








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Re/positioning Women in Educational Leadership

The Changing Social Relations and Politics of Gender in Australia

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WOMEN AND THEIR underrepresentation in leadership are recurrent “problems” in education. But this is part of a wider political and increasingly economic problem in “globalized” democratic societies. This chapter first provides the historical context for gender equity reform in Australia. The relationship between feminism as an epistemological and political movement vis-à-vis the state and the individual shapes equity discourses and organizational practices as well as research on gender and leadership. History also indicates that there is no simple linear progress toward gender equity. Context and policy shape the possibilities and practices of educational leadership, both formal and informal.

I then outline the most recent “re/positioning” of women with regard to educational leadership in schools and universities over the past decade. I identify issues around the discursive construction in policy and practice of gender and educational leadership in high-risk and low-trust times, arguing that increasing the representation of women in leadership is no longer an adequate measure of success. Finally, I map out a feminist research agenda that seeks to advance thinking and research about gender and leadership in the context of emerging challenges to contemporary education.

AUSTRALIAN GENDER EQUITY REFORM: RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

During the 1970s, with the rise of the new social movements in most Western democracies, feminists were able to exert external pressure on a newly elected Australian Labour federal government to address patterns of discrimination against women and girls identified by research. The positioning of “femocrats” (feminist bureaucrats) within the federal and state governments (similar to the state feminism of Scandinavian countries) led to gender equity legislation and policies nationally, including women’s budgets and audits, a practice replicated at the state government level in the 1980s. As in the United States and UK, within a liberal feminist theoretical frame Equal Employment

Opportunity (EEO) policies initially focused on removing legal and structural barriers and gaining equal pay with the intent that individual women could access organizations and therefore positional leadership (e.g., principalship and deanship). Such policies were quickly adopted in education, then seen to be a major site of social change, employment of and equity for women. Investment in public education by the welfare state was viewed to have individual and public benefits.

Identity politics around difference during the 1980s aligned with feminist theories focusing on women’s ways of being and doing. Previously, leadership research had been by men on men in leadership, producing dominant notions of particular forms of masculinity as the leadership norm—being rational, unemotional and objective.

This “cultural feminist” approach re/positioned women as offering a positive contribution to organizational life, rather than the earlier deficit and psychological view that women as a group lacked the necessary skills, vision and aspirations. Drawing from the wider theoretical debates over educational change and organizational cultures, feminists focused on changing “masculinist culture(s)” as sites of male resistance to gender equity with the aim to make them more “inclusive” of alternative models of leadership. Feminist scholarship also drew on theorizations of the social relations of gender and how different masculinities (homosexual, working class, etc.) and femininities (emphasized feminism, lesbianism, etc.) were created in relation to each and relative to the norm of dominant “hegemonic masculinities” (Connell, 1995, Kenway et al., 1998).

Internationally, Australian feminists and femocrats were key players in organizations of the global women’s movement such as Unifem, developing strategies for, and measures of, gender equity, as well as providing exemplars of how equity policy can be developed through the state, such as women’s budgets (Sawer, 1999).

At the same time, the discourse of women’s style of leadership was readily co-opted and incorporated into

EEO policies to either complement or soften “hard” masculinist cultures (see, for instance, Blackmore, 1992). While EEO strategies successfully improved the skills and raised the aspirations of individual middle-class women during the 1980s, the gendered images of leadership and the “masculinist” cultures of educational bureaucracies remained intact (Lingard and Limerick, 1995). While empowering for women collectively, this cultural feminist discourse treated women (and men) as a unified group, with little regard for racial, ethnic, class and indeed value differences among women (and men) (see also Reay and Ball, 2003).

Under the pressure of globalization, neoliberal reforms of the 1990s saw significant shifts by Australian federal and state Labour governments toward “economic rationalism” and “corporate managerialism.” Femocrats, gender equity practitioners and educators in general were increasingly marginalized by the twin mantras of efficiency and effectiveness. Educational restructuring, in the form of devolution of risk and responsibility for outcomes to locally competing units, such as self-managing schools, did not deliver the promise of increased autonomy. Instead, devolution was accompanied by stronger policy frames and external accountability to government with the reassertion of executive management and to volatile student markets.

