

Intersectionality: Engaging the Epistemology of Leadership Theory

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the potential of linking intersectionality and leadership theories utilizing a theoretical bricolage research strategy. In order to explore a theoretical merger between these two disparate disciplines warrants a preliminary understanding of how the production of knowledge has constructed a long-standing epistemic bias against marginalized perspectives. This analysis will seek to illustrate how androcentrism pervades the corpus of intellectual thought and the resulting impact which extends beyond the traditional canon of epistemology to the field of leadership. Intrinsic to this analysis will be an exploration of social identity and how it interacts with larger social environmental factors such as power, privilege, and the nominal integration of intersectionality within leadership studies. This level of analysis will be used to construct a conceptual framework connecting the constructs of complexity, interdisciplinarity, epistemology, and oppression. Beyond exploring this theoretical merger, this examination will consider how an intersectional understanding of identity development can expand the epistemology of leadership theory. This dissertation is available in open access at AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive, <http://aura.antioch.edu/> and OhioLINK ETD Center, <https://etd.ohiolink.edu/>

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Chapter I: Introduction and Background

The history of human existence reveals an intrinsically patriarchal predisposition toward androcentrism. This historically sustained practice of placing masculine perspectives above feminine interests has compromised all facets of intellectual inquiry. Lerner (2005), a pioneer in the field of women's history, posited that "traditional history has been written and interpreted by men in an androcentric frame of reference; it might quite properly be described as the history of men" (p. xvii). As a consequence of these embedded patriarchal conventions, the historical record neglects half of humanity (Lerner, 1986), illustrating how White¹ men "control structures of knowledge validation [and as a result], white male interests pervade the thematic content of traditional scholarship" (Collins, 2000, p. 251).

Given these androcentric antecedents, Lerner (1986) contended that the systemic exclusion of women from "creating symbol systems, philosophies, science and law" demonstrates how women "have been not only educationally deprived throughout historical time in every known society, they have been excluded from theory-formation" (p. 5). As a result, Lerner (1986) insisted, "[w]hat women must do, what feminists are now doing is to... say, the basic inequality between us lies within this framework. And then they must tear it down" (p. 13). Anzaldúa (1990), a feminist Latinx scholar, likewise suggested challenging epistemological boundaries:

Necesitamos teorías [We need theories] that will rewrite history using race, class, gender and ethnicity as categories of analysis, theories that cross borders, that blur boundaries—new kinds of theories with new theorizing methods. We need theories that will point out ways to maneuver between our particular experiences and the necessity of forming our own categories and theoretical models for the patterns we uncover. (p. xxv)

¹ Based upon the recommended APA format, the term "White" is capitalized throughout this paper. Please note that some cited sources utilize the term in a lowercase format.

This charge for change inspires the present study, which explores the pervasive hegemonic frames within Western society which compromise the epistemology of leadership theory. Connecting epistemology (the theory of knowledge) to leadership demanded a research design that lends itself to building bridges: bricolage. Bricolage, a relative newcomer in the qualitative realm of leadership theory, presents a unique opportunity to engage the historical marginalization of perspectives and practices within the corpus of epistemological tradition. There is nothing conventional in utilizing this research process. It crosses disciplines, it blurs boundaries, it engages and actively seeks out complexity, and it attempts to rectify the social injustices perpetrated against those who reside in the margins. Above all, it examines how these disparate social realities remain embedded within the constructs of power and privilege. Rogers (2012) suggested that “bricolage, as Kincheloe and Berry (2004) explain, exists out of an appreciation of the complexity of the lived world. Further, it exists for questions that don’t lend themselves to easy answers” (p. 6).

In that spirit, this dissertation utilizes a theoretical bricolage, the blending of theories from disparate disciplines, to investigate how feminist epistemology challenges the limitations of gender within the construction of knowledge. The insight acquired from how feminists challenged the epistemology of what was true in knowledge helped build a theoretical bricolage to intersectionality, an interdisciplinary theoretical framework. Connecting the theoretical dots in this manner demonstrates how intersectionality extends the intellectual limitations of feminist epistemology in a more inclusive fashion, both in terms of the construct of gender and other aspects of social identity. The next link in this bricolage scrutinizes the epistemological underpinnings within leadership theory and demonstrates how an intersectional lens is beneficial for addressing these epistemic gaps.

Intersectionality theory, which examines the interconnection between social identities and social location, provides an intellectual shift to counter the impact of White men dominating the discourse of leadership. Applying an intersectional lens to leadership theory explores the interrelationships among identity, location, and oppression to illustrate how the operation of structural intersectionality constructed systemic mechanisms for White men to establish the norm of who and what was a leader. Further analysis clarifies how this standard male referent created epistemological barriers that set up a narrow and exclusive standard of leadership, which has historically discounted marginalized non-dominant perspectives.

Of particular interest here are how leadership theory constructs and maintains epistemic bias, and consequently epistemic injustices against women. Given these epistemic limitations, the study seeks to understand how the epistemology of leadership theory led to the formation of scholarship mired in masculinist models and to discern the degree to which privilege and power sustained these practices. These tasks serve as another level of intellectual inquiry within the study. Another component of this bricolage determines whether intersectionality theory can expand the epistemology of leadership, through an analysis of positivist, post-positivist, and post-structural leadership theories. This analysis leads to the final area of review, which examines how intersectionality offers a more comprehensive epistemological framework for leadership theory.

Bricolage thus provides an ideal methodological strategy to consider how the epistemology of leadership theory could be changed not only by integrating an intersectional lens but by highlighting how epistemological practices perpetuate what Fricker (2007) calls epistemic injustices. Further, intersectionality theory offers an opportunity to alter this practice by considering the intersection of multiple standpoints in concert with one's social location.

Examining the complexity of identity in relation to environment is key to this process because it provides a more complete understanding of how people reference their leadership identities and contextual consideration of the formation of identity within the fluid nature of social surroundings.

By examining the structural impediments which prevent women from accessing leadership in the same capacity as their male peers, this investigation also seeks to understand why these barriers have been constructed and interrogate the epistemological impact of their existence. In order to alter this disparate reality, this study reframes this inequity as an epistemic injustice and suggests new strategies, such as what Medina (2013) calls “epistemic resistance” and “epistemic friction,” to counter the androcentric antecedents which dominate the epistemology of leadership theory. The objective here is to illustrate how these intellectual instruments, in concert with intersectionality theory, provide a more equitable pathway for non-dominant perspectives to access leadership theory. While the analysis focuses on the identity of women, particularly the identities of women of color, its intersectional lens can construct broader cognitive shifts within the epistemology of leadership theory.

Background

Epistemology. In order to present a compelling argument about the knowledge gap within leadership theory, we must review how the discipline of leadership has engaged the subject of epistemology. Epistemology, a specific branch of philosophy, attempts to discern how we know what we know by seeking answers to three key questions: What is knowledge? How does one acquire it? By what standard is knowledge justified? Jiang (2005) posited that within epistemology:

Knowledge claims are made from no particular time, location, circumstance, and perspective, and therefore they are true in all situations and from all perspectives. In

short, knowledge claims are made from nowhere and are universally valid. Such an epistemology clearly denies that knowledge is socially and historically constructed. It dichotomizes subject and object, subjectivity and objectivity, and nature and culture in an absolute manner. It values rationality and abstraction and devalues emotion and the concrete. Since the Enlightenment, it has been the dominant epistemology in Western philosophy and science. (p. 56)

Given that epistemology investigates how one acquires knowledge, it is an essential locus for discerning how the tradition of Western philosophy regards the individual.

Feminist epistemology. While the longstanding epistemological preference within philosophy was to reference a non-particular knower as the standard referent for assigning value to the construction of knowledge, an intellectual transition led by feminist scholars examines how gender informs the construction of knowledge (Bordo, 1990; Lloyd, 1984). This shift grounds knowledge from a feminist perspective, thus creating feminist epistemology (Jiang, 2005). Anderson (2019) defines feminist epistemology as focused on understanding how gender impacts the construct of knowledge, as well as the “practices of inquiry and justification” (para. 1). Another critical facet of feminist epistemology highlights how gender identity is relevant to understanding how women engage the world as particular subjects (Collins, 1990; Frye, 1983; Schott, 2007). In this respect, feminist epistemology places

Emphasis on the epistemic salience of gender and the use of gender as an analytic category in discussions, criticisms, and reconstructions of epistemic practices, norms, and ideals...[Furthermore,] feminist approaches to epistemology tend to share an emphasis on the ways in which knowers are particular and concrete, rather than abstract and universalizable. (Janack, 2017, para. 1)

Understanding how and why feminist epistemology emerged within philosophy is central to this analysis because its development not only illustrates the prevailing male bias of Western epistemology (Jiang, 2005) but also illuminates the value of gender and other marginalized perspectives within this androcentric structure. Furthermore, the construction of feminist critiques highlights an epistemic gap within philosophy—one could even call it an epistemic

injustice (Fricker, 2007)—which discounted women as knowers in order to justify androcentrism (Anderson, 2019).

The initial feminist critiques of epistemology occurred within the sciences; they analyzed how science legitimized its androcentric bias and sought to gain insight into its motives for excluding women (Alcoff & Kittay, 2007). In these early challenges, feminist scholars addressed the underrepresentation of women in the sciences and the gendered assumptions that dominated theoretical scholarship within biology, psychology, and anthropology (Bleier, 1984; Fausto-Sterling, 1985; Haraway, 1988, 1989; Keller, 1983, 1984; Leacock, 1981; Sherif, 1987; Tavis, 1992). Such critiques served to “radically challenge existing ways of knowing within and across their disciplines, creating a shift in the tectonic plates of mainstream knowledge building” (Hesse-Biber, 2012, p. 9).

Limitations of feminist epistemology. While feminist epistemology proved beneficial in addressing the androcentrism present within epistemology, it also struggled with its shortcomings. Its most apparent gap was the focus on a singular aspect of identity as a dominant focal point of oppression (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). This limited scholars’ capacity to engage the complexity of other identities. Recognizing the limitations of this perspective, Alcoff and Potter (1993) proposed a shift beyond the singular axis of gender, in order to expand the boundaries of marginalized perspectives within epistemology. This expansion initially linked gender to other identity categories such as socio-economic class, ethnicity, and race (Grasswick, 2018).

While this nod to greater inclusivity was a turning point in the field of feminist epistemology, scholars initially utilized an additive strategy when considering multiple identity affiliations. This precursor to intersectionality, sometimes called the unitary approach, suggests

that categories such as class, sexual orientation, and gender work in isolation from each other as social properties (Hancock, 2007; Weldon, 2006). However, scholars soon acknowledged, simply adding other identity groups beyond gender is insufficient to address the complexity of human experience. For those scholars who examined gender in combination with other identity affiliations, this predilection for an add-and-stir approach fails to account for how these varied affiliations interact with one another. Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) support this assertion, noting that “[r]esearch has historically focused on only one aspect of the lives of women leaders. But simple categorizations along a single dimension do not capture the dynamics of women’s experiences” (p. 176).

Beyond single-axis and additive: Intersectionality. Crenshaw (1989, 1991) addressed these limitations by introducing the idea of “intersectionality” to examine the intersection of identities and how they interact within larger social systems of domination and discrimination. Intersectionality suggests that the “multiple oppressions” people experience based upon their respective identity affiliations overlap to construct “a single, synthesized experience” (S. Smith, 2013, p. 8). Evaluating this sum experience differs in important ways from an analysis of each respective identity on its own, and this composite synthesis offers a more complex understanding of identity. Geerts and van der Tuin (2013) extended this definition further by defining intersectionality as “the idea that subjects are situated in frameworks of multiple, interacting forms of oppression and privilege through socially constructed categories” like race and gender (p. 171). Meanwhile, the disciplinary influence has spread beyond philosophy to include the fields of anthropology, literature, history, sociology, feminist studies, queer studies, ethnic studies, and law (Cho et al., 2013).

Given these varied levels of engagement with intersectionality theory, what was its cumulative impact on the construct of knowledge? Dill and Kohlman (2011) posited that scholarship on this subject forged “new frontiers of knowledge” (p. 157), while Yuval-Davis (2006) similarly characterized the development of intersectionality as “a major analytical tool that challenges hegemonic approaches to the study of stratification as well as reified forms of identity politics” (p. 201). As such, intersectionality provides an intellectual mechanism to connect the intersection of varied identity affiliations with social locations to illustrate how power erects “systems of oppression” (Carastathis, 2014, p. 304).

Connecting intersectionality and leadership. How, then, is intersectionality theory useful to the field of leadership? Research on the application of intersectionality to leadership studies is still developing (Booyesen, 2018; Holvino & Blake-Beard, 2004; Richardson & Loubier, 2008; Rodriguez, Holvino, Fletcher, & Nkomo, 2016). Richardson and Loubier (2008) observed that “[t]he overall body of existing leadership diversity studies has focused on one or two diversity attributes, missing the effects of multiple intersecting attributes” (p. 142). An illustration of this practice is the nominal research examining intersectionality in relation to women’s leadership. Holvino and Blake-Beard (2004) found that a significant body of leadership scholarship investigated race and ethnicity or gender independently, but failed to research these identities simultaneously. Accordingly, Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) identified “an urgent need” (p. 176) for further scholarship examining intersectional junctures. This research trajectory is partly due to previous scholars examining leadership from a gendered “one size fits all” perspective, in which male representations of leadership subsume the experiences of women (Blackmore, 2005; Coleman & Fitzgerald, 2008).

Furthermore, as research began to reveal how men and women experienced leadership differently (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011), scholars shifted their focus to a unitary approach by examining leadership development from a singular axis of identity (Holvino & Blake-Beard, 2004). This strategy presumed a single-axis; in this case, gender was sufficient to distinguish how the identity of women differs from that of men (Collins, 1990). Another prevailing norm within leadership studies utilizes an additive model to engage identity. A critique of this approach was the propensity to establish a hierarchal order of identity when examining more than one identity variable (Debebe & Reinert, 2012). Moorosi (2014), for instance, suggested that the additive approach “oversimplifies” the development of one’s leadership identity (p. 796). Instead, engaging leadership from an intersectional approach provides new epistemological mechanisms that acknowledge the multiplicity of identity categories and the multifaceted nature of their convergence (Moorosi, 2014). As Yuval-Davis (2006) pointed out, “[c]ategories like gender, ethnicity and class co-construct each other, and they do so in myriad ways, dependent on social, historical and symbolic factors” (p. 209). Richardson and Loubier (2008) further developed this perspective by suggesting that intersectionality provides scholars with the capacity to analyze the intersection of various identity categories, in order to better comprehend how these interactions, relate to the development of leadership identity.

Expanding the epistemology of leadership theory. Given how much leadership engages identity, intersectionality theory provides a theoretical tool to challenge and expand established epistemological practices within leadership theory. This theoretical conduit was established by examining the epistemology of intersectionality theory and determining its relevance to leadership theory. As described above, intersectionality developed in response to feminist challenges against androcentric bias within knowledge-building. Additionally, the

limited ability of traditional epistemological approaches to engage identity serves to further marginalize historically excluded perspectives. Moreover, intersectionality theory reveals how existing socio-historical structures, such as power and privilege, has further embedded and maintained these exclusionary practices.

In their studies of leadership in the work environment, Cole (2009) and Shields (2008) suggested that intersectionality represents an essential area of research for leadership studies—an assertion increasingly supported by other scholars (King, Ryan, & Wessel, 2016; Richardson & Loubier, 2008). Intersectionality thus exemplified an ideal conduit to examine how epistemology—how one learns—intersects with identity—who one is—and leadership—how one leads. Engaging leadership theory through an examination of its foundational assumptions relative to epistemology, identity, and power is essential to this study’s framework because it highlights how current theoretical approaches within the leadership field fail to provide a comprehensive understanding of how intersectional standpoints impact leadership. This more inclusive standpoint seeks to capture the complexity of human experience and illuminate the masculine underpinnings entrenched in leadership theory.

Research Approach

Because this research endeavor aims to establish a rationale for altering the current epistemology of leadership theory, the exploration process warrants addressing the intersubjective capacity of leadership research (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2001). Within the context of this research, intersubjectivity refers to the process of understanding how scholars construct a shared understanding of what is true (Abel & Sementelli, 2004), highlighting the intertwined nature of the researcher and research (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2001). In this respect, the most appropriate stance is that articulated by Kincheloe (2005b) as critical constructivism—inserting a

critical lens in analyzing how meaning is constructed (Bentley, 2003). Critical constructivism advances the idea that a researcher's positionality cannot be objective because "no truly objective way of seeing exists" (Kincheloe, 1997, p. 57). Beyond indicating the capacity of objectivity to measure what is true in the acquisition of knowledge, this model also challenges the construct of subjectivity. Specifically, it argues that the positionality of the researcher compromises the construction of knowledge given how a researcher observes the world is biased by that researcher's experience. In sum, Kincheloe (2008b) argued that knowledge cannot be neutral.

While there are varied forms of constructivism, critical constructivism is ideally suited to develop the pathway to theoretical bricolage because its underlying principles examine the process of knowledge construction. One of the most relevant aspects of this theory is the principle of "epistemological pluralism" (Bentley, 2003, n.p.) Epistemological pluralism posits that there are varied ways of knowing and that the construction of knowledge is derived from multiple disciplines (Miller et al., 2008). In much the same way, bricolage research (Kincheloe, 2008b) acquires knowledge from varied sources (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The capacity to glean from multiple disciplines supports the utilization of bricolage as a research strategy because it provides the intellectual mechanism to link the subjects of epistemology, leadership, and intersectionality.

Another beneficial aspect of critical constructivism is the idea that knowledge is socially constructed (Kincheloe, 2001, 2005b, 2008b). This variable, in conjunction with the intersubjectivity of scholars, provides the mechanisms to critique how the socially constructed nature of leadership theory led to the development of an epistemology which marginalized subjugated perspectives. Understanding the implications of power in the process of

knowledge-building is another core area of interest for constructivists (Kincheloe, 2008a). In this respect, clarifying the influence of power on the construction of knowledge enables scholars to challenge the “elitist assumptions” which utilized power to entrench dominant theoretical perspectives and marginalized knowledge held by historically subjugated groups (Kincheloe, 2008a, p. 15).

Within intersectionality theory, understanding how power influenced “systems of domination” is a central area of focus (Severs et al., 2016, p. 347). The operation of these systems is evident within the categories of intersectionality: the structural, political, and representational (Crenshaw, 2018). Comprehending how these social systems adversely impact populations differently served as another impetus for incorporating this theory within a bricolage research design. Indeed, understanding how power impacts social groups, specifically those with marginalized identities, is another key attribute of intersectionality theory (McCall, 2005). Since these systems are interrelated and identity is more than a singular or additive entity, intersectionality theory offers a critical lens, inspired by critical constructivism, to inquire how identity and systems inform the construction of knowledge within the discipline of leadership.

Along similar lines, this study’s theoretical bricolage utilizes a critical constructivist approach to acknowledge that researchers and the subjects of their research are intricately bound to each other (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2001). With this connection, the researcher and the subject can influence one another, and in doing so, construct something new. Frost (2006) applied this insight to the field of leadership, arguing that “the concepts of both leadership and learning are constructed as agential activities: interdependent yet contingent upon one another” (p. 19). Collectively, these varied aspects of critical constructivism provided the epistemological framework to build a theoretical bricolage which acknowledges the intersubjectivity of scholars,

uses a critical lens to question the social construction of knowledge across multiple disciplines, and critiques how the construct of power entrenches dominant perspectives and marginalizes non-dominant standpoints.

