

Three Dilemmas for Academics: Gender Disparities in Scholarship, Teaching, and Service

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Research on gender differences in the allocation and evaluation of three main components of academic work (i.e., research, teaching, and service) is very informative, and we argue that it may point to potential sources of the disparity in academic industrial and organizational (I-O) psychologists' experiences. We also propose the addition of a few issues to the research agenda set forth by Gardner, Ryan, and Snoeyink (2018) with the belief that attention to these issues will help address the gender disparity.

Types of Academic Work and the Focus on Scholarly Productivity

In their evaluation of faculty work at top I-O PhD programs, Gardner et al. (2018) noted that compared to male academics, female academics spend less time on scholarly activities and more time on teaching and service activities. This gender disparity in our field is similar to that of academia in general. Among associate professors at an R-1 institution, men spent over 7 hours more a week on research than women, whereas women taught 1 hour more, mentored students for 2 hours more, and completed 5 hours more of service obligations per week (Misra, Lundquist, Holmes, & Agiomavritis, 2011). Given that with few exceptions, graduate programs use a *scholarship salience* model where scholarship is weighted more heavily than teaching and service across all faculty ranks in promotion and evaluation decisions (Green, 2008), such gender disparities will, in the long run, harm women in terms of productivity assessments and professional visibility. This is evident in the recent report of the most frequently cited authors in I-O textbooks (Aguinis, et al., 2017) and in the faculty composition of top I-O PhD programs (Huffman, Howes, & Olson, 2017) despite no gender disparity in student enrollment in I-O PhD programs.

Such disparities in the nature of scholarship experiences begin during graduate school. Recent female PhDs from an R-1 institution obtained

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relatively fewer research-based graduate assistantships than men; the women were more likely to be assigned teaching assistantships that required them to spend additional hours in the classroom and to find time outside of their assistantships to complete research (Lubienski, Miller, & Saclarides, 2018). Men also reported better relationships with their advisors and more faculty support; in turn, those variables predicted publication submissions. These gender differences in both perceived support and in assistantship assignments could lead to fewer opportunities for women to accumulate relevant research skills and experiences that are key to advancing. Although both teaching and research assistantships provide graduate students with relevant training necessary for academic careers, research assistantships may be more valuable in terms of the economy of opportunities for developing competitive vitae.

The type and quality of the infrastructure provided to new faculty is also important to examine in the context of scholarly productivity. New hires need office and lab space, in addition to funds for equipment. Some universities offer a standard start-up package to new hires, whereas others leave it to new hires to negotiate facilities and equipment. Gender differences in negotiation exist and can lead to systematic variations in starting salaries (Mazei, et al., 2015). It is not surprising then that there are also gender differences in the amount of lab space allocated to faculty (Bailyn, 2003). Although we are unaware of any studies focused on negotiation of academic infrastructure, we suspect that gender differences in the access and attainment of resources can explain at least some variation in scholarly productivity. This should be a substantive area for future research and is one with measurable outcomes that can be changed with systemic interventions.

Evaluations of Academic Work: Teaching Assessments

The metrics used by Gardner et al. (2018) to compare the advancement of faculty in their sample of top I-O PhD programs were mainly research-productivity measures such as citations, fellowships, and editorships. Tenure and promotion decisions may also be influenced by other metrics as well (e.g., teaching ratings, service activities, and perceptions of citizenship behavior), and they should not be overlooked in terms of sources of disparity. We argue that an important hallmark of academic work that contributes to gender differences in how faculty are evaluated are students' assessments of teaching. These evaluations are often given considerable weight in hiring, tenure, and promotion decisions (Green, 2008), even though there is a long and continuing controversy as to whether assessments of teaching are related to student learning (see Uttl, White, & Gonzalez, 2017 for a recent meta-analysis). Of specific concern is that these evaluations appear to be severely biased against women. Several correlational and field experimental

studies have shown that women receive lower teaching evaluations than men (Mengel, Sauermann, & Zolitz, 2018). In a large-scale natural experiment, 20,000 students were randomly assigned to either a section taught by a male or a female professor and then were given similar assignments and a common final exam. Gender biases in student evaluations were readily apparent even after controlling for differences in faculty tenure, rank, and years of service and for student performance on the final exam (Boring, 2017). Cumulative lower teaching evaluations for women could slow their progress toward tenure and promotion, a prototypical case for adverse impact.

In addition, there is discouraging evidence of misogyny in students' comments about female faculty as evidenced on both institutional (Mitchell & Martin, 2018) and third-party, anonymous websites such as *ratemyprofessor.com* (Storage, Horne, Cimpian, & Leslie, 2016). Students may even use these online evaluations to write anonymous threatening comments to female professors (Mitchell, 2017). Such experiences may be related to burnout and slower progress toward promotion and tenure for women (Lackritz, 2004), contributing to the leaky pipeline described by Gardner et al. (2018).