This cycle of policy-delivery-accountability produced cultures of performativity, leading individuals and institutions to increasingly focus on outward performance as measured against multiple performance indicators, such as standardized tests rather than internal improvement. Simultaneously, schools and universities were experiencing intensified consumer demand to meet the needs of cultural and educational diversity arising from increased retention in schools, the masculinification of higher education after the unification of colleges with universities in 1989, and the emergence of international students as a new source of income for universities and schools (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007). Leadership was seen to be invested in executive positions, and the success of the leader was equated to the success of the school or university (Thomson, 1999).

The trend toward privatization and marketization of public education (universities and schools) accelerated with the election of the socially conservative but economically neoliberal Howard federal government in 1996. Howard sought to re-regulate the social by reconnecting Australian national identity to a narrow and nostalgic version of the nuclear family and border protection against refugees, and deregulate the

economy with attacks on unionized collective bargaining. The federal equity infrastructure was steadily dismantled and the funding of the Status of Women’s Office was radically reduced, although the office was retained for its “symbolic value” but with weak monitoring powers (Hancock, 1999). Women who went out to work or relied on welfare were denigrated for not being good mothers. Yet due to the re-privatization of the costs of health and education, women were forced to enter a more casualized and deregulated labor market just to maintain familial class status at the same time child care was privatized.

Gender equity policy also significantly changed focus away from its move toward considering the social relations of gender and different modes of masculinity and femininity and toward boys’ academic underachievement. This was fueled by the federal policy emphasis on outcomes and standards as mechanisms of control over teachers and state governments (Lingard and Douglas, 1999; Mills, Martino and Lingard, 2004).

The backlash against feminism merged with the “crisis in masculinity” discourse, mobilized by the media, the federal government, numerous parliamentary inquiries and a small lobby of male activists who saw boys as victims of feminism (Blackmore, 1997; Lingard, 2003). Together with the privatization of education arising from federal funding policies favoring “user pays” and private schools relative to public universities and schools, the effect has been a polarization of wealth and poverty, increased concentration of poverty, poor health, inadequate educational and community infrastructure, unemployment and educational underachievement. In 2007, one in five Australian children lived in poverty.

These moves regressed previous feminist equity work theoretically and politically. Politically, the “what about the boys and men” school of thought coincided with Howard’s conservative social agenda and diverted attention from the impact of poverty, rurality and indigeneity on educational achievement. The femocrats fled, or were expelled, from the chilly climate of educational bureaucracies now driven by accountability of the public service up to their political masters to whom they were “contracted” rather than to “the public” (Taylor, 1997).

Feminist academic-teacher connections were lost as all felt the brunt of restructuring and intensification of labor. Equity units in many state governments that worked for such groups as indigenous populations, girls and women, persons of low socioeconomic status, students with disabilities and so on were dissolved

and mainstreamed (Sawer, 1999). The policy discourse shifted from equal opportunity and social justice to a more individualized discourse of diversity (Bacchi, 2000). In the area of theory, the 1990s were also a period in which feminists were enticed by poststructuralism and its focus on identity because of its linguistic sophistication and explanatory power with regard to the experiences of individual women and women leaders. But the poststructuralist focus on identity, language, and text and the contradictions, ambivalences and contestations between the multiplicity of leadership identities and discourses distracted from the wider and highly gendered economic and material restructuring of education and the professions that was gendered (Dillabough and Acker, 2003; Pyke and Ward, 2003).