In essence, this research approach links the subjects of epistemology and leadership utilizing an intersectional approach to challenge the limitations within the existing epistemology of leadership theory and to expand the scope of how leadership theory engages identity, socio-historical context, and power. According to Chapman (2007), understanding “one’s theoretical underpinnings enables one to challenge existing beliefs, assumptions, and values and to consider how those presuppositions influences one’s actions. It is the first step to building a new theory” (p. 224). As such, the benefit of broadening the epistemology of leadership is the capacity to create something new—intersectional leadership.

Statement of the Problem

Linking intersectionality to leadership theory serves as the primary focus of this research initiative. Connecting these theoretical constructs illustrates how the epistemological underpinnings of leadership theory fail to incorporate an intersectional analysis of identity. This void is partly due to current practices within leadership that marginalize non-dominant perspectives. This practice of “othering” (Spivak, 1985) is based on a firmly established pattern of White male privilege which excludes historically marginalized groups and has resulted in an epistemological bias within leadership theory.

Another rationale for addressing this gap is the propensity for scholars to engage marginalized others by utilizing unitary and additive approaches, which erects a limiting hierarchal order. The impact of these strategies is the construction of an incomplete composite of the non-dominant perspectives because they presume and maintain an outsider status. This

exclusionary stance is also problematic because it fails to consider whether individuals can simultaneously possess both marginalized and privileged aspects within their various identity affiliations (Richardson & Loubier, 2008).

In sum, these gaps maintain an established hegemonic order which results in an epistemic injustice against those whose perspectives exist outside the androcentric framework which pervades leadership theory. Intersectionality theory provides a counter-perspective to these inherent limitations because it expands the epistemology of how multiple identities intersect and respond to larger social structures undermined by power and privilege. While this area of research remains a relatively new sphere of interest within leadership theory, it provides a worthwhile tool to engage and consider how the merger of two theoretical bodies informs the construction of a conceptual framework for intersectional leadership.

Purpose and Process of the Study

The purpose of this research study is to discern how and deconstruct why the epistemology of leadership subjugates the viewpoints of women, and to consider what the integration of intersectionality theory does to counter this epistemic practice. This research process thus utilizes a theoretical bricolage strategy to link intersectionality to leadership theory. Bricolage, derived from a French term, refers to the construction of ideas attained through using materials “at hand” (Levi-Strauss, 1966, p. 11). According to Rogers (2012), this methodological approach

considered a critical, multi-perspectival, multi-theoretical and multi-methodological approach to inquire.... Generally speaking, when the metaphor is used within the domain of qualitative research it denotes methodological practices explicitly based on notions of eclecticism, emergent design, flexibility and plurality. Further, it signifies approaches that examine phenomena from multiple, and sometimes competing, theoretical and methodological perspectives. (p. 1)

A theoretical bricolage allows researchers to utilize theoretical models in a myriad of manners (Rogers, 2012). Within the present research design, bricolage is employed to examine how feminist scholars challenged the hegemonic bias present within the corpus of epistemology and how the development of intersectionality theory incorporated more inclusive perspectives, particularly those of women, within the production of knowledge. The theoretical bricolage from intersectionality to leadership illustrates how androcentrism compromises the epistemological roots of leadership theory, which maintains epistemic injustices against marginalized standpoints exercised through the (dis)operation of power. Moreover, bricolage strategies enable scholars “to understand the different theoretical contexts in which an object can be interpreted—providing a multi-perspectival, post-structuralist perspective, showing the plurality of complexities that influence a phenomenon” (Rogers, 2012, p. 6). Utilizing a theoretical bricolage to explore the role power plays in the construction of leadership theory is beneficial to this analysis. As such, engaging leadership theory by adopting an intersectional lens introduces the ability to explore new theoretical perspectives in the production of knowledge for marginalized perspectives.

Lincoln (2001) summarized the benefit of employing this research design by suggesting:

Kincheloe’s (2001) bricoleur is far more skilled than merely a handyman [sic]. This bricoleur looks for not yet imagined tools, fashioning them with not yet imagined connections. This handyman [sic] is searching for the nodes, the nexuses, the linkages, the interconnections, the fragile bonds between disciplines, between bodies of knowledge, between knowing and understanding themselves. (pp. 693–694)

Research Questions

The combination of these theories raises an important question: what epistemological insight does intersectionality theory offer to leadership theory? Answering this question required an analysis of how intersectionality theory informs the construction of more inclusive epistemological practices within leadership theory. Accordingly, critical concepts like identity,

epistemology, and power were subsequently utilized to construct a theoretical bricolage. Doing so generated an additional research question: the practice of intersectional leadership encompasses which epistemological variables?

Significance of the Study

The rationale for engaging leadership theory by utilizing intersectionality is to provide scholars with the capacity to analyze the intersection of varied identity categories in order to comprehend how these interactions relate to the development of leadership identity (Richardson & Loubier, 2008). Grzanka (in press) suggested that intersectionality provides a compelling heuristic to evaluate how varied modes of marginalization and privilege “shape the lived experiences of all individuals and social groups” (p. 1). Furthermore, an intersectional lens is utilized to examine how the construct of power maintains the marginalized reality of subjugated standpoints within leadership theory and further reinforces entrenched hegemonic practices. This analytical process illustrates the “assumptions underlying the dominant notion of leadership” (Blackmore, 2005, p. 65).

Engaging leadership theory through an examination of its foundational assumptions relative to epistemology, identity, and power was essential to this process because it highlights how current theoretical approaches within the leadership field fail to provide a comprehensive understanding of how intersectional standpoints impact leadership. This more inclusive standpoint demonstrates the complexity of human experience and further illuminates the masculine underpinnings that dominate leadership theory by offering for consideration a more epistemologically just framework of leadership.

Definition of Terms

The terms most relevant to this research include androcentrism, epistemology, feminist epistemology, intersectionality, identity, and leadership. Bem (1993) defined androcentrism as:

The privileging of male experience and the “othering” of female experience; that is, males and male experience are treated as a neutral standard or norm for the culture of the species as a whole, and females and female experience are treated as a sex-specific deviation from that allegedly universal standard. (p. 41)

Glick and Fiske (2001) offered another aspect to consider by suggesting androcentrism is a “‘system-justifying’ ideology” (p. 911). Androcentrism is important to this research inquiry because it underscores how broader social structures which prevent equal access to epistemology compromise the construction of knowledge.

Steup (2017) characterized epistemology as:

The study of knowledge and justified belief. As the study of knowledge, epistemology is concerned with the following questions: What are the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge? What are its sources? What is its structure, and what are its limits?...Understood more broadly, epistemology is about issues having to do with the creation and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas of inquiry. (para. 1)

Given the objective of epistemology to discern how the construction of knowledge occurs, its practice raises several questions: (1) For whom is the production of knowledge generated? (2) Who has access to this process? (3) Who does this exclude and why? These questions are of particular interest to feminist scholars, who challenged androcentric bias within the corpus of knowledge production to construct a new theoretical perspective: feminist epistemology.

Anderson (2019) defined feminist epistemology as the theory of knowledge discerned from a feminist standpoint. This theory, she added:

Studies the ways in which gender does and ought to influence our conceptions of knowledge, the knowing subject, and practices of inquiry and justification. It identifies ways in which dominant conceptions and practices of knowledge attribution, acquisition, and justification systematically disadvantages women and other subordinated groups, and

strives to reform these conceptions and practices so that they serve the interests of these groups. (para. 1)

Intersectionality is another critical term in this analysis. Crenshaw (1989) characterized it as a theory that strives to address epistemic challenges by moving beyond the focus of gender to consider how the intersection of various identities responds to or engaged more extensive systems of domination and oppression within the social world (Crenshaw, 1989). For this dissertation, the larger system at play is the social construction of knowledge within the discipline of leadership.

The final concept of this research focus is leadership. The ambiguity surrounding the term leadership has fostered a practice of “definitional permissiveness” (Rost, 1993, p. 6), but even within this ambiguity, the standard references endorse the “study of leadership... as the study of ‘great men’” (Klenke, 2004, p. 1). Moreover, it has been primarily the study of political leadership exercised by a privileged group of “‘great men’ who defined power, authority, and knowledge” (Klenke, 2004, p. 1). Given this context, rather than endorsing one particular definition, this study supports Klenke’s underlying premise that “leadership is shaped by culture...and that definitions change from one context to the next” (2004, p. 11).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

One underlying assumption of this research is its framing from a Western standpoint. This perspective is a privileged one, particularly framed within research focused on subjugation and marginalization. However, this complexity provides a context to examine how the nature of identity exists within an intersection, where at times privilege and oppression mutually coexist. Along similar lines, one limitation of this study is the relatively small body of scholarship which engages leadership theory utilizing an intersectional framework. However, this dearth of previous research serves as an advantage because the present study was not overly influenced by

how other scholars engaged a subject or theory. This context allowed significant freedom in establishing the parameters of the research.

One delimitation associated with this research is its examination of how the constructs of epistemic injustice, identity, and power are relevant to leadership theory. While the interdisciplinary popularity of intersectionality theory has resulted in a wide range of scholarship which has some applicability to the scope of this dissertation, the shared constructs between both disciplines guided the construction of a theoretical bricolage between intersectionality and leadership.

Another delimitation of this analysis is its incorporation of a bricolage research design. One challenge affiliated with this methodology was the lack of a traditional template to guide its construction. Bricolage intentionally resists established protocols because constructing something new from intellectual tools at hand necessitates original thinking not bound by convention. While there are varied forms of bricolage, this research effort focuses on theoretical bricolage. This delimitation was deliberate because it provides an explicit parameter to address the epistemological terrain of intersectionality and leadership theories.

Dissertation Outline

This section briefly outlines the remaining chapters of this dissertation. Chapter 2 (Research Design) establishes the structure of the study's research design. As such, this chapter outlines the trajectory for constructing a theoretical bricolage. Foremost, this process involves revealing how the subjects of epistemology and feminist epistemology are relevant to the research strategy, mainly how epistemology serves as the theoretical bridge linking intersectionality and leadership. This bridge proved beneficial for considering how intersectionality is useful to the field of leadership studies, especially for analyzing how

intersectional theory is relevant to the epistemology of leadership. Chapter 3 (Epistemology Theory, Research, and Practice) presents a detailed examination of the intellectual strands that bind the subjects of epistemology and feminist epistemology. These strands are used to highlight how the production of knowledge within the corpus of the intellectual tradition consistently neglected to include marginalized standpoints. The implications of this pattern for leadership theory serve as another key focus of this analysis. Chapter 4 (Intersectionality and Leadership Theories, Research, and Practices) outlines fundamental tenets and categories affiliated with intersectionality. It also scrutinizes the epistemology of leadership theory and conducts a historical and critical analysis of leadership theory. This chapter also examines the implications of gender within leadership theory and explores how intersectional identity and structural intersectionality are relevant to leadership theory.

Chapter 5 (Theoretical Bricolage) illustrates the utilization of a theoretical bricolage research strategy by including an analysis of the importance of theory, a review of the process of theory development, and an exploration of the relevance of complexity within bricolage. This foundational analysis of the operation of bricolage constructs a framework to outline the principles which undergird a theoretical bricolage. The next phase of review illustrated the application of these principles to intersectionality and leadership theories. Finally, Chapter 6 (Intersectional Leadership) connects both theories by illustrating how epistemology serves as the strand that connects both fields of thought. Examining how knowledge production compromises marginalized standpoints within leadership theory reveals how intersectionality theory can circumvent this sustained practice of epistemic bias. Furthermore, the utilization of intersectionality theory to construct a conceptual framework provides leadership theory with the

capacity to understand how the intersection of varied identity affiliations, in concert with socio-historical factors, enhances the epistemology of leadership theory.

Summary

Several theories have influenced how we engage scholarship. The presumption inherent in the production of knowledge is that the process of constructing knowledge is “value-free” (Heifetz, 1994, p. 17) and neutral; the historical record has proven otherwise. If, as Hegel proposed in his *Philosophy of Right*, the primary objective of philosophy is to establish principles of what “the world ought to be,” then the systematic exclusion of marginalized standpoints within the production of knowledge is an area of concern which deserves additional attention (Ypi, 2013, p. 117). Linking intersectionality theory to leadership theory is an opportunity to explore how a more inclusive understanding of leadership can add to the repository of scholarship on this subject, with the intention that this research endeavor can further construct a social reality that “ought to be.”

However, before engaging what “can be,” it is necessary to review what currently “is”—in this case through a literature review on the constructs of feminist epistemology, epistemic injustice, and power—in order to discern how these constructs, relate to leadership theory. Building a bridge between these subjects demonstrates common themes present within both intersectionality and leadership discourse. By understanding what links these two areas of scholarship, it is possible to construct a theoretical bridge utilizing a bricolage research design. This chapter provided background and context information for this study, along with a blueprint for the dissertation’s overall structure. Its objective was to construct links between intersectionality and leadership theories, utilizing the social identity of women to illustrate how the practice of hegemony and power marginalizes certain identity standpoints and reveals the

intellectual impact of this exclusion within the production of knowledge. This chapter thus articulated the current gaps in the literature on leadership and suggested how intersectionality theory addresses these epistemological gaps.

This overview also illustrates how epistemology established a tradition of androcentrism within the production of knowledge, and how feminist critiques named and challenged this marginalized reality. As a result of these critiques, intersectionality theory extended this level of analysis to examine the intersection of varied identities in order to offer a more nuanced understanding of one's social position within the political, structural, and representational realms of society. Exploring the benefits of this more inclusive stance for leadership theory is a key focus of this dissertation. As such, Chapter 2 will investigate how to construct a research design which enables the development of a theoretical bricolage between intersectionality and leadership.

Chapter II: Research Design

This chapter provides a rationale for the utilization of a bricolage research strategy. Within the realm of qualitative inquiry, bricolage suggests that scholars harvest existing intellectual resources to construct new ways of thinking (Levi-Strauss, 1966). Developed in 1962 by Levi-Strauss, this research approach continues to prosper within academia (Rogers, 2012). Given the capacity of bricolage to cull from varied academic disciplines, this chapter reviews how bricolage served as the ideal methodology to examine and critique the epistemological underpinnings of knowledge production. The development of this bricolage thus warrants a review of the methodological process and arguments affiliated with this research in order to link feminist epistemology, intersectionality, and leadership theories. The final level of analyses in this chapter considers how the integration of these theories guides the construction of a conceptual framework for intersectional leadership.

Epistemic Positioning and Paradigmatic Stance

Epistemic position. The traditional, monological approaches to engaging leadership theory fail to capture the complexity of marginalized perspectives within the production of knowledge. This epistemic position asserts that although there are varied ways of knowing; access to the acquisition of knowledge is a not equal process. The realm of philosophy serves as the ideal mechanism to begin this bricolage because it has historically been seen as a source for the production of knowledge. Central philosophical concepts utilized to determine what is true in knowledge are subjectivity, credibility, reliability, and justification. The construction of knowledge has to consider not just the standard utilized to validate what is true, but who has been relegated the authority to make these determinations. As such, scholars must consider the

contexts which create knowledge, with particular attention to how individuals, whether privileged or marginalized, are situated as leaders.

This paradigmatic stance thus warrants close consideration of how the socio-historical variables of privilege and power entrench a dominant male perspective within epistemology. Another facet of this epistemic position entails discerning the implications related to the lack of female perspectives within the construction of knowledge and the effect this intellectual deficit has had upon the discipline of leadership. Understanding this convergence between the identity of women and their social location as leaders provides a critical lens to consider the usefulness of intersectionality theory to address epistemic gaps within leadership theory.

This level of engagement warrants an analysis on the formation of leader identity. If leadership is “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2013, p. 5), then understanding the identity of a leader is integral to understanding how he or she leads. Erikson (1959) is given credit for this insight due to his development of a theoretical framework to explain the formation of identity. Marcia (1966) expanded Erickson’s research by proposing that the “choices and commitments” an individual made impacts his or her identity (p. 885). Moxnes (2007) added that these choices derive from an individual’s value system. Karp and Helgø (2009) supported this assertion by noting that “some” scholars “claim that values create choices, and choices create values” (p. 885). The idea that identity is fluid was supported by Kark and van Dijk (2007), who suggested that varied situations impact individuals differently and result in their identities changing in response to “external stimuli and environmental challenges” (p. 886). In extending this perspective, Karp and Helgø (2009) proposed that “one’s image of one’s self is a social construction—being created and re-created” (p. 886). Moxnes (2007) likewise suggested that individuals grow in relationship to

being visible by others and to themselves. In this respect, how one develops one's identity is due in part to his or her interaction with others (Higgins, 1987).

What then is the relationship between identity and leadership? Many scholars have noted the impact of identity on leadership development (Baltes & Carstensen, 1991; Day & Harrison, 2007; Day et al., 2008; Karp & Helgø, 2009). Researchers have proposed that a "development approach" (Karp & Helgø, 2009, p. 887) could help advance our understanding on the construction of leadership identity (Erikson, 1959; Kegan, 1982; Loevinger, 1976). In their conceptual model of leadership identity, Karp and Helgø (2009) asked a compelling question: "If leadership is dependent on identity, how should one pay attention to identity in the act of leading?" (p. 887). This question advanced the idea that leaders become cognizant of their value systems and how those values impact decisions, choices, and behaviors (Karp & Helgø, 2009). This insight, considered the "Holy Grail," provides an individual with the capacity to "develop one's self as a leader and, ultimately, as a human being" (Karp & Helgø, 2009, p. 891).

Yet, for leaders who align their identities with marginalized perspectives the prevailing androcentrism of leadership does not assign these identity affiliations the same value as White men (Okozi, Smith, Clark, & Sherman, 2009). This reality challenges how marginalized identities have equal access to leadership. Furthermore, when addressing the subject of identity, the existing research has primarily focused on examining a single dimension of identity rather than exploring the intersection of multiple identities, with a few notable exceptions (Deaux, 1991; Ferguson, 1995; Finley, 1997; Kiely, 1997). This single-axis approach to identity affiliations like gender, race, and class also fails to account for the relational nature of how these and other locations intersect (Carstensen-Egwuom, 2014). Engaging identity in isolation inhibits the capacity of researchers to consider their positionality, as well as compromises their capacity

to view themselves and their subject from a “condition of detached alterity” (Kobayashi, 2003, p. 348). One could further suggest that a scholar who aligned his or her research by utilizing these disparate social locations situates knowledge in the same manner (Nagar & Geiger, 2007). Carstensen-Egwuom (2014) maintained that “[a] relational analysis should shed light on the continued complex and often ambiguous relationships between different people that evolve through face-to-face social interaction and that are embedded in larger social processes” (p. 269). It is this interrelational nature of identity that enables individuals to construct meaning from their respective identities (Kezar, 2002).

Paradigmatic stance. The research paradigm that guides the development of this dissertation is post-positivism. This framework asserts there are multiple ways of knowing (Wildemuth, 1993) and that the process of determining what is true is complex (Ryan, 2006). Post-positivism challenges the idea that academics can be neutral conduits within the process of meaning-making as false (Ryan, 2006). This paradigmatic stance also suggests social systems and environments shape scholars and this standpoint, in turn, influences how they conduct research (Fox, 2008). In this respect, post-positivists ascribe to the belief that neutrality does not exist and, instead challenges academics to investigate their own epistemology.

Bricolage thus serves as the ideal methodology to construct theoretical bridge from intersectionality to leadership because it supports complexity (Kincheloe, 2005b), critiques neutrality (Rogers, 2012), engages reflexivity as a practice where scholars examine their positionality in relation to their research subject (Denzin & Lincoln, 1999), as well as invites change (Kincheloe, 2005). The central focus of this methodological stance posits:

Indeed, what bricoleurs are concerned with here is nothing less than the quality of the knowledge we produce about the world. In this context, they address both the reductionism of uninformed research methods and the quest for new ways of seeing. In the intersection of these concerns, they uncover new insights into research and

knowledge production, new forms of reason that are directly connected to specific contexts, practical forms of analysis that are informed by social theory, and the concreteness of lived situations (Fischer, 1998)... With these understandings as valuable parts of their tool kits, bricoleurs expand the envelope of social research, of what we can understand about the world. They are empowered to produce knowledge that can change the world. (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 345)

Given this paradigmatic stance, the key facets which guide the construction of this bricolage design include interdisciplinary, reflexivity, complexity, and change.

