organizations are recommended to introduce systems and techniques such as daily nudges to employees that correct their biased behaviors, and in turn, create and slowly establish habits that aid in dismantling old gender expectations.

Women perceive the constraints of working in a masculine environment. An environment that is created by men for men and, as a result, women are placed outside this masculine environment and to be included they must prove that they possess the same qualities as their male counterparts (Einarsdottir et al., 2018), they must fix their behaviors and attitude according to a masculine idea of management to be perceived as effective as senior managers as their male colleagues. Women must be confident to promote themselves in the workplace; they must be assertive in their decisions, ambitious, part of influential networking events. Women must be constantly and consistently present at work, and they must get through discriminatory processes embedded in work procedures, policies, and structures while at the same time holding the weight and responsibility of a family, which creates a double workload and eventually leads them to stall in their middle-management positions or quit altogether.

In December 2020, the National Women's Law Center reported that 100 percent of the jobs lost were held by women, women lost 156,000 jobs while men gained 16,000 jobs (National Women's Law Center, 2021). One in four women reported in fact that they were considering decreasing their work responsibilities or leaving their job because of the pandemic and of the responsibility of the family placed entirely on them (Connley, 2021).

Women give up because of the challenges to senior management the workplace presents. These challenges are invisible and deeply embedded into the environment that they barely feel real. This is why the literature often suggests to women to lean in, to fix their attitudes and approaches to management, and assimilate the “masculine way” of management. Indeed, women who hold senior management positions often have adopted masculine styles of management (Kolb, 2009). Still, women who assimilate such styles are not typical, and this strategy has clearly not worked to adjust the gap between the career paths of men and women. Organizations must be accountable for the challenging organizational environments they provide to women and fix their practices, strategies, and policies to value each employee’s contributions and support the careers of every employee regardless of their gender.

Educated and professional women experience a lack of appreciation, utilization, and value of their work. Organizations’ lack of support for the advancement of women is likely to contribute to the persistence of the underrepresentation of women in senior management roles, which has societal and organizational consequences (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Women who perceive a lack of support leave organizations to start their own career journey but given the high chances of failure of such initiatives, only a few women succeed (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Reentering the workforce is also challenging, only 74 percent of women make it back into the workforce (Hewlett and Luce, 2005). Women leaving the workforce creates a void of role models, sponsors, and mentors that future generations of women need to aspire to senior management positions. Turnover and stalling of women in middle management positions not only hurt organizations, present and future generations of working women in tangible ways, but they also cause dangerous societal consequences for present and future generations of employees in general who, by obliging to masculine organizational cultures will eventually reinforce and

perpetuate inequitable systems of marginalization and delay the progress and achievement of equality.

Limitations

This study certainly has several limitations. This study was performed on secondary data, which, for some variables, meant an approximate measurement, especially for career advancement aspiration, as very few studies have attempted to measure it. Another limitation of this study is the self-reported nature of the responses, which may cause a bias that may affect the results.

Most studies found in the literature review use linear regression (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006; Litzky and Greenhaus, 2007; Ellinas et al., 2018; Dawley et al., 2010) to analyze the relationships between the variables of interest, and although data is collected using Likert scale items, ordinal variables, scholars often compute scores changing the nature of the variable and, allowing them to proceed with linear logistic regression. Since this study uses secondary data, variable measurement is limited to the items that the survey has already collected. For this study, both dependent and mediating variables were measured using a single item, which did not allow for the computation of a score, which is why an ordinal logistic regression was performed.

When using only one item, there is a possibility of measurement error which poses a threat to the internal validity and reliability of the measure, if the item does not entirely reflect a construct (Resh et al., 2021). The analysis performed on turnover intention lacked significance or failed the assumptions tests, which leads to the conclusion that this dependent variable may not have been properly measured.

This study is also limited to a sample of all-female employees in supervisory and managerial positions, which may also be a strength of this study, as the scope was to understand what affects women's career choices, given the persistent underrepresentation of women in senior managerial roles.

Future Research

Future research should focus on strengthening the measurement of the variables employed in this research, especially considering that two of the prominent and most influential constructs are new to the literature: POS for women's advancement and employer satisfaction.

Employer satisfaction particularly is less established in the literature; therefore, it needs further testing, especially considering that its mediating effect was found to be stronger than job satisfaction.

Future research should apply an intersectional lens and focus on understanding women of color and other identity groups' career advancement aspirations and turnover intentions, as they may face additional challenges to career advancement.

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