Paradoxically, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the discourse is about lifelong learning, innovation and teacher leadership. Yet teachers and academics, schools and universities endure increased regulation through the disciplinary technologies of market and managerial accountability as well as the intensification of work and precarious tenure. The institutional flexibility necessary for survival in local, national and international education markets is now contingent on labor flexibility, exemplified in the casualization of educational labor in Victoria schools increasing from 8% to 16% and in universities from 8% to 30% since 1996 (AVCC, 2005). This is not about family-friendly workplaces, but rather encourages increased expectations for unpaid overtime, which invades private lives. In 2006, the latest Gender Equity Index report indicates that with regard to democracy and women's position in Australian society, women are, as in the United States, in a regressive position relative to a decade ago. Australia has been listed by the ILO (International Labour Organization) in 2007 in the top 20 countries where workers are at risk. What does this mean for the possibilities for individual women in leadership, the gender politics of education as a field and the gender micropolitics of educational organizations?

THE POSITION OF WOMEN LEADERS IN AUSTRALIA

Restructuring during the 1990s meant government school systems and the higher education sector (38 universities) tapped into the growing pool of female aspirants fired up by equal opportunity programs and feminist discourses about women leading organizational change. So how have we progressed? Broadly across government, nongovernmental organizations

(NGOs) and business, there is ongoing underrepresentation. Women in Australia in 2005 are still not well represented in executive positions in industry (only 3%) and parliaments (28% federal government, 27% New South Wales, 30% Victoria, and 43% in the Australian Capital Territory), with women being 28% of federal ministers in the Howard government, which has generated the backlash against feminism and undermined women's working and familial conditions.

In local government, previously an avenue for women's political careers, women average 25% of local councilors. Women are still on average only 37% of the judiciary (EOAW, 2005). In education, with regard to organizational position and power, women in higher education (HE) are still largely concentrated in the lower nontenured ranks as lecturers and senior lecturers and in marginalized contract or casual positions as assistant lecturers and research assistants, as they were in 1992 (Castleman, Allen, Battalich and Wright, 1995). Table 10.1 indicates that restructuring HE with a focus on quality and research has meant that more males *and* females are in professorial positions, in part as universities seek to attract research leadership.

What these full-time employment (FTE) figures in HE do not show is the actual high rate of part-time work undertaken by female academics (Probert et al., 1998, p. 62). Research performance of senior tenured staff is invisibly supported by numerous contracted research assistants, whose job positions are largely undefined but who often work as tenured staff's domestic as well as academic laborers (Reay, 2000; Bell and Bentley, 2005). At the same time, there has been a numerical feminization of teachers in HE, with the proportion of women employed full time rising from 33% in 1996 to 40% in 2005.

Paradoxically, the most significant rise has been at the executive level in HE. In 2005, of the 38 universities, three had female chancellors and 11 had female vice chancellors (up from two vice chancellors

Table 10.1. Percentage Distribution of Academic Staff, Australian Universities, by Gender

Full-time estimated Level	1996		2005	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
A Tutor	29	14	26	15
B Lecturer	45	21	41	29
C Senior lecturer	18	28	21	26
D Associate Professor	5	14	7	14
E Professor	2	11	5	15
	100	100	100	100

Source: Australian Vice Chancellors Committee, 2006.

in 1995 and six in 1999)(AVCC, 2005). In 2002, 24% of the 153 deputy and pro vice chancellors and 37% of the senior administrative staff were women (AVCC, 2002). This was the effect of the escalated expansion of the middle management infrastructure of teaching and research in universities encouraging academics to market and meet external accountability and quality requirements. Of the 66 Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes, 19 had female directors compared to four in 1995. Yet the numbers of senior academic women remain low, with full female professors, like vice chancellors, being predominantly white, middle class, in their 50s, living with a partner and with children, a profile not representative of the ethnic diversity of Australia (Ward, 2000). More women remain at associate professor level, dispirited, worn out or stuck in the multiplying number of administrative positions that are proliferating as part of the multi-tasking required of academic leadership; for instance, international students, teaching and learning, and the like are proliferating in more managerialized universities (White, 2003).