Interdisciplinarity. This element explores the connections between various disciplines, and is a central component of this research framework. Interdisciplinary represents the ideal mechanism to engage the linkage between theories (Kincheloe, 2005). This research strategy is fitting for bricoleurs, who observe the inherent benefits of bypassing traditional research methods otherwise situated within a singular research strategy and framed within one specific discipline (Burr, 1995). By broadening the scope of intellectual inquiry, bricoleurs open the research process to engage multiple disciplines, yielding insight into the subject of their queries (Gergen, 1999).

Reflexivity. The social location of a scholar influences his or her respective research (Cunliffe, 2013). Bourke (2014) suggests:

This act of examining the research process in the context of my positionality can be described, at least in part, as reflexivity. Reflexivity involves a self-scrutiny on the part of the researcher; a self-conscious awareness of the relationship between the researcher and an “other” (Chiseri-Stater, 1996; Pillow, 2003). (pp. 1–2)

This assertion warrants that researchers be cognizant of how they are situated socially and to utilize this insight to examine the social situation of their research subjects (Cunliffe, 2013). The reflexive component of this theoretical analysis emphasizes how socially constructed structures, like oppression and power, were hidden within the production of knowledge (Cunliffe, 2004, 2013). Carstensen-Egwuom (2014) supported this contention:

Critical social theories can help researchers to actually perceive the frictions and workings of powerful social differentiations and hierarchies in the field, to see what they would otherwise have overlooked... A conscious inclusion of social theories and perspectives that spell out previously ignored structures of oppression is thus the second part of an intersectional reflexive approach to research practice. (p. 268)

Within this dissertation, the reflexive capacity of bricolage provides a conduit for scholars to acknowledge and alter epistemic gaps within leadership discourse. Furthermore, intersectionality theory, motivated by a need to construct more inclusive practices within the production of knowledge, provides leadership theory with an epistemological tool to minimize entrenched androcentric practices.

Complexity. Complexity is another variable intrinsic to bricolage research design and provides a fitting framework to consider the impact of androcentrism upon leadership theory. As Kincheloe (2001) contends:

[s]uch a historiographically and philosophically informed bricolage helps researchers move into a new, more complex domain of knowledge production where they are far more conscious of multiple layers of intersections between the knower and the known, perception and the lived world, and discourse and representation. (p. 688)

Utilizing intersectionality theory as a lens to determine how identity impacts leadership scholarship is essential to understanding the inclusion and exclusion of identity within the production of knowledge and discerning the impacts of this practice. Given that “[r]esearch is a process, not just a product” (England, 1994, p. 82), one central consideration is comprehending how a researcher’s identity is relevant to the subject of inquiry within their research. By adopting this stance, a bricoleur integrates complexity and reflexivity within the research process. A complexivist approach is key to this bricolage because it provides the intellectual tool to critique the dominant male-normed epistemology of leadership theory.

Change. Intrinsic to this research inquiry is the notion of change. Integrating the constructs of complexity and reflexivity means changing the way scholars have traditionally

engaged these subjects. As such, this dissertation includes an analysis of leadership and change. This locus is essential because as Kotter (1990) suggests, the central purpose of leadership is to generate change. This sentiment is echoed by Northouse (2013), who posits that “leadership is about seeking adaptive and constructive change” (p. 13).

Within a bricolage design, the critical constructivist approach is ideal because it uniquely asks questions about the “dialectical relationship” between reality and knowledge (Levi-Strauss, 1966, p. 24). Investigating this juncture is necessary for the change process to occur. Kincheloe (2005) maintains that examining the “complexity of this relationship” invites the acknowledgment that “knowledge and reality change both continuously and interdependently” (p. 326). Given this dynamic, the task of the bricoleur is to examine how the status quo generates knowledge production, and, in the process of doing so, reflect upon who is part of this process and note who is left out. Furthermore, the bricoleur articulates the rationale for this epistemic exclusion and aims to change reality (Kincheloe, 2005).

Research Method Overview

Constructing a theoretical bricolage meant letting go of the conventional dissertation format because with this research approach there is no traditional methodology (Guillot, 2015). Employing a nontraditional trajectory, this research design built a bricolage between intersectionality and leadership theories to discern how the practices of power and privilege infiltrated the realm of knowledge production. This process began with a review of the traditional canon of philosophy and expanded to consider the rationale for feminist critiques of epistemology. The insight from these critiques were then extended to an analysis of various research paradigms within leadership, specifically positivist, post-positivist, and post-structural

leadership theories. Within this bricolage, determining how intersectionality was beneficial to the epistemology of leadership theory served as the final area of examination.

Bricolage Research

What is bricolage? The etymology of the term reveals it is the process of utilizing the intellectual resources at hand to construct something new (Levi-Strauss, 1966). Residing within the spectrum of qualitative research, bricolage is defined as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3). French anthropologist Levi-Strauss (1966) receives credit for applying the term bricolage to the realm of philosophy and used it as a metaphor to help construct meaning-making within mythological thought. Bricolage thus is the research process of constructing meaning by utilizing intellectual resources at hand. The researcher who utilizes this methodology is assigned the descriptor bricoleur (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Employing this research strategy requires a bricoleur if it is deemed necessary, to construct “new tools or techniques” to make this metaphorical quilt (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4).

Building upon the intellectual contributions of Levi-Strauss (1966), Denzin and Lincoln (2005; 2011), Kincheloe (2001, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d), Kincheloe and Berry (2004), and Berry (2004a, 2004b, 2006, 2011) expanded the application of bricolage within qualitative research, using a broad spectrum of multidisciplinary strategies. Kincheloe (2005) posited:

The bricolage can be described as the process of getting down to the nuts and bolts of multidisciplinary research... In this way, bricoleurs move beyond the blinds of particular disciplines and peer through a conceptual window to a new world of research and knowledge production. (p. 323)

Rogers (2012) suggested that the application of bricolage “denoted methodological practices explicitly based on notions of eclecticism, emergent design, flexibility and plurality. Further, it signified approaches that examine phenomena from multiple, and sometimes competing,

theoretical and methodological perspectives” (p. 1). In this respect, bricolage presents an ideal conduit by which to explore the merger of two disciplines—intersectionality and leadership—to determine how this merger impacts the production of knowledge within leadership theory.

Methodological Processes and Arguments

Unlike conventional research designs where scholars use either a monological process or a positivist design, bricolage has “no step-by-step procedures or methods to follow, no preconceived format, no familiar structure but only the respect for difference and the desire to continue constructing new knowledge and possibilities” (Berry, 2006, p. 98). However, in order to determine how meaning-making occurs within bricolage, a review of the methodological processes affiliated with this research strategy is necessary. The scholarship of Kincheloe (2011, 2017) provides the most detailed analysis of how to engage the constructs of this methodology.

Lincoln (2001) noted:

Kincheloe’s (2001[this issue]) *bricoleur* is far more skilled than merely a handyman [sic]. This bricoleur looks for not yet imagined tools, fashioning them with not yet imagined connections..... It is “boundary-work” taken to the extreme, boundary-work beyond race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class. It works the margins and liminal spaces between both formal knowledge, and what has been proposed as boundary knowledge, knitting them together, forming a new consciousness. (pp. 693–694)

Given the research focus of this dissertation, the specific elements analyzed include (1) how bricolage engages the construct of complexity within its epistemology; (2) how its existence is derived from “respect for the complexity of the lived world and the complications of power,” (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011, p. 168); (3) how it seeks out new forms of knowledge production; and (4) finally, how it crosses the boundaries of varied disciplines (Kincheloe, 2005). The development of this dissertation used the research process outlined by Kincheloe as a theoretical template; thus, this research methodology entailed multiple objectives. Foremost, it examined how feminist epistemology is utilized to challenge the androcentrism present within

the corpus of knowledge production in leadership theory. Secondly, it evaluated how this practice engages Kincheloe's epistemology of complexity. Likewise, it considered how the operation of power complicates the practice of knowledge production. Finally, this research strategy examined how the merger of intersectionality theory and leadership theory highlighted the boundary crossings aspect of Kincheloe's bricolage research process and explored the potential of an intersectional leadership framework to counter epistemic limitations within leadership theory.

Theoretical Bricolage

There are varied types of bricolage, inclusive of methodological, interpretive, narrative, political, and theoretical (Kincheloe et al., 2011). For this research design, the focus was theoretical. The advantage of employing bricolage is the capacity of researchers to utilize theoretical models in many ways (Rogers, 2012). Another benefit is that it provides an effective methodology for incorporating a critical lens of inquiry (Kincheloe, 2005). Bricolage also provides a critical lens to examine assumptions present within the production of knowledge and explore how dominant narratives impact subjugated perspectives (Kincheloe, 2004a). As a methodological strategy, these elements inform the development of a bricolage between intersectional and leadership theories. Analyzing this context enables the bricoleur, not only to interrogate dominant discourses which exclude marginalized perspectives, but to question and challenge exclusionary epistemic practices within leadership theory.

Theoretical bricolage also proved ideal for this research approach because it entreats the bricoleur to examine how the operation of power works within a specific discipline to construct dominant methodologies. In other words, it affords the bricoleur the capacity to interrogate the traditional methodological paradigms of leadership theory. Likewise, integrating the element of

reflexivity is beneficial to this bricolage design because it invites the bricoleur to link seemingly disparate theories, examine their respective epistemologies, and consider how the intersectional complexity of an individual, when considered in conjunction with his or her social location and the construct of power, provided insight into how these dynamics collectively impacted meaning-making. In this respect, a key benefit of using theoretical bricolage research design is the ability to employ a critical, complexivist, and reflective lens to examine how the epistemological foundation of intersectionality theory enhances the epistemology of leadership theory.

Elements of Theoretical Bricolage

The elements of this research design engage the eclectic nature of bricolage by culling from various bodies of scholarship. This bricolage highlights the interdisciplinary nature of this research strategy by exploring the epistemological linkages between intersectionality and leadership. This review also inquired into the practice of knowledge production from the perspectives of historically marginalized individuals, specifically women, to investigate the epistemological bias present within leadership theory. Reflexivity, another element intrinsic to theoretical bricolage, served as a subject of review to determine how the process of meaning-making occurs, by contextualizing how the individual, in relation to broader social structures such as power, engages epistemology.

This research approach was ideal because it provided an interdisciplinary facet to connect two seemingly disparate theoretical bodies of work, utilizing epistemology as the common denominator. Berry (2004a) added that a bricolage approach offers scholars the capacity to engage varied epistemologies. This assertion was supported by Rogers (2012), who posited that bricolage “challenges the epistemological and ontological assumptions that the world has

universal structures that exist independently of human rationalities” (p. 3). Lincoln (2001) extended this argument by suggesting that the role of the bricoleur was to seek out “the nodes, the nexuses, the linkages, the interconnections, the fragile bonds between disciplines, between bodies of knowledge, between knowing and understanding themselves” (p. 694).

Bricolage, situated within the research paradigm of post-structuralism, assigns the bricoleur with the task of engaging “epistemologies from previously silenced groups” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 7). According to Kincheloe (2004b), acquiring this insight is necessary because bricoleurs are “dedicated to questioning and learning from the excluded” (p. 48). This notion was further reinforced by Rogers (2012), who noted that scholars engaged in this type of research “seek knowledges that are usually silenced in dominant research narratives” (p. 12). This facet of bricolage is ideal for examining leadership theory because it offers the opportunity to use a critical lens to examine the exclusion of marginalized standpoints and to show how Western male perspectives dominate the literature. Within bricolage, these elements help scholars investigate how these perspectives perpetuate epistemic injustices, as well as illustrate an epistemic bias within leadership theory.

Beyond addressing the epistemic neglect of non-dominant narratives, Kincheloe (2001) posited that bricoleurs analyze the constructs of culture and power. A bricolage research design extends the level of epistemological analysis further than individual and social group identities to consider how larger social constructs impact knowledge production. Kincheloe’s (2004a) bricolage provides bricoleurs with the capacity to acquire insight into “the historical embeddedness of all acts of knowledge production and how the social construction of knowledge shape the world of the researcher” (p. x). Thus, utilizing a bricolage design to explore the role power played in the construction of leadership theory is beneficial to this analysis. The

relationship between epistemology and power is integral to the exploration of epistemic injustices within leadership theory. A potential remedy to address this inequity is the construct of epistemic resistance (Medina, 2013). According to Paredis (2013): “With a deeper understanding of how the world is shaped both externally and internally, researchers are in a better position to develop creative ideas and take viable actions to resolve issues relate to oppression” (n.p.). Given these dynamics, the interdisciplinary nature of a bricolage design links epistemic bias to epistemic resistance within the production of knowledge in leadership.

Intrinsic to the development of a theoretical bricolage is the need to engage the element of reflexivity during the process of meaning-making (Cunliffe, 2004, 2013). Reflexivity in this context relates to how individuals exist with others and are dependent upon their social locations, how this mutuality helps shape who we are as individuals, and how it informs how we shape those around us (Cunliffe, 2013). As such, reflexive practice involves “questioning taken-for-granted theories, practices, and policies... asking what is said and not said... [and] accepting there are different perspectives” (Cunliffe, 2013, slide 9). While this either/or binary dynamic remains a focus of intellectual inquiry, it constructs an incomplete epistemology because it fails to account for the complexity of how individual identity, privileged or marginalized, operates within larger social constructs. Furthermore, the binary fails to consider how individuals can co-exist within the “and” by possessing both dominant and subjugated standpoints. As a consequence, these incomplete composites have constructed an epistemology that lacks an understanding of what this intersection reveals to leadership discourse.

Theoretical Analysis

This bricolage presents a series of arguments which constructs an epistemological framework which links intersectional and leadership theories. Given that there was no traditional

format assigned to this research method, the theoretical bricolage was built by connecting a series of epistemological elements. Within this research design, the elements which connect intersectionality and leadership are epistemic resistance, epistemic friction, change, and leadership.

Epistemic resistance. Within the production of meaning-making, epistemic resistance highlights the practice of epistemic bias within leadership theory. Epistemic resistance is defined as the utilization of one's knowledge assets and aptitudes to challenge and alter unjust frameworks, as well as the "complacent cognitive-affective functioning that sustains those structures" (Medina, 2013, p. 3). While the idea of epistemic resistance resides within the field of social epistemology, its roots were constructed within the theoretical boundaries of race and feminism (Medina, 2013). Furthermore, its construction was as an extension of the concept of epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007) which highlights how epistemology perpetrates unjust practices against an individual as an agent of knowledge. Epistemic resistance thus serves as a mechanism to resist and challenge epistemological inequities (Medina, 2013). Medina (2013) ascribed two facets to his idea of resistance: the "analytic," which illuminates the epistemological traits associated with oppression, and the "normative," which attempts to provide a process for challenging the injustice tied to oppression (p. 3). In this context, Medina (2013) suggested that oppression was the "enemy of knowledge... [because]...it handicaps our capacity to know and to learn from each other" (p. 27).

The integration of epistemic resistance within this theoretical bricolage presents an opportunity to challenge and change the epistemic injustices perpetuated against subjugated standpoints. Understanding the entrenched epistemic injustices present within the epistemology of leadership theory provides an intellectual mechanism to alter the inequity of dominant

discourses, by utilizing Medina's notion of epistemic resistance. Epistemic resistance also offers a potential pathway to enhance the epistemology of leadership because it places the concept of resistance in the context of "opposing forces" (Medina, 2013, p. 49). Within Medina's conceptual framework (2013), the term resistance is utilized within a cognitive context to examine how forces were applied to "beliefs and belief systems" (p. 48). This framework illustrates that "[r]esistance' has a strong *reactive meaning*: it involves the interplay of forces reacting against each other" (p. 49).

Within the realm of leadership, the exertion of epistemic resistance occurs in a myriad of ways. As a facet, resistance utilizes intersectionality as an opposing force to question how leadership theory interacts with the construct of identity. Epistemic resistance also suggests the inclusion of new pedagogical references that engage the complexity and intersection of identity, beyond the singular and additive approaches. Consideration of how structural intersectionality and the construct of power impact the intersection of non-dominant perspectives likewise illustrates the application of epistemic resistance to leadership theory. In this regard, epistemic resistance presents a means to interrogate epistemic injustices perpetuated against women as leaders. Understanding entrenched epistemic injustices present within the epistemology of leadership theory thus offers an intellectual mechanism to alter the inequity of dominant discourses.

While the implied strategy within this analysis focuses on marginalized standpoints, it is important to remember that a leader's identity can encompass both dominant and non-dominant perspectives. Engaging this duality beyond a binary framework also serves as an essential locus for this theoretical bricolage. While this bridge from intersectionality to leadership is a relatively new research focus, it is critical to continue to seek out opportunities to challenge an entrenched

and persistent male-normed standard within the discipline. In this respect, epistemic resistance can expand the epistemological parameters of leadership. One way it does so is by provoking tension through a new epistemological strategy—epistemic friction.

Epistemic friction. The act of engaging epistemic resistance between intersectionality and leadership results in what Medina (2013) called epistemic friction (p. 50). According to his definition, “Epistemic friction consists in the mutual contestation of differently normatively structured knowledges which interrogates epistemic exclusions, disqualifications, and hegemonies” (2011, p. 21). When applied in a cognitive framework, epistemic friction examines the engagement of beliefs in an “internal and external” (Medina, 2013, p. 49) fashion; each of which can be “beneficial” (p. 50) or “detrimental” (p. 50). An illustration of internal epistemic friction is the resistance it generates serves to offset external effects, in order to challenge “ignorance” and reveal intolerance (Medina, 2013, p. 50). Alternatively, the “external epistemic resistance” experienced by individuals can illustrate “beneficial epistemic friction” (Medina, 2013, p. 50). This benefit is derived by compelling an individual “to be self-critical,” evaluate “beliefs,” and acknowledge “cognitive gaps” (Medina, 2013, p. 50). Friction, in this context, can be operationalized internally and externally, in order to challenge epistemic injustice (Medina, 2013, p. 50). A further attribute of friction is its capacity to place “knowledge(s)” in contradiction with one another in order to fight the “monopolization” of established epistemic practices (Medina, 2011, p. 13). Additionally, epistemological friction is utilized to ensure that marginalized standpoints are recognized and placed within the same corpus of traditional epistemological perspectives and allowed to generate friction by being different (Medina, 2011, p. 21).

Meta-lucidity. Another attribute associated with epistemic friction is the concept of “meta-lucidity” (Medina, 2013, p. 47). According to Medina (2013), individuals who experience oppression have the cognitive capacity to understand the shortcomings associated with dominant perspectives. As such, meta-lucidity highlights how varied perspectives “redraw our cognitive maps, to re-describe our experiences, and to re-conceptualize our ways of relating to others” (Medina, 2013, p. 47). In terms of race, for example, meta-lucidity gives marginalized subjects the unique capacity to cognitively recognize “blind spots” missed by racial groups in socially dominant positions (Medina, 2013, p. 196). Such cognitive awareness provides oppressed individuals with the ability to acquire “meta-insights about the cognitive structures and epistemic habits of others in their social context” (Medina, 2013, p. 197). These insights foster meta-lucidity and enable knowledge generated by both the oppressed and privileged subjects to remain in interaction, generating friction. Beeby (2013) suggested:

Resistance is sensitivity to our own knowledge practices and those of others. It is contestation—the practice of challenging dominant beliefs and ideologies. And most importantly, it is not a solo endeavor. The things we must resist—distortions in our collective knowledge resources and practices caused by racism and sexism—affect everyone. (pp. 66–67)

The practice of meta-lucidity further reveals inherent epistemic biases within the philosophical canon, and in so doing arms agents of change with the capacity to highlight marginalized realities within leadership theory and reveal a broader range of epistemological perspectives.