A programmatic approach to research on reducing biases in student evaluations is needed, with a particular focus on building empirical evidence demonstrating the validity of alternative assessments of teaching that do not have adverse impact. I-O faculty should use their expertise to advocate to university administrators for unbiased assessments of teaching by explaining how such adverse impact may lead to liabilities.

Variations in Academic Service Type and Time Allocation

The third major component of academic work that most commonly receives the least weight in tenure and promotion decisions is service, which could be either internal or external in nature and can include university, professional, and community activities. Expectations for time spent on internal service in academia vary across universities and I-O faculty also have frequent opportunities for external professional service, perhaps more than our non-I-O colleagues. These external service projects that arise from discipline-related expertise can be valuable to the extent that they help faculty build professional networks, provide or receive mentoring, and engage in collaborations. In contrast, internal service on administrative committees within one's department or university can be riskier given that this service can be fraught with conflict that may expose committee members to sticky political situations or derail collegial relationships.

Women, and particularly women of color, may be asked more frequently than men to serve on university committees as administrators attempt to improve the diversity of such groups. There is evidence of gender disparities in internal service: Women report performing significantly more university

service than men and spending more time on those assignments (Misra et al., 2011). More specific to I-O faculty, there is evidence of similar disparities for ethnic minority faculty serving on committees within business schools (Minefee, Rabelo, Stewart, & Young, 2018; Treviño, Barkin, & Gomez-Mejia, 2017). As Green (2008) noted, copious amounts of time spent on service can hinder tenure and promotions given the lower weight it typically receives. Outside of formal administrative roles, faculty generally do not receive extra compensation for internal service; rather, accepting internal service assignments is perceived as a display of good citizenship behavior (Guarino & Borden, 2017). Even though women appear to have no greater preference for service than men (Misra et al., 2011), they are more likely to take on these extra assignments. Depending on departmental politics, they may even fear retaliation for refusing an assignment, creating difficult dilemmas for women as they attempt to balance research, teaching, and service responsibilities.

Gender disparities in service appear to be more pronounced for internal than for external service (Guarino & Borden, 2017). This reflects research from corporate settings indicating that women were less likely to be given opportunities to do “glamour work” that could garner outside recognition and the opportunity to stretch their skills, and they instead were more likely to be assigned “office housework” that was administrative in nature or involved emotional labor (Williams & Multhaup, 2018). In the academic context, external service can produce increased visibility that may lead to invited talks, collaborations on grants, and even job offers. Thus, academic women may be at a disadvantage in developing their careers given less time spent on external service relative to time spent in departmental committee meetings.

I-O psychologists have specialized skills that often translate to requests for consulting expertise outside the university. These may either be pro bono or paid projects. We know of no empirical evidence on whether gender disparities exist in the distribution of I-O academic faculty time or compensation for such projects. This could be a fruitful avenue for future research.

Concluding Thoughts on the Importance of Applying I-O to Academic Gender Disparities

We reviewed research in academic settings that highlights gender differences in the allocation of various components of academic work and how one type of academic work, teaching, is evaluated. Gender differences in the distribution of time across the three components of academic work can differentially impact research productivity, and we encourage open and honest dialogue with women faculty about the value of protecting their research time (if that is a highly valued component) and taking on appropriate service assignments. The tendency for female faculty to perform more internal service than their male colleagues is potentially troublesome given that it

reduces the time available for other work activities that are more likely to be noticed and rewarded. It can be difficult for faculty members to determine whether their service load is too heavy, as these norms are often not calculated or shared within or across departments. University administrators might consider making that information more easily available to help women better calibrate expectations and mentors should provide guidance for new faculty regarding appropriate service expectations.

We also emphasize the importance of recognizing that evaluations of faculty teaching often rely too heavily on students' perceptions and are subject to severe biases that may lead to adverse impact. Academic I-Os should not only set the research agenda for developing unbiased assessments of teaching but should also make compelling arguments to university administrators about the risks of using biased instruments in hiring and promotion decisions. I-O psychologists are well-positioned as change makers given our expertise in both assessment and interpersonal dynamics, and we have an opportunity to contribute to the reduction of gender disparity.

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Where Are the Women of Color in I-O Psychology?

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We applaud the efforts of Gardner, Ryan, and Snoeyink (2018) in launching much-needed dialogue on gender representation within the field of industrial and organizational (I-O) psychology. We agree that it is imperative to address inequity in our profession, beginning with an informed assessment of accurate information. However, the focal article did not offer any information on the representation of a group that too often goes unnoticed: women of color.¹

According to the model of intersectional invisibility (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008), women of color are often overlooked because they possess multiple marginalized identities and hence are perceived as non-prototypical members within their own identity groups (e.g., women). As a result, this

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¹ By women of color, we are referring to non-White and/or Hispanic women.