One explanation for the low numbers of female professors is that it is faster for women to take the managerial rather than research track to get a promotion. Achieving a research chair requires negotiating careful career moves such as establishing a career before children, completing a doctorate before becoming an academic, doing a post-doctorate fellowship rather than being an early career researcher and teaching at the same time (Currie, Thiele and Harris, 2002; White, 2003). Those who seek promotion or get promoted into executive levels of university management tend to be those who meet the male norm or who fit a particular model and have survived previous positions within the HE culture with little opportunity or little desire to challenge the dominant models of corporate leadership (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007; Currie, Thiele and Harris, 2002).

Against the HE situation, women seem to have progressed relatively better in schools. In state schools in 2005, women were 62% of principals (principal and assistant principal, primary and secondary) in the Australian Capital Territory, 42% in New South Wales, 53% in Northern Territory, 43% in Queensland, 49% in South Australia, 48% in Tasmania, 46% in Victoria and 38% in Western Australia (AEU, 2005). Women now constitute over 74% of the teaching force, compared to 70% in 1996, fueling concerns about the lack of men, particularly in primary schools (Mills et al., 2004). But as with the academy, teachers are still a homogenous middle class and white workforce.

The South Australian Department of Education cites 5.8% of employees born overseas compared to 20.3% of the general population and 1.23% of Australian and Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI) employees (many of them Aboriginal education workers) compared to 2% benchmark (Department ECS, 2005, p. 58). The Department of Education in New South Wales (the largest and most populous state) in 2005 cited that 1.4% of its employees were from ATSI background, 12% from racial, ethnic and ethno-religious minority groups, and 11% from a non-English-speaking background (NESB).

Yet as with universities, women teachers are in more precarious work situations. In New South Wales, women in 2005 constituted 70% of all full-time and part-time staff (up from 68% in 2001; 65% of the permanent full-time positions; 91% of permanent part-time; 74% of temporary full-time; and 85% of temporary part-time. At the upper end, in 2002 women were 33% of the senior executive service level and seven of the 46 district superintendents, critical positions with regard to the selection of principals (NSW Department of Education, 2003). There continues to be an ongoing gender differential between primary and secondary, as indicated by Victoria in 2005 where women constituted 50% of primary principals and 83% of primary teachers; 42% of secondary principals and 60% of secondary teachers (DE&T Annual Report, 2004–2005). The Catholic sector (20% of all Australian students) has the highest ratio of women principals, this sector being more amenable to women leaders with its history of nuns as principals, although always under the paternalistic gaze of the local parish priest and bound by Catholicism's patriarchal view of leadership.

As women get to the same levels as their male managers, resistance can become the ploy (Burton, 1998). Dispersal of responsibility downward also shifts responsibility for action away from the executive level. Yet evidence suggests that it is the lack of political will on the part of executives in universities and schools to commit to equality for women that is a major obstacle (Sinclair, 1998).

Then there is the localized belief of many men in particular, that women have done well and were indeed advantaged due to gender equity policies despite systemic patterns indicating the contrary: women's experience that they are not doing well (Castleman, Allen, Battalich and Wright, 1995; Currie, Thiele and Harris, 2002). Evidence from interviews with middle managers suggests ongoing discrimination because women

have discontinuity in careers, familial responsibilities, and the like (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007). A dominant feature of universities during the 1990s, Currie et al. argue, was the normalization of the male culture of competitive individualism, a “blokiess” that makes men feel comfortable and women excluded, a culture in which men’s sexuality is ruled in and women’s sexuality ruled out (e.g., child care, breastfeeding) (Cheslerman, Ross-Smith and Peters, 2004; Eveline, 1998). While largely invisible, this culture is normalized and indeed exacerbated in the field of education, which has become highly politicized and managed because education is now seen to be critical to knowledge-based economies.

Finally, there are new phases of restructuring in schools and universities emerging with pressures resulting from international “quality assurance” and professional standards movements. The approaching Australian Research Quality Framework has the potential to create new hierarchies. Women in all education sectors often enter the field late, experiencing career discontinuity, and so will be further disadvantaged by such quality regimes (Morley, 2001).