Leadership and change. Integral to this paradigmatic stance is altering the epistemology of leadership to incorporate an intersectional perspective of leadership identity and illuminate socio-historical factors that contributed to this epistemic status quo. As such, an inquiry into change theory is necessary, but with a specific emphasis on leadership theory. The selection of adaptive leadership serves as an example of how to address the concept of change within the epistemology of leadership theory. Northouse (2016) described this theory as centering “on the

adaptations required of people in response to changing environments and how leaders [could] support them during these changes” (p. 274). Adaptive leadership is appealing to this analysis because of the contributions of Heifetz (1994) who is credited with developing the concepts which undergird adaptive leadership theory and “originally intended as a practical framework for theory building” (p. 276). This original intent makes it an ideal parameter to examine how the concept of change applies to leadership theory.

What then were the concepts aligned with Heifetz’s original thinking of how adaptive leadership applies to theory-building? One of the central thoughts of this theory challenges the idea that leadership is value-free (Heifetz, 1994):

Rigor in social science does not require that we ignore values; it simply requires being explicit about the values we study. There is no neutral ground from which to construct notions and theories of leadership because leadership terms, loaded with emotional content, carry with them implicit norms and values. (p. 14)

This assertion is important because it suggests that the epistemology of leadership is constructed by “norms and values” (Heifetz, 1994, p. 14) and provides the opportunity to investigate these dynamics further. As a discourse dominated by male perspectives, this normed standard construct values based on the predominate perspectives within leadership theory. Feminist intellectuals utilized a similar strategy to critique the epistemology of philosophy given the hegemonic frames within meaning-making that exclude women (Alcoff & Potter, 1993; Code, 1991, 1993). Scholars who support intersectionality exercised this same rationale in order to engage the perspectives of marginalized standpoints within the construction of knowledge (Crenshaw, 2018; King, Ryan, & Wessel, 2016; Moorosi, 2014; Von Wahl, 2011; Wagner & Pigza, 2016). The idea that knowledge is not neutral, but rather influenced by social norms which are skewed to privilege White men over other historically underrepresented groups, served as the inspiration to expand the epistemology of leadership.

Acknowledging the fallacy of value-neutrality allows researchers to consider how non-dominant perspectives, particularly those of women, have been excluded within leadership theory. This rationale for this epistemological assertion was affirmed by Heifetz (1994), who maintained that “[l]eadership is equated with prominence and dominance” (p. 15). This perspective, he further suggested, prompts an important question: “How and why do particular individuals gain power in an organization or society?” (Heifetz, 1994, p. 16). Given the environment which constructs leadership theory and those who dominate the field, this assertion presumes a male order. Thus, Heifetz added, “Many scholarly approaches to the study of leadership during the last two hundred years focus on the phenomena of prominent and influential people” (1994, p. 16). This stance not only argues that the epistemology of leadership is flawed, but suggests that socio-historical factors resulted in power being assigned to dominant perspectives. This locus between identity, socio-historical context, and power within adaptive leadership served as the inspiration for the development of this theoretical bricolage.

Another relevant element of the adaptive leadership model is the idea that there are “hidden values” within leadership theory (Heifetz, 1994, p. 16). Utilizing the examples of great man theory, contingency theory, situational leadership, and transactional leadership theory, Heifetz (1994) asserted that the hidden presumption within these leadership theories is that they are value-free. Furthermore, he identified a central theme in these theories which illustrates how leaders exert their “influence” on others:

By stating that the mark of leadership is influence over outcomes, these theorists unwittingly enter the value realm. Leadership-as-influence implicitly promotes influence as an orienting value, perpetuating a confusion between means and ends. These four general approaches attempt to define leadership objectively, without making value judgments. When defining leadership in terms of prominence, authority, and influence, however, these theories introduce value-biases implicitly without declaring their introduction and without arguing for the necessity of the values introduced. (Heifetz, 1994, p. 18)

The variables of value-neutrality and value-bias apply to this review for several reasons. First, the value-neutral stance within leadership theories maintains the epistemological exclusion of non-dominant perspectives. Additionally, the value-bias present within leadership theories perpetrates an epistemic bias against historically marginalized others, because it presumes the dominant perspective of White males. Given the epistemic shortcomings relative to value-neutrality and value-bias, Heifetz (1994) asserted that leadership theory must be examined within the social context in which it occurred, in order to inspire individuals to address “tough problems” (p. 15). He added: “When we teach, write about, and model the exercise of leadership, we inevitably support or challenge people’s conceptions of themselves, their roles, and most importantly their ideas about how social systems make progress on problems” (Heifetz, 1994, p. 14).

Thus, adaptive leadership theory reveals how the hidden epistemic flaws exercised through value-free and value neutrality discourses within leadership uniquely impact marginalized groups. More specifically, these flaws served as the inspiration to consider how unjust epistemic practices impacted women. The capacity to change leadership through the incorporation of an intersectional lens presented the opportunity to enhance its epistemology—particularly as it relates to the constructs of identity, socio-historical context, and power—given how these facets reveal hidden flaws within leadership theory’s production of knowledge.

Women’s leadership. The exclusionary stances which pervade leadership theory led scholars to consider additional paradigms necessary to alter the epistemology of women’s leadership. Storberg-Walker and Haber-Curran (2017) contend “woman-normed leadership theories are the lynchpin needed to catalyze change” (p. 2). Merton (2010) posited that theories

create “facts” (p. 196) that in-groups (those who hold power) utilize to establish norms within society. As a result, the dominant in-group establishes social expectations that advance their version of theory and, in doing so, discount the non-dominant outgroup. Ferraro, Pfeffer, and Sutton (2005) added:

Social science theories can become self-fulfilling by shaping institutional designs and management practices, as well as social norms and expectations about behavior, thereby creating the behavior they predict. They also perpetuate themselves by promulgating language and assumptions that become widely used and accepted. (p. 8)

The ability of theories to generate self-fulfilling realities and for in-groups to utilize their power to construct social norms impacted leadership theory (Storberg-Walker & Haber-Curran, 2017). Furthermore, the capacity to advance gender equity within leadership theory could alter established norms and disrupt the in-group’s capacity to set social expectations (Storberg-Walker & Haber-Curran, 2017). This change process provides scholars with the ability to “use theory to reshape the definitions of leadership; the expectations about leaders; and the structures and practices in organizations, communities, and other social structures” (Storberg-Walker & Haber-Curran, 2017, p. 7). In this respect, theorists can become “change agents” whose social justice agenda advocates gender equity within the discourse of leadership (Storberg-Walker & Haber-Curran, 2017, p. 7).

Summary

This chapter highlighted epistemic shortcomings within the production of knowledge to illustrate why these gaps warranted attention. Bricolage was the ideal methodological choice because it provided the intellectual tools to cull knowledge from multiple theoretical perspectives relevant to philosophy, intersectionality, and leadership. Woven within this research design was an examination of interdisciplinarity, complexity, and reflexivity—facets unique to a bricolage methodology. An additional focus of this design was a review of the requisite elements aligned

with a theoretical bricolage, as well as a theoretical analysis of how intersectionality and leadership theories share a similar epistemological framework. Collectively, these research approaches illustrate why bricolage is the ideal methodology suited to reveal how intersectionality is beneficial to the epistemology of leadership theory.

Chapter III: Epistemology Theory, Research, and Practice

Establishing a theoretical link between intersectionality and leadership warrants a critical review of the epistemology of each theory to establish how non-dominant perspectives, particularly those of women, were marginalized within the academy. Understanding how the practice of justified true belief, an epistemological tool to determine what is true in the production of knowledge, maintained this epistemic injustice served as a focal point of inquiry. Investigating how feminist scholars critiqued epistemology to consider the influence of social context and the relevance of gender is another area of analysis. An additional sphere of review explored the intellectual shift from feminist epistemology to intersectionality, emphasizing its key tenets and its varied categories. Another area of inquiry established an epistemological link between intersectionality and leadership by illustrating the relevance of identity development within both theories. This focus also considers the implications of gender, specifically for women, in relation to their development as leaders.

Epistemology thus serves as the foundation to build a theoretical bricolage because it reveals how the production of knowledge is constructed within the academic tradition. This literature review establishes how the development of feminist epistemology relates to the subjects of intersectionality and leadership. Furthermore, an analysis of the importance of the feminist critiques of epistemology highlight how androcentric limitations imposed upon intellectual inquiry spans all academic disciplines, inclusive of leadership.

Epistemology: Where are the Women?

Development and context. Credit for the word “epistemology” belongs to the Scottish metaphysical writer and philosopher Ferrier, who coined the term in 1856 by combining the Greek words logos, signifying explanation, and episteme, denoting meaning, to construct his

“theory of knowledge” (p. 49). Ferrier believed that the primary condition of knowledge was the ego and that a requisite for knowing is an understanding of oneself (pp. 75–76). Duymedjian and Ruling (2010) offer a more contemporary definition by describing epistemology as “what is known, as well as the nature and validity of knowledge used and produced” (p. 140). Collins (1990) suggested that epistemology studies philosophical questions related to truth and knowledge. This theoretical tradition to justify what was true in knowledge used the mathematical model of justified true belief (JTB), which posited: *S* knows *p*, a proposition, only if *S* believes *p* and *p* is true (Goldman & Beddor, 2016). Intrinsic to the operation of JTB is the utilization of objectivity to assign neutrality to the knower, i.e., the subject of *S*, in order to achieve validity within the scientific tradition (Code, 1991).

A central shortcoming of justified true belief is the “persistent androcentrism and frequent sexism” (Code, 1991, p. 161) that has been the source of critique amongst feminists, who argued that the gender of the knower is epistemologically significant (Grasswick, 2018). De Beauvoir (2011) affirmed this limitation when she observed that “[r]epresentation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth” (p. 196). This assertion was supported by Hurtado (1989) who suggested that within the United States marginalized groups are “positioned in a particular and distinct relationship to White men, and each form of subordination is shaped by this relational position” (p. 833). When considering the construct of gender in relation to the construction of knowledge, Code (1991) suggested that the sex of the knower is epistemologically noteworthy:

The *S* who could count as a model, paradigmatic knower has most commonly—if always tacitly—been an adult (but not old), white, reasonably affluent (latterly middle-class) educated man of status, property, and publicly acceptable accomplishments. This assumption does not merely derive from habit or coincidence but is a manifestation of engrained philosophical convictions.... It is no exaggeration to say that anyone who wanted to count as a knower has commonly had to be male. (pp. 8–9)

A result of this while male-normed standard is scholars contend that as a theory of knowledge, epistemology, is void of non-dominant perspectives (Bar On, 1993; Ferguson, 1979; Frye, 1978; Hartsock, 1983).

Relevance of justified true belief. One central facet of JTB is its emphasis on propositional knowing at the omission of other types of knowledge, such as knowing people (Code, 1996). JTB also consistently directs the focus away from the distinctiveness of the knower, which relegates inquiries related to epistemic authority to an ostensibly disembodied and non-particular knower (Hekman, 1995). This established practice is counter to the reality that as individuals we know or do not know the world well (Collins, 1990; Frye, 1983; Garry, 2017; Schott, 2007). JTB is commonly referenced utilizing masculine terminology and intimates that attributes like caring and emotion, characteristically relegated to the feminine, construct a perception that women are less justified in their beliefs (Bordo, 1990; Le Doeuff, 1991; Lloyd, 1995).

Haslanger (1999) engaged JTB theory in the following manner:

In saying that S knows that p, I am saying that S has met certain cognitive/doxastic standards, with respect to the *belief* that p; because truth is a constitutive goal of belief, this partly explains why we take truth to be a primary condition for knowledge. (p. 471)

She added that within the discipline of philosophy, the “something more beyond true belief” is traditionally viewed as justification (Haslanger, 1999, p. 472). Zagzebski (1999) maintained, “[f]or several decades the concept of justification has received an enormous amount of attention since it was assumed that the JTB definition of knowledge was more or less accurate and that the concept of justification was the weak link in the definition” (p. 100).

Code (1987) extended this analysis further by questioning why epistemologists in their examination of knowledge seldom ask, “But whose claims? When? And in what circumstances?”

(p. ix). Collins (1990) applied Code's point to the case of African-American scholars who struggle with two competing versions of what epistemology determines is true: the standpoint of Black feminist scholars versus the privileged perspective of White men. This binary, by virtue of privilege, assigns White men with a higher degree of epistemic authority, making it difficult for African-American women to discern "whom to trust, what to believe, and why something is true" (Collins, 2000, pp. 252–253). The need to examine established epistemological tradition was supported by Haslanger (1999), who asked: "How is feminist inquiry into gender and the sexism of our epistemic practices relevant to this project?... Can feminist inquiry tell us something about what conditions we should include in an 'analysis' of *S* knows that *p*?" (pp. 473–474). These meaning-making practices illustrate an epistemic tradition which excludes women as agents within the production of knowledge. In order to explain the persistence of the JTB model requires revisiting our understanding of what knowledge is, as well as challenging established epistemological practices (Haslanger, 1999).

Historical exclusion of women and the resulting impacts. The exclusion of women by philosophical forefathers has continued within the canon for 25 centuries (Le Doeuff, 1989). This tradition persisted, in part, due to the "the gendered interpretations of theoretical concepts, like matter and form in Aristotle... overarching philosophical concepts of reason and objectivity [which] have been gendered as male" (Schott, 2007, p. 46). Feminist philosophers challenged the practice of universal applicability because "part of what it means for a moral theory or an epistemology to be universal is that it must be usable by a full range of human beings, not just by members of a dominant social group" (Garry, 2017, para. 9).

While these omissions illustrate how the canon excluded women from epistemology, it is necessary to understand the cumulative effects of this practice. Foremost, the historical absence

of women within the canon resulted in an “oxymoron problem” between the terms women and philosophy (Bordo, 1999, p. 251). An illustration of this practice is found in a comparison between the work of scholars like Makin and Le Doeuff. Makin (1673), a 17th century English proto-feminist, noted in the 17th century that “[w]omen have been profound philosophers. [Yet,] A Learned Woman is thought to be a Comet, that bodes Mischief, whenever it appears” (para. 1). Three centuries later this sentiment was echoed by Le Doeuff (1989), whose assessment of the “classical pantheon” revealed that it was a primarily male enterprise in which men usurped “philosophical rationality” in their image (p. 5). Another impact of these exclusionary practices was articulated by Code (1991), who argued that the foundational base of epistemology had been historically grounded on the notion that women lack the capacity to “think” (p. 304). Witt and Shapiro (2015) asserted: “Our tradition tells us, either implicitly through images and metaphors, or explicitly in so many words, that philosophy itself, and its norms of reason and objectivity, excludes everything that is feminine or associated with women” (para. 2).

Emerging from this pattern of exclusion was the development of feminist philosophy, which served as a critique of the prevailing androcentric bias. While a recent breakthrough within the Western intellectual tradition, feminist philosophy has become a “major subdiscipline within philosophy” (Stone, 2007, p. 1). Alcoff and Kittay (2007) noted: “For what is new in the more recent period of feminist work in philosophy is a greater self-consciousness about precisely the relationship between feminism and philosophy, and a questioning of philosophy itself as understood through the canonical works” (p. 4). Beyond its commitment to name and remove gender bias from the philosophical tradition, Gardner (2009) suggested that feminist philosophy strives to educate and reconstitute the philosophical canon. Furthermore, Alcoff and Kittay (2007) asserted that feminist philosophy transforms the canon itself by asking new questions

which provide the opportunity to construct original research approaches, as evidenced by the scholarship within the areas of ethics and epistemology (p. 10).

This review of the historical exclusion of women reveals how the epistemological terrain constructed and refined a framework of what defined knowledge in order to maintain a tradition of epistemic exclusion. A review of Plato's formula of justified true belief illustrates the breadth of philosophical scholarship undertaken to answer the question: What is knowledge? Yet, this analysis also illustrates how the canon of philosophy utilized gender, rationality, universality, and neutrality as its basis to justify the systematic exclusion of women as producers, recipients, and agents of knowledge. In attempting to explain how the intellectual omission of half of humanity is possible, Code (1991) asserted, "Philosophy has rarely claimed to be a theoretical pursuit of the people, by the people, and for the people, not even in Plato's time" (p. 267).

Framing Feminist Epistemology

The emergence of feminist epistemology in the 1970s represented a marked shift within philosophy by challenging inequities embedded within the traditional canon (Doucet & Mauthner, 2006). In order to understand the significance of how feminist epistemology emerged as a new theoretical body of work, this section presents a review of its relationship to feminist philosophy, an analysis of its development as a theoretical construct, and an account of how its critique of the traditional canon challenged central tenets of knowledge.

Development of a new theoretical tool. How is feminist epistemology distinct from feminist philosophy? Feminist epistemology, a subset and relatively new addition to feminist philosophy, analyzes the epistemic relevance of gender by examining how one comes to comprehend knowledge (Jiang, 2005). Conversely, feminist philosophy is philosophy engaged from a feminist perspective which investigates the subject of gender (Code, 2000). Pohlhaus

asserted, “Because feminist epistemology pays attention to gender, it focuses on knowers as particular and embodied. This has led feminist epistemologists to focus attention on what can be called the central concept of feminist epistemology: the situated knower” (G. Pohlhaus, personal communication, February 10, 2016). As such, this situated knower comes to understand knowledge from his or her specific social location is a central focus of feminist scholars (Anderson, 2019).

Longino and Lennon (1997) framed feminist epistemology as having two key foci—the “critical and constructive” (p. 20). The critical area illustrates how androcentrism is actualized in philosophical subjects like “objectivity, reason, knowledge, and rationality” (Longino & Lennon, 1997, p. 20). In contrast, the constructive perspective attempts to acquire an intellectual expanse for the consideration of feminist perspectives (p. 20). Koertge (2012) extends this focus further by suggesting the epistemological tradition be examined within the “social context” in which it emerged (p. 119). Investigating the development of feminist epistemology as a theoretical tool of analysis illuminates this social context.

From these preliminary critiques of the traditional canon by feminist philosophers emerged a new area warranting analysis—feminist epistemology—as scholars examined the correlation between feminist interests and epistemology (Alcoff & Potter, 1993; Code, 1991). This intellectual shift aligned itself with other feminist inquiries that questioned the relationship between the traditional stance of how epistemology viewed the creation of knowledge and subjects like power and gender, specifically masculinity (Gilligan, 1977; Miller, 1976; D. E. Smith, 1974). These early works are critical to framing feminist epistemology within the appropriate philosophical context because they illustrate how scholars grappled with understanding how “feminisms intersect with epistemology” and how “women’s ways of

knowing” challenge the traditional philosophical perspective of “proper epistemology” that discounts “the social context and status of knowers” (Alcoff & Potter, 1993, p. 1).

These early critiques occurred within the sciences and sought to gain insight into the motives for excluding women, as well as how science legitimized its androcentric bias (Alcoff & Kittay, 2007). From the 1960s through the 1980s, feminist scholars were primarily feminist empiricists whose scholarship aimed to fix these shortcomings by integrating women’s viewpoints within research, as well as incorporating more inclusive methodologies (Hesse-Biber, 2012). Harding (1986) suggested that feminist empiricists’ reliance upon empirical science to accurately reflect the world, utilizing the scientific method, is flawed because it presumes that science can eliminate bias from the production of meaning-making. She further maintained, “feminist empiricism argues that sexism and androcentrism are social biases correctible by stricter adherence to the existing methodological norms of scientific inquiry” (Harding, 1986, p. 24).

Another perspective offered by Janack (2017) characterized feminist epistemology as an analysis of the underrepresentation of women in the sciences and the gendered assumptions that dominated scholarship within the disciplines of biology, psychology, and anthropology. The work of Frye (1983) presented one of the earliest critiques of feminist philosophy to explain and analyze the terms “male chauvinism,” (p. 41) “sexism” (p. 17), and “oppression” (p. 1) with the role of women. In doing so, she noted how the roles of women were distinctive and in opposition to the traditional philosophical canon that reflected all human experiences as universal. The focus of these critiques by feminist scholars was to contest the intolerance within their respective areas of scholarship, particularly the theoretical domains which justified androcentrism (Anderson, 2019).

Epistemological expansions. Beyond examining this androcentrism within science, new areas of research interest emerged and expanded the boundaries of feminist epistemology. This expansion examined the connection linking gender to other social identity categories such as socio-economic class, ethnicity, and race (Grasswick, 2018). Alcoff and Potter (1993) supported this development by arguing against the narrow inclination of scholars to target gender as the dominant focal point of oppression. Indeed, the range of research now covers a broad spectrum of academic inquiry ranging from feminist standpoint theory, which suggests that knowledge is socially situated (Harding, 1986, 1991, 1998), to a phenomenological framework examining how the “lived body” operates within the world (Grosz, 1994), to the intersectionality of philosophy with social categories such as transgender identity (Bettcher, 2014), disability (Wendell, 1989), and race (Alcoff, 1997; Crenshaw, 1989; Martínez, 1996; Mills, 1997). As a result of these feminist critiques, an emerging body of scholarship within feminist epistemology reexamined traditional concepts such as justification, objectivity, subjectivity, and credibility, in order to assess their relevance to the construct of gender. An analysis of each of these constructs follows, in order to determine its epistemological significance.

Justification. Within the canon of feminist epistemology, justification is a central concept warranting analysis. A review of the scholarship of Pollock (1999) and Fumerton (2002) illustrates the traditional Western philosophical perspective on this construct, while the work of Code (1987, 1991, 2000) and Dalmiya and Alcoff (1993) offers a counterpoint to contest the established canon. Pollock (1999) suggested that justification is critical to the field of epistemology because “[t]he question ‘How do you know?’ is a question about what justifies you in believing” (p. 383). Fumerton (2002) characterized justification as possibly the “most fundamental” concept within the field of epistemology, describing it as the process of answering

Plato's question, "What must be added to true belief to get knowledge?" (p. 204). Code (2000) defined justification simply as "how theories are tested" (p. 105), but Fieser (2018) elaborated by noting that justification is an integral factor in the construction of knowledge.

Analyzing justification is a formidable process due to a wide spectrum of theoretical approaches that exist within epistemology and the profound variations amongst scholars. Some focus on examining the elements contained within the construct whereas others seek to understand the context in which it arises (Fumerton, 2002, p. 204). Code (1987) asserted that the justification methods of foundationalism and coherentism exemplify the strongest strategies to date to address the challenges in understanding the complexity of what encapsulates the construct of knowledge (p. 7). However, she also observed:

The implicit view often seems to be that, if epistemologists could get clear about what justifies our claims that this is a hand and that is a doorknob, then all the rest would follow. In other words, such propositional claims, once explicated, would provide paradigms for the explanation and justification of all knowledge. (Code, 1987, p. 7)

How then does feminist epistemology engage traditional justification theories? Anderson (2019) explained that the focus of feminist epistemologists and practitioners of science is to investigate how the construct of gender affects our understanding of knowledge, subjectivity, and justification. Furthermore, the scholarship of feminists reveals "dominant conceptions and practices of knowledge attribution, acquisition, and justification systematically disadvantage women and other subordinated groups, and strives to reform these conceptions and practices so that they serve the interests of these groups" (Anderson, 2019, para. 1).

Dalmiya and Alcoff (1993) challenged the traditional justification standard by contending that "the schema '*S* knows that *p*'" (p. 220) is assumed to be adequate for all possible knowledge and as a consequence of this assumption, all-knowing became propositional. Indeed, they utilized the example of old wives' tales to illustrate how contemporary epistemological practices

invalidate this type of knowledge by overlooking the Aristotelian principle that knowledge can be derived utilizing propositional analysis as well as practical experience. The traditional canon further discounts women's practical experience by utilizing a "[u]niform criteria of justification" and subscribing to a "unitary notion of the epistemic norm of truth" (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1993, p. 241). Dalmiya and Alcoff (1993) maintained, "[o]ur claim here is that this almost exclusive preference for 'knowing that' [i.e., propositional] lies at the root of epistemic discrimination" (p. 221). Indeed, they proposed that this traditionalist stance fosters an epistemological perspective which discounts both "experiential knowledge" and "knowing how" (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1993, p. 230). Thus, "epistemic discrimination" is advanced through the practice of "developing definitions of knowledge and stipulating requirements for justification that traditional women's beliefs have generally not met and, in fact, cannot meet" (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1993, p. 217).

How do Dalmiya and Alcoff support this contention? Simply put, they question whether modern epistemology is justified in excluding the conditions of "experiential knowledge" and "knowing how." Their rationale for this assertion is that the definition of knowledge is a "paradox," because examples utilized to define the term are encompassed within the definition of knowledge itself (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1993, p. 231). They likewise contend that:

This strategy for legitimizing knowing how is informed by the attempt to question and overthrow these assumptions about knowledge and to dislodge truth as the sole epistemological norm. Knowing is not necessarily a matter of saying and representing what is the case but can also be a kind of practical involvement with the world. (Dalmiya, 1993, p. 235)

Feminist scholars argue that this epistemological predisposition to utilize justification as the litmus test to determine the veracity of truth is biased (Code, 1991; de Beauvoir, 2011). In challenging the limitations of propositional knowledge, Code (1991) argued that current epistemic practices needed revision:

But in arguing for a remapping of the epistemic terrain, I am taking issue with the implicit belief that epistemologists need only to understand propositional, observationally derived knowledge, and all the rest will follow. I am taking issue also with the concomitant claim that epistemologists need only to understand how such knowledge claims would be made and justified by autonomous, self-reliant reasoners, and they will understand all the rest. Beliefs of this sort are, in the end, politically oppressive in that they rest on exclusionary assumptions about the nature of cognitive agency and mask the experiences one might expect a theory of knowledge to explain. (p. 269)

While this analysis explained how one facet of knowledge, justification, was utilized to exclude women from the epistemological terrain, another area meriting exploration is the construct of objectivity.

Objectivity. To understand the relevance of objectivity to feminist epistemology, it is necessary to discern how Western philosophy has defined the construct, note the critiques made against objectivity, and understand how these philosophical challenges altered the terrain of feminist epistemology. Porter (1996) defined objectivity as signifying, within the majority of circumstances, “fairness and impartiality” (p. 4). He added that when scholars addressed the subject of objectivity within the scientific realm, they referred to “its ability to know things as they really are” (Porter, 1996, p. 3). In this respect, the scientific community consistently regarded objectivity as the representative standard for “scientific inquiry,” assigning value to the “knowledge” generated by science, and inquiring into the foundation by which science exercised its “authority... in society” (Reiss & Sprenger, 2014, para. 1).

While these definitions are useful to establish how the canon approached this subject, how does the practice of objectivity occur within the philosophical realm? Scholars such as Keller (1985) and Harding (1986) asserted that the operation of objectivity was utilized to minimize individuals who reside at the margins of society. This marginalization occurred through a range of philosophical practices which serve to discount one’s ability to know by suggesting a lack of objectivity (Anderson, 2019; Bordo, 1987; Daston & Galison, 2007). These

practices operate by defining objectivity as masculine in relation to the feminine which renders the feminine as lacking objectivity (Hillman, 1972; MacKinnon, 1987) and so de-authorizes women capacity to access knowledge equally.

Keller (1985) observed that “the exclusion of the feminine from science has been historically constitutive of a particular definition of science—as incontrovertibly objective, universal, impersonal—and masculine” (p. 47). MacKinnon (1987) asserted that objectivity, a standard by which epistemologists determine what was true, is flawed because the “social” operation of objectivity highlights how the presence of androcentrism objectifies women (p. 50). Hillman (1972) supported this contention by suggesting “[t]he specific consciousness we call scientific, Western, and modern was the long-sharpened tool of the masculine mind that had discarded parts of its own substance, calling it ‘Eve,’ ‘female’ and ‘inferior’” (p. 250). Two specific sites where the practice of hegemony influenced objectivity can be found in the concepts of detachment (Bordo 1987; Keller, 1985) and value neutrality (Harding 1991, 1998; Longino 1990, 2001; Potter 1993), both of which have been used to define objectivity in ways that delegitimize women as “objective” knowers.

Within the scientific community, detachment was assigned merit because its practice fortified the belief that establishing distance between an object of study and the researcher maintains the integrity of epistemic objectivity (Anderson, 2019). Nelson (1995) supported this assertion by noting, “the abstract, general, separated, detached, emotionless, ‘masculine’ approach taken to represent scientific thinking, is radically removed from, and clearly seen as superior to, the concrete, particular, connected, embodied, passionate, ‘feminine’ reality of material life” (p. 40). It is this established tradition which assigned “positive value” and “unequivocal virtue” to masculine detachment and relegated the feminine as inferior (Nelson,

1995, p. 40). The result of this epistemological tradition was fortifying the stereotype that women are emotional beings who lack the capacity to be emotionally detached from the practice of good thinking (Anderson, 2019). As a result, this epistemological convention maintained a masculine paradigmatic standard within science whose practice marginalized women (Keller, 1985).

The construct of value-neutrality further illustrates the limitations within the operationalization of objectivity. In establishing the relationship between objectivity and value-neutrality, it is worth noting that objectivity was characterized by Code (1991) as a “defining feature of knowledge” (p. 10). Fee (1983) added that objectivity epitomizes how the construction of knowledge is rooted in science. Value-neutrality was linked to objectivity because it was considered an “ideal of objectivity” which served to “guard against temptations toward wishful thinking and dogmatic, politically motivated or ideological reasoning” (Anderson, 2019, para. 96). The standard of value-neutrality also suggests a separation between a knower and the object of study and utilizes this gap as indicative of the scientific pursuit of “perfect objectivity” (Code, 1991, p. 32). Within science this quest for perfection was the clearest process to determine what is epistemologically true. Feminist scholars contested this objectivity standard by suggesting that the ideal of value-neutrality held by scientists is both misleading and impractical (Harding 1991, 1998; Longino 1990, 2001; Potter, 1993). Anderson (2019) argued that the scientific stance of neutrality was counterproductive because it “blocks [scientists’] recognition of the ways their values have shaped their inquiry, and thereby prevents the exposure of these values to critical scrutiny” (para. 96).

While the hegemonic practice of defining objectivity as masculine in such concepts as detachment and value-neutrality illustrates how the operation of objectivity deviates from its

structural definition, how have these philosophical challenges been altered the terrain of feminist epistemology? According to Longino (2010), with the arrival of a feminist perspective within the canon, matters related to “the responsibility of knowers” were reexamined and met with antagonism from traditionalists, but made an impression on those disappointed with the current state of affairs within philosophy (p. 734). She speculated that this awareness was the result of understanding how “our experience as objects of knowledge... gave us a particular vantage point. We knew what it was like to be ‘known,’ and it was not pleasant” (Longino, 2010, p. 734). This heightened feminist perspective led to the development of new scholarship, which not only challenged the narrow definitions of objectivity but presented original thinking on how to foster a more inclusive understanding of objectivity within philosophy.

One representative example is Haraway’s (1988) construct of feminist objectivity, which highlights how feminist epistemologists advanced the debate regarding the definitional limitations of objectivity by moving the spectrum beyond value-neutrality, to examine how the context of gender situates individuals differently within the canon. This shift represented a new way of considering how one’s situated perspective creates “situated knowledges” (Haraway, 1988, p. 581) and is significant because it illustrated how feminist scholars were not satisfied with the inherent limitations of a neutral viewpoint (Anderson, 2019). Neutrality, negated what is unique to women’s perspectives and failed to acknowledge how gender differences, in effect feminist objectivity, could be of benefit to epistemology. Anderson (2019) posited: “What attention to situated knowledge does do is enable questions to be raised and addressed that are difficult to frame in epistemologies that assume that gender, and the social situation of the knower more generally, is irrelevant to knowledge” (para. 32).

Furthermore, feminists were not content to have epistemology insert “different details for the ‘neutral perspective’ either” (G. Pohlhaus, personal communication, February 10, 2016). Rather, epistemologists sought to advance a perspective which required that one be held responsible for his or her own “situated perspectives” (G. Pohlhaus, personal communication, February 10, 2016). The impact of this shift in thinking about objectivity as a “situated” viewpoint had the effect of nullifying the privilege neutrality afforded the traditional stance of the scientific method. Instead of proposing that women could be as objective as their male counterparts, feminist epistemologists challenged the traditional canon’s definition of objectivity by asserting “that it is vital to account for the social positioning of the social agent” (Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002, p. 315). Thus, the construction of feminist objectivity served to contest the scientific standard of value-neutrality and was indicative of how scholars began to alter the terrain of feminist epistemology.

The philosophical terrain altered even further due to challenges levied against methodological practices related to the operation of objectivity. An illustration of these practices can be found in the work of Eichler (1988), who examined how to circumvent androcentric bias and contradictory research standards. It is likewise featured in the idea of feminist “consciousness raising” by MacKinnon (1987), and the Marxist political concept of “feminist historical materialism” by Hartsock (1983), which advances the notion that feminist inquiry could be both a method and an epistemology. Other scholars like Nielsen (1990) and Reinharz and Davidman (1992) embraced methodological approaches which incorporated a feminist perspective. On the other end of the research spectrum, Harding (1987) insisted that there was no single research method focused on feminist inquiry, but instead suggested scientists cull their research from a variety of methods applicable to the focus of their investigation.

Another epistemological impact was the introduction of Harding's (1991) "strong objectivity" (p. 149). Harding (1991) proposed the idea of strong objectivity to counter the limitations of objectivity, suggesting that researchers initiate their research from the perspective of a marginalized group and utilize reflexive analysis to understand in what way their social location impacted their work. The location of marginalized perspectives was critical because "they are least likely to allow denial of the critical and interpretive core of all knowledge... and seem to promise a more adequate, sustained, objective, transforming accounts of the world" (Haraway, 1988, p. 584).

As a counter to the value-free, neutral method which disregarded social location and the marginalized perspective, Harding (1991) argued that this alternative approach provided the researcher with strong objectivity. Hesse-Biber (2012) added that exercising strong objectivity compelled scholars to contemplate the standards and motives they utilize in the exploration of philosophy. Harding (1993) noted that strong objectivity necessitated "the subject of knowledge be placed on the same critical, causal plane as the objects of knowledge" (p. 69). Harding's concept represents a theoretical shift to analyze humanity from the viewpoint of the marginalized and hence represents knowledge as "more objective" (Garry, 2017, para. 38). Hesse-Biber (2012) characterized Harding's epistemological contribution as an illustration of how to exercise "feminist objectivity" (p. 10), which resulted in the creation of "new epistemologies of knowledge by incorporating women's lived experiences, emotions, and feelings into the knowledge-building process" (p. 10).

The collective impact of feminist challenges against the traditional canon's limited view of objectivity resulted in new, original, and inclusive theoretical approaches that enhanced scholars' perspectives of how to engage knowledge, particularly from the viewpoints of those

who reside at the margins. Additionally, these philosophical shifts helped feminist epistemologists illustrate how the narrow definition of objectivity warranted revision.

Subjectivity. The search for what justifies true belief warrants understanding the linkage between subjectivity and objectivity. Bowie (2003) suggested that objectivity “depends upon its other, the subject which defines it: there would be no way of understanding the term without its other” (p. 12). The traditional canon views objectivity as creating distance between an individual and knowledge, in order to establish a detachment between the knower and the knowledge. In contrast, subjectivity seeks to bind the knower and knowledge by examining the self and one’s interaction with the world to determine what is true. Harding (1992) described this process as understanding the social location in which a knower exists and noted how the canon had perceived subjectivity as an intellectual threat with the capacity to taint “pure knowledge” (p. 189).

A feminist challenge to subjectivity was advanced by Code (2011), who posited: “The subject—the knowing subject, the moral-political subject—has often . . . been invisible in philosophy, as the unaddressed and unspecified presence behind or within analysis of knowing, being, and acting” (p. 716). Garry (2017) supported Code’s contention that the standard rubric of justified true belief is limited when analyzing subjectivity within the corpus of epistemology. She suggested that a stronger and more compelling account of knowledge would encapsulate a wider gamut of instances which reflect the reality of human existence. This conceptual shift would result in an inability to utilize “the interchangeable subject, *S*, but must include subjective features of *S* such as the person's identity, interests or circumstances” (Garry, 2017, para. 34). These facets provided scholars with the capacity to understand not only the complexity related to “knowing a person” (Garry, 2017, para. 41), but also how these components could be utilized to analyze how

“political interests” (para. 41) were exercised to regulate “who is allowed to be a standard knower, that is, an *S* (Code 1991, 1995, 1998)” (para. 34).

Subjectivity is significant to feminist epistemology because it critiques how the academy regarded “the knower” as a featureless abstraction. In extending her earlier analysis of subjectivity, Code (2011) offered this perspective:

A viable feminist analysis has to start from a recognition that selves/subjects are always embodied and situated. . . and details of their specificity and positioning are germane to understanding how they are as, human selves/subjects, thrown together and thrown into a complex, rich, challenging, often intractable world. (p. 717)

Code (1993) further asserted the construct of gender was not a classification that could be constrained, but rather it was interconnected with ethnicity, race, and socio-economic class, amongst other social identity categories (p. 20). These locations, she noted, are felt in different manners and also intersect with “structures of power and dominance... [and] [h]omogenizing those differences under a range of standard or typical instances always invites the question, ‘standard or typical for whom?’ Answers to that question must necessarily take subjectivity into account” (Code, 1991, p. 20).

To illustrate her point, Code (1993) utilized the work of fellow philosopher Foley. She suggested that his theoretical analysis of epistemic rationality relied upon the “standard S-knows-that-p rubric” by utilizing “S” as synonymous with “we,” therefore suggesting that “S” speaks for “everyone” (Code, 1993, p. 22). As a result, the “subjects” represented only a privileged few—“the dominant social group in Western capitalist societies: propertied, educated, white men” who speak for a larger body of “us” (Code, 1993, p. 23). Harding (1992) asserted that marginalized subjectivities are necessary within the corpus of epistemology because they enable the production of knowledge (p. 187). She added: “Knowledge from the perspective of women’s lives could not occur without this public act of women naming their experience in their

terms. It is these subjectivities that legitimate knowledge claims” (Harding, 1992, p. 187). While Code and Harding differ in their stance on subjectivity, their scholarship reveals the range of perspectives on the topic of subjectivity. Furthermore, given how the constructs of justification, subjectivity, and objectivity were utilized to limit women’s access to knowledge, the subject of credibility is another theoretical construct warranting review.