In aggregation, these factors mean that women are moving into leadership to manage downsizing, outsourcing and casualization of an increasingly feminized education labor force working under more precarious and underresourced conditions at a time of intensification of labor and increased surveillance. Women principals in schools and as vice chancellors in universities tend to be concentrated in the more difficult to staff and less resourced institutions seeking to meet the needs of more diverse student populations, compared to more selective elite schools and universities. Thus through choice and selection, the burden of equity continues to lie with individual women rather than men, systems or the state.

It is risky for both men and women who resist the managerial discourse, as the bottom line is ultimately about institutional survival in national and international markets that rank and reward in increasingly simplistic and reductionist ways—on student evaluations or test scores, market reputation, abstracted notions of quality of research, or just money won. At the middle management level, where many women are now located, many women simultaneously resist and comply with the regimes of performativity. All are in some ways complicit through better managing themselves and others to reach organizational objectives while also seeking to mobilize the discourses in more equity-oriented ways, accommodating, rejecting

and revising what they can at the local level (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007). Many women thrive in this entrepreneurial and managerial context, some with little regard for their female or male colleagues, being more committed to their own self-advancement than equity for others. In the lower ranks, there is significant dissatisfaction and alienation among women as public universities and schools rely on the unfunded overtime and commitment and goodwill of their staff to maintain quality, at risk to teachers’ and academics’ health, well-being and family life (Probert, 2001b).

At the same time, some things have changed. During the 1990s, EEO policies successfully led to increased numbers of women in middle management: principal and assistant principal class, deans and heads of school. While there is weak central monitoring of EEO outcomes, equity is often the outcome of self-regulating universities, for example, which seek to be perceived as EEO employers at a time when it is difficult to attract quality academics. Similarly, schools are undergoing redesign in order to be able to better prepare students for the twenty-first century. Teachers are now seen to be the critical factor in improving student outcomes. Teacher leadership is an emerging discourse within school reform that recognizes, as feminists have long argued, that many people do leadership, and that leadership is a collective and relational practice, whereas positional leadership is often reduced to management. But as most equity researchers argue, it is the capacity of EEO to be so readily incorporated into the process and procedurally driven management frame that is its major weakness and strength.

EQUITY ISSUES

The overarching question is whether women’s representation in leadership is an adequate measure of progress within the current re-formation of gender within globalized economies. Furthermore, what is the role of the “post-welfare” state with regard to gender equity? What types of strategies are required within institutions and within education in more deregulated times?

Policy Frames

Policies in the 1980s recognized that there was systemic structural and cultural disadvantage that required remediation. EEO policies provided a language and legitimization of reform for women and by women. Much professional development and equal opportunity policy continues to focus on changing the status of women by adopting similar practices that have

worked for men. Currie et al. point out (2002, p. 82) that unless the “peak male culture” in executive positions in universities or in education bureaucracies recognizes that discrimination is often intangible, and that male advantage is likewise invisible and unnamed, then a major cultural shift will not occur.

Diversity as a Conceptual Strategy

What gender equity practitioners know is that naming the problem is critical (Bacchi, 2000). The 1990s have seen the language of equal opportunity, social justice and equity supplanted by that of diversity, but with what effect? Diversity is more descriptive than normative. Diversity therefore fits well within the neoliberal framework of the individual’s right of choice as the primary mechanism of distribution of educational resources (Blackmore, 2005). With the corporatization of education, the discourse of diversity has been readily appropriated for its symbolic value: diversity is productive in that it mobilizes all talent within an organization as long as it does not challenge the dominant economic mode of operations, the entrepreneurial cultures or strategic leadership.

The lack of diversity in educational leadership is problematic, not merely because it is counterproductive within a culturally diverse society, but also because excluding the voices of “the other” questions the legitimacy of democratic institutions (Sinclair, 2000b).

Disengagement and Alienation from Leadership

Numerous reports on teacher and principal as well as academic demand and supply indicate that governments face ongoing shortages in part due to demographics with the retirement of the large baby boomer cohort (Blackmore, Thomson and Sachs, 2006). But research in Australia as elsewhere indicates that there is a “disengagement” with leadership seen in diminished numbers of applicants for formal leadership positions in schools and in universities, and that women in particular are tending toward refusal (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007; Gronn and Rawlings Sanaei, 2003).

Two issues emerge. One is the extent and nature of the workload involved with the principalship and middle management in universities and the physical, emotional as well as ethical cost that it often brings. Resistance to leadership arises out of awareness of teachers and academics of the intense pressure and scrutiny executives and managers experience.

Collectively, performance management, mission statements, strategic plans, outcomes-based education, performance indicators and performance ap-

praisal have produced a subtle but intrusive web of power that captures and exploits the desires of teachers and principals, academics and deans to do well. It also directs their emotional, intellectual and physical energy toward specific and often narrow organizational ends that may not include equity. Add to this political pressures for professional standards and performance-based pay; the media bashing of teachers (lowering standards) and academics (low quality of research); multiple government reports on teaching and teacher education; quality assurance regimes; and teachers’ and academics’ declining rate of pay relative to other professions. When women do get into positional leadership, they undertake the emotional management work of systems in ongoing crisis. In particular, for women with dependent family, the culture of overwork, long hours and the like means exclusion or self-exclusion (Chesterman, Ross-Smith and Peters, 2004, p. 10). Most see formal leadership as being about management, not educational leadership.

The second “turn off” identified in Australian research (as in the UK and United States) is rejection of the implicit and explicit value systems promoted in management and the politicization of education. Positional leadership for many women is perceived as being more about “being good” in alignment with system priorities or market demand rather than “doing good” in alignment with educational principles and what is best for the students and colleagues (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007). Many are passionate about education as a means of social change and personal empowerment and making a difference, with a professional commitment to “the public.” When leadership is limited to individual or organizational success and focused on performativity (i.e., being seen to be doing more for less) they are disinterested (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007; Probert, 2001a; Sinclair, 2006).

Australian research has identified an emerging values dissonance as part of a wider cultural shift in education in which the field has been restructured toward more instrumental and vocational ends. Broadly, education has become an industry and a field subjugated to politics and journalism. Institutionally, there has been a concentration of power in line management and consequent marginalization of the academic and teacher voice. Australian universities became less of a democratic/collegial community of scholars transmitting and expanding knowledge and more a corporate business delivering education *products* (Currie, Thiele and Harris, 2002). This is indicative of how education is being framed by the new contractualism of

educational governance, which positions education as an individual position rather than a public good. This contractualism has implications for the role and responsibilities of educational professionals with regard to “the public” and for how leadership is understood and enacted locally as a democratic or managerial, individual or collective, practice, least of all about social justice in and through education (Blackmore, 1999).

FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA: BEYOND WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP

Feminist researchers in Australia have argued that gender equity for women has stalled, if not regressed (Probert, 2001b). Most agree that gender equity policies have benefited middle-class white women, but even they are now questioning their capacity to effect change.

Politics of Leadership and Gender Research

What is also evident is that mainstream research in educational administration has not been informed by feminist research. The numerical increases of women in leadership (particularly executive leadership) are now seen to mean that all women are equal and the issue of the underrepresentation of women and leadership is resolved. Even the token chapter in many educational administration texts, typical of the 1990s, has disappeared. (There is no such chapter in the 2005 *International Handbook on Educational Administration and Leadership*.) This is indicative of the overall failure of the field to be informed by critical organizational theory outside the field and feminist, black and post-colonial theory within the field that sees organizations as cultural sites structured by the social relations of gender, class and race (e.g., Alvesson and Due Billing, 2002; Aschraft and Mumby, 2004; Hearn, 2002).

Gender Division of Labor

Probert (2001a) argues cogently for the need to review certain mythologies about the nature of “the problem.” She argues that Australian equity reforms have been effective in providing a range of policies and practices (family leave, maternity leave, mentoring, etc.) that seek to reduce structural and cultural discrimination against women.