Credibility. Why is credibility significant to the canon of philosophy and relevant to the intellectual work of feminist epistemologists? Alcoff (1999) described credibility as the process by which one makes an epistemological evaluation of someone else’s capacity to convey knowledge (p. 1). Medina (2013) assigned specific attributes to the concept and described its impact as “interactive,” suggesting that it operates through the process of comparison and contrast (p. 61). When one is assigned credibility, the perception is that this individual has more, less, or equal credibility to others (Medina, 2013). Medina further asserted that the practice of credibility applies to “clusters of subjects, in particular, social networks and environments” (p. 61), as opposed to individuals. In this context, some “clusters” (Medina, 2013, p. 61) are allocated more credibility, which he labeled an “excess” (p. 63), while other groups were allotted less credibility, which he labeled a “deficit” (p. 62). In applying the practice of credibility within the context of oppression, an excess of credibility granted to any specific group assigned that cluster as being “more worthy of epistemic trust” (Medina, 2013, p. 63), while those groups deemed less credible received “less epistemic trust” (p. 63). As a result of these disparate dynamics, the privileged cluster can enjoy a higher degree of epistemic authority, which fosters an epistemic injustice between those given more credibility and those relegated a deficit of epistemic authority (Medina, 2013).

As members of a group assigned less credibility, women have been the recipients of epistemic injustice, specifically testimonial injustice (Fricker, 2007). Testimonial injustice is described as an “identity-prejudicial credibility deficit” whereby an individual, based on his or her identity group affiliation, is the recipient of less credibility because the hearer has a prejudice affiliated with the speaker’s social identity group (Fricker, 2007, p. 4). Credibility thus emerges as a central theme within feminist epistemology because it strikes at the core of how epistemological practices discount women as agents of knowledge due to the practice of testimonial injustice. Grasswick (2011) asserted:

[i]t is perhaps unsurprising that equity activists would draw strong conclusions about testimonial injustice, delineating innumerable ways in which gender schemas determine (unfairly) who counts as a credible knower and who gets credit for contributions to the collective store of authoritative disciplinary knowledge. (p. 176)

Beyond the practice of testimonial injustice, the Western philosophical canon traditionally engaged epistemology by diminishing women’s credibility as knowers (Frye, 1983; Langton, 2000). Alcoff (1999) introduced the relevance of this idea by asking, “In assessing a claim or judgement, is it relevant to take into account the social identity of the person who has made the claim? Does a claim or judgment gain or lose credibility in virtue of the claimant’s social identity?” (p. 3). Langton (2000) answered this question by noting one way in which women get “left out” (p. 130): they are neither counted as knowers nor are they assigned “intersubjective authority” (p. 132). This argument was supported by other scholars, who suggested that those who belong to a marginalized group inclusive of women and minorities, as well as the young and the elderly, are perceived as lacking credibility (Code, 1995; Fricker, 1998, 1999; Frye, 1983; Govier, 1999; Jones, 2002; McConkey, 2004). Marginalization thus results in a lack of credibility when the affected group, in this case, women, are not

acknowledged as knowers by other knowers (Langton, 2000). This unbalanced allocation of social power serves to distort the credibility of marginalized groups (Langton, 2000).

Fricker (2007) extended this idea further by applying Wartenberg's idea of "social alignment" (p. 13) to illustrate how the social operation of power served "to effect social control" (p. 13). Specifically, social power is exercised as "a practically socially situated capacity to control others' actions, where this capacity may be exercised (actively or passively) by particular social agents, or alternatively, it may operate purely structurally" (Fricker, 2007, p. 13).

Credibility, utilized in this framework, provides context for understanding how some epistemic injustices, such as testimonial injustice, exert themselves within the canon. In this respect, being assigned less credibility compromises the capacity to believe an individual and illustrates the practice of testimonial injustice. By linking social power to one's capacity to be a knower, Fricker introduced the broader category of epistemic injustice whereby one is wronged "in their capacity as a knower" (2007, p. 1). McConkey (2004) added that the notion of epistemic injustice is a process which confers credibility to knowers (p. 198). Similarly, Langton (2000) explained that epistemic injustice "can arise from an unjust distribution of credibility, and which could serve to exclude women from the class of those who fully function as knowers" (p. 132). In this context, credibility is key because its operation reveals how knowledge claims may be predisposed to favor those in power (McConkey, 2004).

Frye (1983) argued that the androcentrism present within philosophy created such a reality, whereby "[a] few, a few men, have with a like satisfaction told the story of the world and human experience—have created what presents to be progressively a more and more complete, accurate, and profound account of what they call 'Man and his World'" (p. 4). The consequence of men exercising their social power to malign the credibility of women as knowers is that

women's version of the "story" fails to get included within the canon of human experience so that the "story" remains incomplete (Langton, 2000, p. 133). As a result, women who break this cycle may have their credibility questioned because "their knowledge may fail to look like knowledge to men, so that women, again, fail to be counted as knowers" (Langton, 2000, p. 133). McConkey (2004) concluded by noting, "Just as a knower is not credible unless they are understood as such by society, a person cannot even begin to count as a knower unless their knowledge claims can be acknowledged" (p. 203).

Summary

This theoretical review of feminist epistemology illustrates how key concepts such as justification, objectivity, subjectivity, and credibility are utilized to establish practices which reinforce and maintain embedded androcentric assumptions. These assumptions reveal a pervasive bias within the philosophical canon regarding the role of women and their capacity to engage knowledge as situated knowers. Feminist critiques within the realm of science began the process of dismantling this epistemological status quo. By situating women to have equal access to the production of knowledge, feminist epistemology constructed new strategies to reexamine the foundation upon which the traditional canon defined knowledge.

This philosophical pushback was evident in the scholarship of Fricker (2007), who framed the practice of exclusion as an epistemic injustice, and Medina (2013), who presented his concept of epistemic resistance to contest and change oppressive ideologies. The epistemological impact of challenging these dynamics is the construction of new theories and scholarship to contest this marginalized reality. The introduction of strong objectivity, standpoint theory, epistemic injustice, and epistemic discrimination highlight just a few of the theoretical challenges to alter this historically pervasive and exclusionary discourse.

Chapter IV: Intersectionality and Leadership Theories, Research, and Practices

Intersectionality

In this chapter, a critical review of intersectionality theory establishes a foundation to construct a theoretical bricolage to leadership theory. It is built by first defining intersectionality, then addressing key areas within the literature on leadership that benefit from the incorporation of an intersectional focus, specifically the subject of identity and its relationship to larger systemic structures in society. This review articulates why these attributes are significant to this discussion through an examination of prior approaches to engaging identity, and addressing how intersectionality offers a new level of epistemological complexity to leadership theory. This level of analysis also evaluates the varied structural categories encompassed by intersectionality.

Defining intersectionality. Crenshaw (1989) coined the term “intersectionality” which is characterized as an “idea” (Floyd, 2012, p. 3), a “theory” (Mann, 2013, p. 59), and a research paradigm (Dhamoon, 2011). Bassel and Emejulu (2010) defined intersectionality as the analysis of the concurrent and intertwined effects of multiple dimensions of difference. Hankivsky (2014) posited:

Intersectionality promotes an understanding of human beings as shaped by the interaction of different social locations (e.g., “race”/ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion). These interactions occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments and other political and economic unions, religious institutions, media). Through such processes, interdependent forms of privilege and oppression shaped by colonialism, imperialism, racism, homophobia, ableism and patriarchy are created. (p. 2)

Given the evolving nature of intersectionality, its application to leadership theory has been nominal which warrants an analysis of how critical tenets of intersectionality clarify a theoretical connection to leadership.

Key tenets. One of the central elements of intersectionality suggests that representations of identity cannot be limited to a single-axis because they fail to consider the complex and

multifaceted nature of human experience (Hankivsky, 2014). Intersectionality theory presents the ideal mechanism to move beyond the singular axis of gender to acquire a more complex understanding of inequities resulting from varied social locations and experiences related to the (dis)operation of power (Hankivsky, 2014).

Another facet of this construct is that individuals, dependent on the situation or context, can concurrently experience both oppression and privilege (Weber, 1998). While most intersectional research addresses subjects who are marginalized on multiple levels, Nash (2008) suggested that this focus on oppressed subjects itself presents a dichotomy, because it remains uncertain if intersectional theory focuses on how subjects are marginalized or a more universal understanding of identity. She further asserted:

One “so what” question that remains unexplored by intersectional theorists is the way in which privilege and oppression can be co-constituted on the subjective level. That is, while intersectionality purports to describe multiple marginalizations (i.e., the spectre of the multiply-marginalized black woman that haunts intersectionality) and multiple privileges (i.e. the spectre of the (heterosexual) white man that haunts intersectionality), it neglects to describe the ways in which privilege and oppression intersect, informing each subject’s experience. (Nash, 2008, pp. 11–12)

Another central tenant of intersectionality is its capacity to serve as an instrument to investigate how individuals encounter privilege and oppression through political, economic and social mechanisms (Hankivsky, 2011). As such, intersectionality discerns how “[r]elationships and power dynamics between social locations and processes” are inextricably connected and subject to change (Hankivsky, 2014, p. 3). It is this potential for change that provides scholars with a social justice framework to address inequities present within society (Chun, Lipsitz, & Shin, 2013; Dill-Thornton & Zambrana, 2009; Grace, 2014; Luft & Ward, 2009; Mehrotra, 2010). In this respect, intersectionality examines the relationship between the individual and larger social “structures and systems” to discern “how power relations are shaped and

experienced” (Hankivsky, 2014, p. 3). This nuanced aspect of intersectionality theory enables scholars to acquire insight regarding the junctures of varied trajectories of power (Nash, 2008).

The collective impact of these tenets is critical because they illustrate a distinctive shift from previous efforts within feminist epistemology to engage a single-axis of identity, by seeking to understand what the complex intersection of identities reveal about identity. Furthermore, given that one’s social locations are in constant flux, the adaptive nature of intersectionality seeks to understand how one’s intersectional identities exist in concert with larger social systems. This nuanced engagement with identity and broader structures provides scholars with the capacity to investigate how the mechanism of power plays into the relationship between the individual and society. By bridging these dynamics together, intersectionality introduces a marked shift in thinking about the complexity of privilege and oppression, moving these constructs beyond a binary approach to consider how they coexist within an individual.

Intersectional attributes. Understanding attributes affiliated with intersectionality theory is necessary to assess its intellectual impact. This examination warrants a review of prior approaches to engaging identity, understanding the epistemological complexity associated with this theory, an analysis of how intersectionality addresses the subject of identity, and an appraisal of the categories affiliated with this theory.

Prior approaches to engaging identity. Assessing the intellectual significance of intersectionality theory merits an appraisal of the additive approach of engaging identity. This precursor to intersectionality is sometimes referenced as the unitary approach since it suggests that categories such as class, sexual orientation, and gender work in isolation from each other as social properties (Hancock, 2007; Weldon, 2006;). According to Dubrow (2008):

In the unitary approach, it is assumed that demographic variables have additive effects. For example, the joint effect of being a woman, belonging to an ethnic minority, and

representing a disadvantaged social class is seen as a sum of the effects of these three demographic variables. (p. 88)

The limitation of this stance is that it fails to account for the complexity of how varied social identities operate in conjunction with one another, and particularly how this complexity engages with broader social structures.

In contrast, Crenshaw (1991) engaged her subjects from a multiplicative or categorical approach (McCall, 2005). This stance presumes that the varied elements affiliated with the intersections of identity all have meaning and are worthy of study (McCall, 2005). According to Dubrow (2008), “[i]n the multiplicative approach, intersectionality implies that the relationship between the person and the attitude or behavior is conditional upon intersecting identities” (p. 93). This perspective of how identities intersect replaced the additive approach, elucidating the contrast between both stances and illustrating how intersectionality replaced its more limited precursor.

Epistemological complexity. How then does intersectionality build upon feminist critiques regarding the limitations of epistemology? Intersectionality theory provides scholars with the capacity to engage identity utilizing a complex epistemology (Kincheloe et al., 2011). Achieving this symmetry occurs when intersectionality moves beyond the locus of singular and additive notions of identity to consider how the intersection of identity in relation to social location and structural social systems impact the construction of knowledge.

Intersectionality theory engages this complex epistemology because of its interdisciplinary nature, evidenced by its prolific scope of work which spans multiple academic disciplines. Intersectionality is also an intellectual conduit to examine the micro-level engagement between the individual and the groups with which they identify (Winker & Degele, 2011). Complexity also occurs by linking the micro-level stance with larger macro-level socio-

historical structures and systems to more accurately reflect the intersectional standpoint of leaders.

Social identity. Another central attribute of intersectionality theory views social identity in relation to privilege and oppression. Illustrative of this approach is Essed's (1991) idea of "gendered racism," which denotes how the gendered nature of racism has impacted African-American women (p. 31). This focus is indicative of the early work in the field, which focused on the identity groups of gender, race, ethnicity, and class, as they were perceived as the key "markers and controllers of oppression" (Dill & Kohlman, 2011, p. 155). A paradigm shift was introduced by Collins (2000) with her "matrix of domination" theory, which details how varied forms of "intersecting oppressions" are unified and function collectively to foster injustice (p. 18).

Replacing additive models of oppression with interlocking ones creates possibilities for new paradigms. The significance of seeing race, class, and gender as interlocking systems of oppression is that such an approach fosters a paradigmatic shift of thinking inclusively about other oppressions, such as age, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnicity. (Collins, 1990, p. 225)

Beyond expanding the scope of social identities included in intersectionality theory, Collins (2000) unified her matrix around four domains of power: hegemonic, structural, interpersonal, and disciplinary (p. 276). Furthermore, she maintained, each domain has a distinctive function: "[t]he structural domain organizes oppression, whereas the disciplinary manages it. The hegemonic domain justifies oppression, and the interpersonal domain influences everyday lived experience and the individual consciousness that ensues" (Collins, 2000, p. 276). Collins's contributions on intersectionality are important because it illustrates how the constructs of oppression and power impact social identity affiliations. Dill and Kohlman (2011) posited that intersectionality scholarship forged "new frontiers of knowledge" (pp. 157–158). Calás, Ou, and Smircich (2013) supported this assertion by noting how this proliferation of categories enabled

the category of gender to become more distinct, “by referencing [the categories’] multiply intertwined social locations” (p. 710).

Intersectional categories. Crenshaw (1991) suggests that intersectionality must examine how intersectional subjects exist in an unjust world, using the categories of the political, structural, and representational. A review of these categories highlights the marginalization of non-dominant perspectives, particularly those of women. The addition of these categories is beneficial to intersectionality scholarship because they illustrate how social systems intersect with identity affiliations to inform the construction of intersectional identity.

Political intersectionality. This category of intersectionality is understood utilizing the example of domestic violence perpetrated against women of color (Crenshaw, 2018). In this instance, the additive approach assumes that women reference their experience with domestic violence through the social identity of gender, without failing to consider the impact of other social identity affiliations. Crenshaw (1991) challenged this limited perspective because it “frequently conflates or ignores intragroup differences” and further reinforces and replicates marginalization by discounting how other identities impact subjects, like domestic violence (p. 1242).

Crenshaw (1991) suggested that intersectionality provides a more comprehensive mechanism to engage other social identity affiliations like race and class, in conjunction with gender, to understand the impact of domestic violence on women. By shifting the focus beyond an either/or dichotomy or the add and stir approach found within the additive approach, intersectionality examines the intersections of these varied social identities within larger social aspects such as the “political,” “representational,” and “structural” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1245). This broader, inclusive stance thus helps to construct a more fully developed understanding of

how domestic violence impacts women of color (Crenshaw, 1991). This example demonstrates how political movements which seek to alleviate social injustice can further marginalize or exclude the interests of the women they aim to assist (Crenshaw, 2018). Verloo (2006) posited: “Crenshaw uses political intersectionality to indicate how inequalities and their intersections are relevant to political strategies” (p. 213). As such, this strand of intersectionality reveals how the systemic utilization of politics served as a mechanism for exclusion. In this respect, political intersectionality illustrates the macro-level impact of an epistemological bias perpetuated against women on a micro-level. It is this level of complexity that offers a more nuanced understanding of the epistemic injustices that bind the individual to larger socially unjust structures.

Structural intersectionality. Developed by Crenshaw (1991) to detail the experiences of women of color impacted by domestic violence, this form of intersectionality occurs on the structural level. It is characterized by understanding where racially marginalized women lie in “location” to the social identities of gender and race when addressing the subject of violence and noting how this “location” is uniquely dissimilar to the experiences of their White female counterparts (p. 3). According to Verloo (2006), “[s]tructural intersectionality occurs when inequalities and their intersections are directly relevant to the experiences of people in society” (p. 213). Crenshaw (2018) characterized structural inequality as highlighting the multifaceted and standardized practices of oppression. She added that the structural category “refers to the way in which women of color are situated within overlapping structures of subordination” (Crenshaw, 2018, p. 114). Utilizing the context of abuse against women of color, intersectionality illustrates how subjugated groups are more susceptible to experiencing violence and more susceptible to insufficient interventions that lacked an appropriate understanding of the structural dynamics at play (Crenshaw, 1991; Richie, 2012). As Borchorst and Teigen (2010)

argued, “[i]t is widely accepted that the intersectionality approach is innovative in its call for systematic reflections on how structures of differentiations mutually constitute each other” (p. 19). In this respect, the structural category presents itself as the convergence of systemic obstacles like gender, class, and race that serve to further compound the disempowerment of individuals within structural patterns of domination (Crenshaw, 1991).

Cho et al. (2013) argued that intersectionality “addresses the larger ideological structures in which subjects, problems, and solutions were framed” (p. 791). Crenshaw’s structural dynamic is distinctive because it suggests that socially constructed mechanisms sustain the marginalization of disenfranchised Others through state-developed interventions which were originally intended to provide assistance to victims. In the case of Crenshaw’s work on domestic violence, legal protective provisions within the Immigration and Nationality Act actually furthered the subordination of immigrant women. An amendment within this Act required immigrant women be married for two years to be eligible for U.S. citizenship. However, an unintended consequence of this legal revision is that it preemptively barred immigrant women from raising issues of violence within their respective marriages, for fear of deportation. Like its political counterpart, structural intersectionality reveals how macro-level barriers construct social mechanisms which maintain the subjugation of marginalized subjects. Intersectionality theory thus highlights inequities that exist at the macro level and how everyday routines sustain these social injustices (Holvino, 2012; Moorosi, 2014).

Representational intersectionality. Another category of intersectionality is the representational facet characterized as the convergence that occurs when the subjects of race and gender clash resulting in a lack of representation for issues that affect women of color (Crenshaw, 1991). According to Crenshaw (1991), representational intersectionality is how

“images” of women of color are constructed to overlook and discount their intersectional identities (p. 1283). Frost and Elichaooff (2014) suggested the representational category contested the socially constructed depiction of women of color and proposed that reactions to gender or race should counter each social category and also address gender and race for the sake of averting subordination. Carastathis (2014) added that this final form “concerns the production of women of color drawing on sexist and racist narratives tropes, as well as, the ways that critiques of these representations marginalize or reproduce the objectification of women of color” (p. 307). Given how this category often entails women utilizing commonly accepted images within modern culture, representational intersectionality also employs images to develop different configurations of subjectivity that are assigned value and, hence, acquire social legitimacy.

Lennon (2015) explained this idea further:

The imagination then makes *things which are absent* in some way *present*... Images, in this sense, weave together the sensory *present* with what is *past*, the projected *future*, and the spatial *elsewhere*. Thus, the imagination is that by which there is a world for us. (p. 2)

Crenshaw (1991), in her model of how women of color experience representational intersectionality, utilized the example of violence, specifically citing a rap band’s usage of obscene lyrics which describe in lewd detail their predilection for sexual acts of violence against Black women. The portrayal of women of color through images, like rap lyrics in popular culture, constructs narratives around race and gender which characterize women of color by utilizing distorted social misrepresentations (Crenshaw, 2018). Code (2011) characterized this place as the “hegemonic imaginary” where women remain “tokens” by virtue of a “subjectivity and agency within an imaginary that rendered them [women] universal Man’s complement: the second sex” (p. 720). She added that how “femininity, female subjectivity, becoming woman, in its various modalities has been constituted, historically, [remains a process] of exclusion” (Code,

2011, p. 720). This dynamic of how society discounts women illustrates how representational intersectionality illuminates social distortions of women, particularly women of color, by minimizing their capacity to count as knowing subjects. This pervasive epistemological shortcoming is especially relevant to the following analysis of leadership theory.