She cites two dominant explanatory frames for women’s ongoing underrepresentation, one being that unequal outcomes are due to unequal treatment and the second being that women lack human capital in the form of experience and qualifications due to different career choices. Researchers agree that level,

age, full-time work and time out of the labor markets were the most important determinants of the gender salary gap with years worked the strong predictor of level (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007; Probert, 2005, p. 53; Ward, 2001).

Probert suggests that promotion systems in themselves in universities and schools are premised upon merit and provide a range of supports and recognition of women’s position, and that when women do apply they have a higher ratio of success than men who apply more often (Burton, 1998). Women are more likely to get promoted as teaching is recognized and valued in most institutions, but less likely to apply as men are more aggressive about career and self-advancement. Second, while women and men are both affected by casualization, the issue is now the underrepresentation of women in continuing employment because of the difficulty in moving from sessional to continuing (Probert, 2005, p. 53). Women start lower in academic careers (Level A) but generally with lower qualifications (no Ph.D.). They also are less likely to earn a Ph.D. (in University of New South Wales women 52.9% compared to 61.9% of men) or progress beyond Level C (Probert, 2005, p. 53).

Third, the issue is not that women teach more and therefore are unable to do research, as is often claimed, but that both men and women are experiencing higher workloads. Similarly in schools, women are more likely to undertake more professional development than men. The gender difference lies not in formal workloads, but more in the extent of informal work, that is, the emotional management work and welfare/mentoring that women undertake with students and colleagues, which is often not done by male colleagues (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007; Probert, 2005). Thus, the longer in the system, the wider the female/male wage gap, with the greatest gap occurring between ages 40–49 for women, a period which feeds into upper levels of management.

The real problem is that while men and women both experienced the detrimental effects of “greedy organizations,” women also felt intensified domestic demands at home that were not experienced by men (Franzway, 2005; Pocock, 2006). Mobility, extracurricular activities and undertaking the additional responsibilities necessary for promotion are therefore difficult. Those women who become principals tend to have supportive, often retired, partners, are single, and nearly all are without dependent children (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007). The logistics of child care have become too hard for many women to take up leadership

positions given the unrealistic demands (Probert, 2005, p. 68). Multiple factors arising from differential responsibilities to men due to the uneven and unequal distribution of domestic and emotional labor at work and at home therefore affect women's "choices" about formal leadership.

Gender and Difference: Which Women and Which Men?

Much of the research continues to focus on mapping women's location within educational organizations and systems, identifying patterns and obstacles to progress, and on the successes/failures of EEO policies. While this research is important to inform policy, theoretically there have not been significant advances beyond poststructuralist accounts of women leaders experiencing ambiguity, contradiction and ambivalence. Many, regardless of their politics and personal dispositions, readily call upon discourses about women's leadership style in ways that are self-affirming but rarely challenged. There is less research that considers the relationship between leaders and their colleagues. As women increasingly move into positional leadership, there is greater scope and less political damage associated with investigating women leaders who do not "fit" the caring and sharing style and who promote values that are not about equity, and indeed could be seen to be about bullying and intimidation. The field needs to move its focus away from gender difference to consider differences among women such as indigenous, "ethnic," religious and linguistic difference (Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Ngurruwutthun and Stewart, 1996; Oplatka and Hert-Lazarowitz, 2006) and not to privilege gender as the analytical frame.

This would lead to different questions for feminist educational researchers. First, the structures that enable or disable particular career "choices" need to be understood more widely. Discrimination is no longer constrained to workplaces but is part of wider structural and cultural relations between family, work and community that are being reconstituted in ways that simultaneously detraditionalize and retraditionalize gender relations.

This has policy implications that can be mobilized. First, there is a need to redesign the job of leadership to be more inclusive of a range of practices. Until there is a recognition of different structures of leadership (e.g., shared leadership, co-principalships, etc.), there must be a focus on educational leadership, making formal positions less demanding physically, emotionally, intellectually and ethically, or there will continue to be

a leadership supply crisis. This supply crisis could be enduring, as more mobile, well qualified and aspiring women feel less committed to education as a vocation, and since educational work is now less attractive for both academic and teaching women relative to other more family friendly and lucrative jobs. Teaching and research may be episodes in a portfolio career (Blackmore, Thomson and Sachs, 2006).