Leadership

Epistemological linkage. A review of intersectionality theory illustrates how its epistemology is applicable to leadership theory. This level of analysis includes an examination of identity to determine how it is germane to the subject of leadership. The theoretical connections between these constructs are then utilized to integrate the subject of gender identity to leadership theory and elucidate what this level of complexity adds to the epistemology of leadership discourse. This linkage reveals how androcentrism pervades the epistemological corpus of leadership theory and the resulting marginalization of women as subjects worthy of theoretical analysis or of embodying leadership. However, examining gender in isolation of other social identities, both marginalized and privileged, also provides a limited analysis of how identity impacts leadership theory. As such, incorporating an intersectional lens provides a theoretical mechanism to investigate how a more complex understanding of identity could benefit leadership theory.

While linking these theories is a relatively new area of analysis (Smooth, 2010), there are key principles which can be used to establish the connection, such as Anzaldúa's (1987) "borderland" metaphor (p. 3), Collins's (1986) "outsider within" perspective (p. 14), and Meyerson's (2003) concept of "tempered radical" (p. 3). The resulting linkage, coined "intersectional leadership," constructs a new paradigm for scholars to consider as we continue to advance a more inclusive epistemological framework for leadership theory.

Identity development and leadership. What is identity and how is it relevant to leadership? Identity, as defined by Vignoles, Schwartz, and Luyckx (2011), is “the confluence of the person’s self-chosen or ascribed commitments, personal characteristics, and beliefs about herself; roles and positions in relation to significant others; and her membership in social groups and categories” (p. 4). Accordingly, identity serves as a “powerful construct. It guides life paths and decisions” (Kroger, 2007), allow[ing] people to draw strength from their affiliation with social groups and collectives” (Vignoles et al., 2011, p. 2). This congruity among affiliations reflects the operation of identity development, which occurs on three levels: “individual, relational and collective” (Kroger, 2007, p. 3). One discerns their identity by distinguishing how she or he is different and unique from other people (Lord & Hall, 2005). The relational aspect of identity operates by comparing oneself to others and utilizing the contrast to help define one’s own identity and the collective specifies how one establishes his or her identity based upon their affiliation with specific groups (Lord & Hall, 2005).

In this respect, individual identity does not operate in isolation but is dependent upon engagement at the relational and collective levels. This assertion is supported by Vignoles et al. (2011) and Booyesen (2018), who suggested that identity operated in continuous interaction within all three levels. Similarly, Kark and van Dijk (2007) suggested that varied situations impact individual identity differently and result in one’s standpoint changing in response to “external stimuli,” inclusive of obstacles found within one’s environment (p. 502). Booyesen (2018) extended this assertion further by noting: “Identity is multifaceted, and multiple, consisting of fixed, fluid, shifting and temporary; independent and interdependent, enhancing and conflicting; complementary and contradictory identities, differing in prominence and salience based on contextual fluctuations and regulation” (pp. 4–5). In broadening this rationale,

Karp and Helgø (2009) proposed “that one’s image of one’s self is a social construction—being created and re-created” (p. 886).

Given the multi-level operation of identity construction, how does its development intersect with the construct of leadership? Erickson’s (1959) framework of social identity development provides the epistemological connect to leadership theory. Karp and Helgø (2009) elaborated:

The development of identity is based on this self, and development can then be charted in terms of a series of stages in which identity is formed in response to challenges and human interaction...The particular characteristics of the self, determine its identity—the individual’s personal, highly subjective comprehension of him or herself as a separate human entity—his or her self-image. (p. 885)

Marcia (1966) expounded upon Erickson’s research by proposing that the “choices and commitments” an individual make impact his or her identity (p. 885).

The effect of identity on leadership development is noted by scholars (Baltes & Carstensen, 1991; Day & Harrison, 2007; Day et al., 2008). Haslam, Reicher, and Platow (2010) suggested that “leadership is essentially a process of social identity management—and hence that effective leadership is always identity leadership” (p. 197). Egan et al. (2017) support this assertion by maintaining the “[c]onstruction of a leadership identity is integral to an individual’s leadership and entails a complex process of identity work (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011; Karp & Helgø, 2009; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Cremer, & Hogg, 2004)” (p. 122).

Researchers have proposed that a strategy focused on how to develop leadership could advance our understanding of how to construct leadership identity (Erikson, 1959; Kegan, 1982; Loevinger, 1976). Ely, Ibarra, and Kolb (2011) posited: “How people become leaders and take up the leader role are fundamentally questions about identity (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Ibarra et al., 2010; Lord & Hall, 2005)” (p. 476). Furthermore, understanding how to construct leadership

identity should involve a “developmental approach” (Erikson, 1959; Kegan, 1982; Loevinger, 1976). The conceptual model of leadership identity by Karp and Helgø, (2009) details this development process by suggesting leaders engage in understanding their own identities as leaders, in order to effectively lead others. This reflexive practice helps individuals become cognizant of their value system and how those values impact their decisions, choices, and behaviors (Karp & Helgø, 2009).

While Karp and Helgø (2009) suggest that leadership is “identity construction,” their conceptual framework presumes that the developmental process applies to everyone with a one size fits all perspective (p. 892). Within leadership, this norm references the masculine, resulting in a prototypical leader who is self-reliant, demanding, and decisive (Bailyn, 2006; Calás & Smircich, 1991; Dennis & Kunkel, 2004; Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Willemson, 2002). A meta-analysis on gender and leadership style conducted by Eagly and Johnson (1990) challenged this gendered presumption. The findings from this research identified a distinctiveness, albeit small, to the ways women and men led. More compelling was the assertion of Coleman and Fitzgerald (2008):

[w]hat appears to be uncompromising is that models of leadership implicitly draw on male hegemonic images of what it means to be a leader and act in a leadership role (Fitzgerald, 2003). These hegemonic images and values may then be used to implicitly and explicitly judge all those who do not match up to them, both women and men. (p. 119)

Ely et al. (2011) support this contention by maintaining there is a linkage between the formation of identity to leadership development and that the prevalence of gender bias in society inhibits women’s capability to develop their identities as leaders.

Historical and critical analysis of leadership theory. This critical analysis of leadership examines the historical factors which contributed to the sustained practice of male dominance within leadership theory. Collinson and Hearn (2014) asserted that the male perspective

dominates the discipline of leadership and has done so for centuries. Madva (2016) noted that group statistics can be utilized to construct behavioral responses within a group, to reinforce generalized norms. When applied to leadership, this pattern of nominal representation suggests that “the knowledge that women are less likely to occupy leadership positions makes people (men and women alike) less likely to treat women as leaders” (Madva, 2016, pp. 193–194). While numbers are important, a more compelling consideration is the persistence of this reality and the resulting loss of leadership representation.

Within leadership, the historical norm is a male perspective. The implication of this standard is individuals who share the same group membership have preconceived notions affiliated with what it means to be a leader (Hains, Hogg, & Duck, 1997). In attempting to affirm their own social identity, groups seek out the familiar and establish group norms reflective of their own identity (van Knippenberg, 2011). Dugan (2017) asserts, as people engage the discipline of leadership and assume leadership roles, they construct a framework of attributes they affiliate with leadership. Compounding this practice is evidence that gender influences the construction of prototypes and impact how group members engage leaders (Hogg et al., 2006). As a result of gender-normed standards and the practice of prototypicality, the discourse of leadership is dominated by male perspective. This tradition has replicated itself as “the story most often told” in leadership theory (Dugan, 2017, p. 58). Collinson and Hearn (2014) attributed this reality to “the continuing dominance of men in leadership and leadership positions [that] appeared ‘normal’ or ‘natural,’ and largely escaped critical analysis or commentary, even in progressive forums” (p. 73). Dugan (2017) expounded on this assertion with the idea of “ideological critique,” which maintained that male dominance established an ideology which became the norm (p. 63). Marshall and Anderson (1994) extended this notion further with the

belief that “[t]heories are embedded in paradigms” (p. 170). The application of this assertion to leadership theory reveals how the masculinist perspective constructed an intellectual model which further embedded a patriarchal paradigm within the epistemology of leadership theory.

An additional explanation for this dominance is the traditional practice of gender roles, where society relegates males to the public sphere of social life and women to the private sphere of home (Marshall & Anderson, 1994). These ascribed gender roles constructed and maintained social dichotomies, which systems such as education emphasize as unequal (Blackmore, 2005). Scholars such as Sherif (1979) and Kellerman (1984) contend male traits are the characteristics associated with leadership. This pattern helped develop an inherent bias skewed toward men, who presumed their leadership experience represented the universal standard (Blackmore, 2005). Furthermore, this pattern of thought found its way into the methodological strategies affiliated with the discipline of leadership (Hearn & Parkin, 1983; Blackmore, 2005).

Gendered leadership. What then is the consequence of identity and leadership for women as leaders? In a seminal handbook examining the historical and modern contributions of women’s leadership, a contributing author, Vetter (2010) posited:

It might seem odd to begin an encyclopedia about gender and leadership by claiming that there are no feminist theories of leadership. Yet an extensive study of feminist theory scholarship reveals an alarming dearth of theoretical analysis of women as leaders. (p. 3)

According to Ospina and Foldy (2009), the rationale for this trend is that the discipline itself established White men as the “standard social identity referent” to the exclusion of women within “traditional leadership theory” (p. 888). Vetter (2010) argued that the lack of theory was the result of a leadership field that predominately emphasized “public life, which has been dominated by men,” whereas women have been assigned to the “private sphere” (p. 3). This dichotomy between the public and private realms of society resulted in a male model of

leadership which assigned traits such as rationality and efficiency as reflective of an effective leader (Coleman & Fitzgerald, 2008). Collectively, male models and traits set the standard rubric to measure leadership. The placement of women outside of this leadership standard created structural impediments which maintained the exclusion and marginalization of women from leadership.

Beyond barriers which prevent women from accessing leadership in the same manner as their male peers, there are also pedagogical barriers which preserve this status quo. In the construction of leadership development programs, there has been a pedagogical preference framed from a male perspective, serving as a framework for teaching leadership theory. This strategy delivers programs designed for men to women based on the presumption that leadership development is the same (Martin & Meyerson, 1998). Women's leadership programs compound the leadership divide given the construction of pedagogical theories using an "add women and stir" approach (Martin & Meyerson, 1998, p. 312) or utilize the strategy of remedying what is wrong with women (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). This contention is supported by Coleman and Fitzgerald (2008), who identified another barrier limiting women's access to leadership as the lack of scholarship investigating the juncture of women and leadership development. As a result, "the ideal leader" was developed from a masculine tradition that presumed leadership was affiliated with the "dominant discourses of masculinity" (Coleman & Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 120). The cumulative effect of these elements is the inability of women to construct and internalize a leadership identity (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Ibarra, Snook, & Guillen Ramo, 2010; Lord & Hall, 2005).

As Coleman and Fitzgerald (2008) assert, changing this reality requires "highlight[ing] that formal and informal leadership development programs reinforce these gendered barriers

precisely because little attention is paid to women's ways of knowing and leading (Blackmore, 1999)" (p. 119). To counter this androcentric prevalence, Ely et al. (2011) suggested the development of a new pedagogical framework to address the "second generation" gender bias intrinsic in the formation of most leadership programs (p. 475). This bias is formidable because it frequently conceals obstacles which inhibit women as leaders (Ely et al., 2011). As a result of the standard male referent within leadership and the pedagogical limitations of an additive approach to identity, women's ways of knowing, and by default women's ways of leading, are compromised by a complex assortment of epistemological barriers.

Intersectional identity and women's leadership. Limitations related to the production of knowledge within leadership warrants consideration of how intersectionality can address these epistemic gaps. While intersectionality is relevant to the experience of women, there has been little research examining the intersectional nature of women's leadership. Holvino and Blake-Beard (2004) contend that a significant body of leadership scholarship examines race/ethnicity or gender independently, but fails to research these identities simultaneously. This research trajectory is due in part to previous scholars examining leadership from a one size fits all model, where gendered experiences, particularly those of women, are subsumed within male representations of leadership (Blackmore, 2005; Coleman & Fitzgerald, 2008). Scholars thus altered their emphasis to unitary or additive approaches by examining leadership development from a single-axis of identity (Holvino & Blake-Beard, 2004). This strategy presumed that one identity variable, in this case, gender, explained how women's leadership journeys are distinctive from men and that by understanding this juncture the challenges related to that leadership path could be resolved (Collins, 1990). Within the additive focus, the area of critique by scholars was its practice established a hierarchal order of identity when examining more than one identity

variable (Debebe & Reinert, 2012). As Moorosi (2014) put it, the additive approach “oversimplifies” the development of one’s leadership identity (p. 796).

By comparison, engaging leadership development from an intersectional approach acknowledges the varied ways in which many identity categories converge (Moorosi, 2014). Yuval-Davis (2006) posited that “[c]ategories like gender, ethnicity, and class co-construct each other, and they do so in myriad ways, dependent on social, historical and symbolic factors” (p. 209). Richardson and Loubier (2008) extended this perspective further by suggesting that intersectionality provides scholars with the capacity to analyze the intersection of multiple identity categories, to better comprehend how these interactions relate to the development of leadership identity (p. 143).

How then have academics tackled the intersectional nature of women’s leadership? The scholarship of Smooth (2010) is representative of a small group of academics examining this juncture. Other scholars include Booyesen (2018) and Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) who scrutinized these constructs within the context of business, while Moorosi (2014) analyzed the leadership development of educators. Smooth (2010) characterizes this body of scholarship on intersectional leadership as “opening new avenues of research and challenging existing questions across sectors of society in the wake or in the absence of diverse groups of women in the leadership ranks” (p. 31).

Smooth posited that the application of intersectionality theory within the leadership field resulted in a “paradigm shift” of how scholars understand the leadership trajectory of women (p. 31). She identified several “central principles” which serve as a guide to understanding intersectional leadership (p. 32), including Anzaldúa’s (1987) borderland metaphor, Collins’s (1990) outsider within standpoint, and Meyerson’s (2001) notion of the tempered radical.

Collectively, the work of these scholars guides the structure of Smooth's conceptual framework. This "intersectionality framework" illustrates the marginalization of women within leadership discourse and examines how the "systems of power" further impact this social location (Smooth, 2010, p. 31).

Anzaldúa's borderland. Smooth (2010) built her framework partly by utilizing the borderland metaphor found within the scholarship of Anzaldúa (1987). This metaphor is used to demonstrate how women can reference both a privileged and marginalized leadership identity. The rationale for this assertion is that woman who attained leadership positions are privileged since there are so few women in leadership roles (Smooth, 2010). In contrast, marginalization occurs as a result of the gendered role of women within society. This dichotomous coexistence of marginalization and privilege is a central facet of this intersectional framework (Smooth, 2010).

The framework highlights how race, gender, class, and sexual identity intersect is a recurring theme within Anzaldúa's work (Martínez, 2005, p. 553). These varied social locations construct what Anzaldúa (1987) described as a "mestizaje" mindset—a label describing the multiple-consciousness of being indigenous, Hispanic, gay, and U.S. American (p. 5). Being mestiza, one resides within the borderland—a metaphor describing the place where "two or more cultures edge each other" (Anzaldúa, 1987, Preface). This cultural clash is reflective of the social location of women as leaders. In this respect, Anzaldúa's border represents a place of "instability" where women have to balance both privilege and marginalization (Smooth, 2010, p. 37). This metaphorical border also highlights how the social location of women to exercise their leadership roles, in domains dominated by men, is contingent upon "the power of others" (Smooth, 2010, p. 37).

The impact of this culture clash is the formation of a “new mestiza consciousness” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 77) which provides Latinas with the ability to function within multiple modes of identity, as well as the capacity to see the world differently with a unique perspective and standpoint. This capacity to reference a multiplicity of identities illustrates the intersectional nature of Anzaldúa’s (1987) scholarship. Furthermore, her work serves as an oppositional counter to the hegemonic reality within which mestizas operate as they “construct new knowledge” (Collins, 2000, p. 284) to challenge oppressions related to gender, race, class, and sexuality (Martínez, 2005). As such, Mitchell and Feagin (1995) maintained that Anzaldúa’s work offers an “alternative construction of identity” with the metaphor of borderland (p. 69).

Beyond the utilization of mestiza to describe the intersectional structure of a Latina’s identity, Bell and Nkomo (1999) also applied Anzaldúa’s borderlands metaphor in a leadership context. In their work, the metaphor describes the hurdles faced by women in leadership roles. They describe the need to find a balance in the clash between the privileges they have attained as educational leaders versus the oppression they experience within broader society. Bell and Nkomo asserted that this way of life exemplifies the reality of life lived in the borderlands. Smooth (2010) described this existence:

[a]s an uncomfortable place, those who find themselves operating within the borderlands are neither at home with their race, gender, or class groups, which they desire to uplift, nor at home in the institutions in which they are leaders. They describe living dual life experiences of both success and marginality at the same time. (p. 36)

Key to the operation of intersectionality is the underlying constructs of marginalization and privilege which guide its operation (Smooth, 2010). Thus, the borderlands represent how the mestiza mindset utilizes intersectionality to engage the world but also enumerates the challenges of leaders whose intersectional identities and power juxtapose with privilege and oppression.

Collins's outsider within. Building upon Anzaldúa's metaphor that women reside in unstable terrain as leaders, Smooth (2010) further suggests that women acquire outsider status as leaders because of how their social position within this border. This additional component of Smooth's (2010) framework draws on Collins's (1998) metaphor of the "outsider within." This metaphor suggests that Black female scholars, as they interact within the privileged countenance of academia, reference the intersections of gender, race, and class identity. This intellectual environment situates them as outsiders by virtue of these marginalized identities. Collins (1998) characterized the dissonance of this reality as the "location of people who no longer belong to any one group" (p. 5). Furthermore, the metaphor is also used to "describe [the] social locations or border spaces occupied by groups of unequal power" (Collins, 1998, p. 5). The application of Collins's outsider model to Smooth's intersectional framework highlights how women, even those who acquire the privileged status of leader, remain consigned to the periphery in a discourse dominated by men.

Collins (1990) extends the "outsider within" trope further with the "matrix of domination" concept, which suggests gender, race, and class operate within an interconnected structure where privilege and oppression coexist. By structuring these identity categories within an "interlocking system" (Collins, 1990, p. 225), she bypasses additive notions of identity and engages the complexity of intersectionality. In this regard, Smooth (2010) characterized Collins's work as "especially helpful in understanding the intersectional positioning of women in leadership" (p. 35). Integrating this layer of complexity to Smooth's framework, women, when assigned a leadership role, maintain a position of privilege given the power ascribed to their role as leaders. Yet, as leaders, women are limited in their capacity to alter the entrenched hierarchy of male leadership given the lack of power ascribed to their gendered role. This paradoxical,

intersectional location is supported by Smooth (2010), who posited: “Intersectionality scholars calls into question the idea that organizations are neutral entities and instead presents organizations as laden with preferences that benefit dominant race, gender, sexuality, and class groups, among others” (p. 35). This framework thus reflects the complex nature of women as leaders—privileged and marginalized; insider and outsider.

While leadership is considered the accrual and practice of power, the uneven gendered distribution of power establishes a hierarchy of who has access to leadership opportunities (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). The congruence of intersectionality and leadership within Smooth’s framework illustrates how power and privilege maintain hegemonic ideologies. Smooth added: “Applying intersectionality to the study of women’s leadership is indeed one of the most exciting areas of research and one that stands to create a wealth of new knowledge” (pp. 39–40).