Second, we need to move beyond current conceptualizations of leadership that equate leadership with formal position. This would mean considering the range of leadership practices in different communities of practice, for instance teacher leadership in schools, academic leadership, but also alternative leader positionalities that derive from black, indigenous and ethnic literature (e.g., AhNee-Benham, 2003; Battiste, 2005; Mabokela, 2007).

Third, research is needed to explore further the significance of the relations between context and leadership practices in order to comprehend how context (policies, politics, location, etc.) shapes the practices of leadership. This involves considering the impact of wider educational reform, the impact of globalized discourses and policies (Lingard, 2006) and how they are conceptualized and implemented, as well as investigating what is happening to education as a profession. As a field, education is increasingly being made subordinate to politics, the media and the economy (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007; Dillabough and Acker, 2002). What does this mean for how women work with/against the nation state and the regionalized state and global policy communities, such as the Office of Education and Child Development (OECD) (Lakes and Carter, 2004)?

Fourth, feminist poststructuralism has theoretically provided a more sophisticated tool to understand the complexities of the positioning of women leaders with regard to multiple subjectivities based on gender, race, class, ethnicity and religion. But in continuing to place gender and identity at the foreground, it has been at some loss to investigate the wider material conditions and specificity of contexts within which leadership is practiced. There is now the need for new theoretical trajectories, such as feminist social geography, to integrate this with feminist materialist theories around the impact of local/global articulations.

Fifth, as we have learned from feminist poststructuralism, essentializing gender will take the analysis no further. The focus on women and not gender has taken this field to its theoretical limit (Alvesson and Due Billing, 2002; Blackmore, 1999; Reay and Ball,

2000). It is critical that feminist and profeminist researchers shift the conceptual focus from women to the social relations of gender, and how different masculinities and femininities are constructed in relation to each other in specific contexts. Issues of race, class, ethnicity and indigeneity then take on significance in understanding leadership in particular situations. The question should be, "Which men and which women are advantaged/disadvantaged within this specific context?" "Which men and which women get to be leaders and why?"

Finally, we need to consider the implications historically, as well as futuristically, of the relations between gender, globalized education and social change. This requires comparative studies that recognize the complexity of gender relations in educational leadership and that identify key issues and strategies, including the local and global, tactical and strategic. Brooks (2006) highlights how globalization has transformed not only the economies of Singapore and Hong Kong but also the social relations of gender in context-specific ways. How are women being located within transnational flows of educational ideas, goods, policies and people and how do these translate into local and transnational practices of educational leadership and gender equity reform as a possible trajectory (Lingard, 2006)? How are notions of leadership shaped by national and diasporic cultures and how will this further transform the social relations of gender (Narayan, 1997)? Add to this the foregrounding of and association between nationalism, citizenship and religion as a mix that has significant potential to inform the micropolitics of gender in schooling and universities.

Feminist academics and researchers need to reconnect with the wider social movements of feminism across nations. Much of the work on women and educational leadership has tended to neglect the impact of feminism as a social, political, economic and transnational movement (Narayan, 1997). This is largely because research has worked within a liberal and arguably masculinist framework of the field of educational administration and leadership. Scholars now need to theorize from postcolonial as well as materialist and poststructuralist perspectives about how the politics of feminism meshes with, interacts with, and subverts research on "women and leadership" (e.g., Tuhiwa Smith, 1999).

As I have indicated, there is no linear progress of equity, and different imperatives for reform have a capacity for both regressive and progressive tendencies for gender equity. While gender equity is ultimately what most researchers and practitioners alike agree is

the intent, how we understand and frame our notions of social justice in globalized societies is yet to be debated (Fraser, 2006).

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