Meyerson’s tempered radical. The final attribute of this leadership framework is the notion of the “tempered radical” (Meyerson, 2003). Meyerson and Tompkins (2007) defined this term as:

Embedded individuals who, for different reasons, are marginalized within the institution they wish to change and are therefore exposed to contradictions between their interests or identities and the dominant logic. Tempered radicals are a special class of actors embedded in multiple institutional contexts—tied both to their workplaces and to identity and/or interest-based communities associated with alternative logics. (p. 311)

Meyerson and Scully (1995) asserted that tempered radicals concurrently occupy the positions of insider and outsider. Within the context of Smooth’s intersectional leadership framework, such individuals question the ways things are through the process of practicing “tempered radicalism” (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, pp. 586–587). Another attribute assigned to the tempered radical is Collins’s “outsider within” because this individual is part of an environment which marginalizes

some aspect of their identity, resulting in a culture clash exemplified by Anzaldúa's (1990) borderland (p. 589). Stonequist (1937) suggested that this location provides individuals with the capacity to acquire the "knowledge and insight of the insider with the critical attitude of the outsider" (p. 155). Meyerson and Scully (1995) added, women and members of minorities are apt to identify as tempered radicals and "[t]hese individuals must struggle continuously to handle the tension between personal and professional identities at odds with one another" (p. 586). In this respect, Smooth's framework utilizes the tempered radical as an umbrella term to describe an individual who can balance both privilege and oppression as an outsider within, can coexist within these disparate realities, and understands life lived in a borderland.

The process of engaging radicalism requires working as an organizational catalyst within a preexisting structure to effect change (Meyerson, 2003). The practitioner's motivation to act occurs when his or her identity is out of alignment with the organization's values and serves as the inspiration to engage a leadership role (Meyerson & Scully, 1995). As a result, of this disjuncture, leaders are inspired to engage in the process of tempered radicalism, and in doing so, exercise "everyday leadership" (Meyerson, 2003, p. 166). This leadership style is accomplished by strategically pursuing the "small wins" approach to incremental change within an organization as opposed to change engaged from a more confrontation leadership style (Smooth, 2010, p. 37).

Beyond Smooth's (2010) reference to employing everyday leadership through the practice of tempered radicalism, this process applies to existing leadership theory, namely grassroots leadership. The exercise of grassroots leadership and its impact on organizational change has been the subject of much previous research (Astin & Leland, 1991; Hart, 2005; Safarik, 2003). Kezar (2012) posited that "[g]rassroots or bottom up leaders are individuals

without positions of authority who make change without formal power” (pp. 725–726). In this way, both everyday leadership and grassroots leadership provide mechanisms by which marginalized individuals can exert a leadership role.

Given the masculine tradition of leadership and the hegemonic hurdles it creates for “women leaders at the intersections of multiple identity groups,” Smooth’s (2010) framework suggests that women leaders can utilize Meyerson’s construct of tempered radicals as a strategy to counter this marginalized reality (p. 37). The impact of employing this strategy, beyond effecting social change, is the capacity to insert “cracks in the hegemonic order” (Meyerson & Tompkins, 2007, p. 309). For those who reside in the margins, Smooth offers the construct of tempered radicalism to demonstrate how non-dominant groups can cull from their intersectional identity affiliations and serve in an empowered leadership role.

Structural intersectionality and leadership. Examining the identity constructs of Smooth’s model in conjunction with larger macro social contexts, such as structural intersectionality, has also proved beneficial to leadership theory. As Mason (2016) suggested, “[s]tructural intersectionality highlights the connectedness of systems and structures in society and helps us understand how each system affects or impacts others. Any particular disadvantage or disability is sometimes compounded by another disadvantage reflecting the dynamics of a separate system or structure of subordination” (p. 8). In the literature on leadership, the operation of structural intersectionality occurs as a result of exclusionary epistemic practices. One such practice is the macro barrier that presumes a gender-neutral stance (discussed earlier) and, as a consequence, maintains an androcentric bias against women and other historically oppressed groups.

The presumption that individuals have equal access to leadership is false. Manuel (2006), utilizing the example of women in academia, suggested that the proliferation of intersectionality is due in part to the exponential increase of women of color in higher education, which has diversified the breadth of intellectual perspectives. She added:

Many of these women were facing their own forms of discrimination (as they integrated many predominantly white campuses), they also had a great stake in elucidating the social locations that made them more vulnerable to discrimination, isolation, and inequality both in the university setting but also in society overall. Perhaps more valuable, these scholars criticized both the epistemology and ontology of the production of knowledge, and tried to advance an intellectual acknowledgement of the power relationships that made their experiences and voices marginal – in academia and in society more broadly. (p. 179)

This irony of this example is female scholars who exercised intellectual leadership to highlight the marginalization of non-dominant standpoints and social locations, including their own, encountered macro barriers present within the operation of academia and the exercise of power that sustained entrenched epistemological traditions. Smooth identified this scenario as a key principle of intersectional leadership because it demonstrates how a non-dominant perspective, one assigned outsider status, works within an academic environment of privilege that afforded that individual an insider status. This dichotomous existence provides female scholars of color with the capacity to understand how oppressive systemic barriers within academia impact their leadership identity.

Locke (2017) suggested that when connecting structural intersectionality to women leaders, there should be “consideration of the structures of the university within which they are constituting themselves as leaders, whilst in turn being constituted by the university itself, must be given” (n.p.). This methodological expansion of structural intersectionality to include how work environments function is essential to challenging macro barriers present within the

governance of organizations (Locke, 2017). Mason (2016) supported this assertion by suggesting structural intersectionality illustrated how:

Systems of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and other markers of difference were intersecting and interlocking. These markers often interact with institutions and structures in society to limit access to resources and information to privilege some groups over others, and to maintain power. (p. 4)

It is this incapacity of non-dominant perspectives to equally access larger macro systems that impact their ability to evolve their identities as leaders fully. DeRue and Ashford (2010) asserted that individuals develop their respective leadership identities at three levels: the personal, relational, and collective. Building upon this contention, Moorosi (2014) maintained that acquiring one's "collective endorsement... involves being seen within the environment as part of a broader social group" (p. 795). The incapacity of women and other non-dominant groups to fully leverage their leadership identities, due to structural impediments within their respective environments, illustrates the impact of structural intersectionality. Debebe and Reinert (2012) suggested the consideration of identity development within a "socio-political context" (p. 11) is essential because this context is responsible for shaping the environment in which individuals exist and, as such, "defines and assigns individuals into social groups, thereby shaping social identity" (p. 11). This context also provides people with the capacity to acquire collective endorsement (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Day (2000) added that in this collectivist orientation, "shared representations and collective meanings" promote leader identity (p. 585).

Structural intersectionality thus operates at multiple interrelated levels between the individual and larger macro-social contexts. One impact of this symbiotic relationship is the construction of artificial barriers that influence an individual's capacity to construct a leadership identity—a practice that encapsulates the reality of marginalized standpoints. The reciprocal relationship between one's social identity and his or her location within leadership theory

accentuates this epistemic injustice and underscores the social inequities of this structural intersection. The acknowledgment of these sustained epistemic barriers benefits the discourse of leadership because it illustrates an epistemic gap and provides a lens by which an intersectional analysis is beneficial.

Conclusion

This analysis illustrates the epistemological linkages that bind together the seemingly disparate epistemologies of intersectionality and leadership. Central to this discussion is discerning the (dis)operation of intellectualism, co-opted by the persistence of hegemonic ideologies, which ostracize individuals who reside at the margin. This systematic exclusion from being present within the production of knowledge and as recipients of knowledge impacts all epistemological traditions, including leadership theory. Merely integrating women into an analysis of leadership theory is insufficient because it fails to engage identity beyond an additive, hierarchal strategy focused on their subjugation, without considering the multiplicity of their varied identities and their respective social locations. In this respect, applying an intersectional lens provides the epistemological complexity to discern how the intersection of privileged and marginalized identities can coexist within leaders. This locus serves as the subject of further analysis in the following chapter, which integrates intersectionality and leadership theories through a bricolage research strategy.

Chapter V: Theoretical Bricolage

This chapter presents a series of theoretical arguments that link intersectionality to leadership. The development of this bricolage begins with an examination of the architecture of theory then utilizes this insight to review key research paradigms, with a specific emphasis on the positivist, post-positivist, and post-structural orientations of leadership theory. While these research paradigms do not reflect the full spectrum of leadership discourse, they illustrate the pervasiveness of epistemic bias against women within positivism and provide counter-perspectives highlighting how post-positivism and post-structuralism challenged these epistemological limitations.

An examination of the positivist orientation within leadership theory includes an epistemological review of the trait, great man, and transformational leadership theories. Within post-positivism, a review of social identity theories illustrates how post-positivist epistemology challenges the positivist paradigm by critiquing the elements of subjectivity, value-neutrality, and objectivity. The final level of comparison examines the epistemology of post-structuralist research through a theoretical review of critical leadership studies (CLS), to distill how this research orientation addresses women's leadership. Collectively, these paradigms reveal how the epistemology of leadership theory excluded women within the positivist approach and how post-positivist and post-structuralist thought challenged these epistemic limitations. However, even within the inclusive orientations of post-positivism and post-structuralism, engaging identity with a single-axis or additive approach proved limiting when addressing the subjects of women and leadership. These limitations thus warranted an exploration of how intersectionality theory can address these epistemological gaps within leadership theory.

Beyond the deconstruction of leadership theory, building a bricolage to intersectionality requires establishing several theoretical connections. Foremost, it necessitates an exploration and expansion of the boundaries of identity engagement within leadership theory. This construction process also includes an examination of the utilization of subjectivity and reflexivity within the post-positivist and post-structuralist research paradigms. Applying a critical lens to this effort further entails an analysis of how both theoretical models share a comparable epistemology. Furthermore, discerning the developmental process of how meaning-making is constructed proved relevant to this bricolage by understanding the architectural structure of theory, drawing interdisciplinary comparisons between intersectionality and leadership, and highlighting how these theoretical comparisons reveal epistemological gaps within leadership discourse.

Architecture of Theory

The construction of a theoretical bricolage between intersectionality and leadership warrants a review of intrinsic components which comprise the structure of leadership theory.

According to Dugan (2017):

Exploring the inner mechanics of a theory is essential. This includes unpacking key assumptions about its nature, clarification of terminology, and differentiation of core considerations among theories. Taken together these three elements could be considered the building blocks of understanding leadership. (p. 4)

Dugan further characterized these “blocks” as representative of the “architecture of leadership theory” (p. 4). Subsumed within this architectural framework is the suggestion that leadership theories fall within two central spectrums: the “psychological” and “sociological” (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014, p. 6). While the psychological strand addresses what is perceived as “dominant” or “mainstream” (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014, p. 83) within leadership theory, it emphasizes the “internal dynamics” of the individual leader (Collinson, 2011, p. 183). By contrast, the sociological aspect dissects the “the shifting possible constructions of leadership located within

their complex conditions, processes, and consequences” (Collinson, 2011, p. 183). A key distinction between these two perspectives is that the psychological model seeks to understand the “essence” of individual leaders, while the sociological model examines the context in which leadership is operationalized between a leader and follower (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014, p. 7).

What then does the nature of leadership reveal? Dugan (2017) argued that leadership is a socially constructed concept and, as such, is an abstraction derived by the human need to articulate and understand our respective environments. Additionally, the social construction of leadership is impacted by “time, context, and culture,” giving it a continually evolving nature based on the “shifting norms in the sociopolitical systems in which we exist” (Dugan, 2017, p. 8). In this context, the theory of social constructionism suggests that knowledge is the result of the social exchanges which occur between a person and “their context” (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014, p. 93).

When applied to leadership theory, this concept examines the synergistic relationship between the individual and his or her environment, and in doing so contests the traditional view that knowledge is “unbiased” (Burr, 2015, p. 2) and “objective” (p. 2), instead deeming it “as products of that culture and history” (p. 3). This point of view posits that leadership theory is likewise subjective given reality is constantly evolving, as leaders interact and engage the inner self within the fluid contexts of their respective social environments. As one study put it, the “[c]ontext of leadership is hence complex, multi-dimensional and socially constructed, and thus fluid and subjective” (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014, p. 93). Applying social constructivism to the discipline of leadership contests the traditional and accepted standard of the one-size-fits-all model and interrogates the predilection of leadership scholars to assign certain factors to how individuals lead (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014).

Beyond the socially constructed nature of leadership theory, it is also values-based. Dugan (2017) asserted, “[i]f leadership is socially constructed, then *how* it is constructed represents the value norms that a particular group of people endorses at a given point in time whether good, bad, or somewhere along the continuum” (p. 9). This position was supported by Alvesson (2011), who posited that leaders possess the capacity to influence followers and, as a result, can shape the values of an organization’s culture. Schein (1985) further suggested that one must examine the historical context in which an organization’s culture was constructed, as members of the organization, over time, acquired and adopted the values of the leader. In this respect, a group of followers, led by a leader, in concert with their socio-historical context, help to co-construct the values of an organization. Because of its values-based orientation, the discourse of leadership conveys those values which are considered more meaningful (Dugan, 2017). The social constructs of leadership theory highlight the value assigned to a male dominant perspective which permeates the architecture of leadership theory. The impact of this value is it maintains an androcentric framework which excludes non-dominant perspectives.

The final facet of leadership theory which warrants review is its interdisciplinary character. This attribute speaks to the broad range of disciplines which engage in the study of leadership, including health sciences (Tuncdogan, Acar, & Stam, 2017; Willcocks, 2017), economics (Zehnder, Herz, & Bonardi, 2017), business (Gloor, 2017; Harney, 2016), religion (Chandler, 2016), and politics (Boin, Stern, & Sundelius, 2016; Brown, 2016). According to Dugan (2017):

This leads to a body of literature that is at times both complementary and contradictory as different disciplines naturally emphasize unique dimensions. This multidisciplinary approach differs from an interdisciplinary one that explicitly puts disciplines in conversation with one another, expanding boundaries in the process. While multidisciplinary approaches are additive, interdisciplinary approaches are integrative and synergistic. (p. 9)

This interdisciplinary aspect of leadership theory provides the conduit to conduct not only an epistemological analysis of the research paradigms of positivism, post-positivism, and post-structuralism, but also to explore how to expand the discourse of leadership through a theoretical bricolage with intersectionality theory.

Epistemological Gaps in Leadership

Before addressing specific gaps in leadership theory, it is necessary to review the epistemology of leadership. This section thus examines how the lack of a universal definition of leadership supports the argument that the epistemology of leadership itself is difficult to discern. Next, a historical and contemporary review of feminist critiques of leadership theory is developed to highlight the androcentrism within the research paradigms of leadership.

Leadership defined. If, as Johnson (1995) suggested, epistemology is the study of knowledge and understanding how individuals come to know what they know, then how does leadership theory presume individuals learn? Discerning the epistemology of leadership is a challenging task. First, consider the problematic nature of how leadership is learned. Within the canon of leadership, there is a wide range of epistemological perspectives—some of which compete with one another (Bogenschneider, 2016). One way to understand the epistemological foundation of leadership theory is to examine how the field itself is defined. Here the lack of a universal definition illustrates an epistemological disconnect to how knowledge is assigned value within the discipline.

This challenge was noted by Bennis (1959), who claimed that the varied attempts to establish a definition of leadership have proven illusory, and, as a result, have spawned an unceasing array of perspectives to clarify its meaning, all of which have failed to construct a universally accepted definition. While Bass (1981) referenced the vast plethora of definitions

within the field, Horner (1997) suggested there was an equally wide array of leadership theories which attempt to address the epistemological roots of how one learns leadership. In contrast, Bogenschneider (2016) argued for a link between a “definition of leadership” (p. 25) and a “theory of leadership” (p. 25), because determining what leadership requires is the development of a “framework to know leadership” (p. 25). This debate illustrates the varied and contradictory definitions of the term itself, and further reveals a lack of “agreement on the epistemology of identifying leadership” (Bogenschneider, 2016, p. 4).

Feminist critiques of epistemic bias in leadership. Since epistemology is the intellectual pursuit of understanding how individuals acquire knowledge, understanding how feminists challenged limitations within the production of knowledge is key to changing the epistemology of leadership theory. To illustrate the scope of the challenge, Venegas-García (2011) characterized the omission of women in leadership discourse as an “immeasurable void, open to many misconceptions, negative assumptions, and stereotypes about who is or can be a leader” (p. 6). When considering other dimensions of identity such as race, this void was further reinforced by Ospina and Foldy (2009), who contend knowledge limitations regarding the leadership perspectives of individuals of color also exist within discourse of leadership.

What is the rationale for this trend? Harding (1987) suggested one option:

Feminists have argued that traditional epistemologies, whether intentionally or unintentionally, systematically exclude the possibility that women could be “knowers” or agents of knowledge; they claim that the voice of science is a masculine one; that history is written from only the point of view of men (of the dominant class and race); that the subject of a traditional sociological sentence is always assumed to be a man. (p. 3)

Harding’s assertion extends to the discipline of leadership given how it is framed within a White masculinist model which exclude non-dominant perspectives, specifically “women and people of color,” as “knowers” (Rusch, Poplin Gosetti, & Mohoric, 1991, p. 9). In this respect, feminist

critiques highlight how the epistemology of leadership theories marginalizes non-dominant standpoints (Blackmore, 2005, 2013; Follett, 1940, 1949).

Vetter (2010) attributed the absence of women in leadership theory to a discipline which assigned men to the “public” arena and women to the “private sphere” (p. 3). As a consequence of this dichotomy between the public and private realms of society, the discourse of leadership was prototypically framed within a Eurocentric male context and, as such, affiliated masculinity with representations of ideal leadership (Coleman & Fitzgerald, 2008; Collinson & Hearn, 1996; Fitzgerald, 2003). Collectively, assigning male models and traits to the rubric measuring leadership relegated women to the private sphere creating structural impediments, which maintained the marginalization of women and their exclusion from leadership. As a counter to these limitations, the intellectual contributions of Follett (1940, 1949, 1987), as well as contemporary scholars like Sinclair (2013), illustrate how feminist critiques, both historical and contemporary, addressed the epistemological gaps present within leadership theory.

Follett: The visionary. Mary Parker Follett, a 19th century scholar, feminist, and theorist, is well-regarded for her academic contributions across a vast range of disciplines, including public administration (Ansell, 2009; Fry & Thomas, 1996), psychology (Crawford, 1971), management (Parker, 1984; Simms, 2009), political science (Feldheim, 2003), human resource development (Wheelock & Callahan, 2006), and leadership (Bennis, 1995). Hailed as a visionary (Samuel, 1996; Melé, 2007), a pioneer (Bennis, 1995), and a prophet (Ansell, 2009; Drucker, 1995; Simms, 2009), Follett introduced leadership concepts whose longevity and import extend to modern leadership theories, particularly transformational, contingent, path-goal, (Monin & Bathurst, 2008), situational (Gibson & Deem, 2016), and relational (Kenny, 2012) theories.

Contemporary leadership and management scholars alike have acknowledged Follett's intellectual contributions (Drucker, 1995; Gibson & Deem, 2016; Kanter, 1995; McLarney & Rhyno, 1999; Mendenhall & Marsh, 2010). Bennis (1995) notes the extent of her influence:

Just about everything written today about leadership and organizations comes from Mary Parker Follett's writings and lectures. They are dispiritingly identical—or if not identical, they certainly rhyme—with the most contemporary of writings... Follett was there first. (p. 178)

This assertion was supported by Bathurst and Monin (2010), who maintained that Follett's scholarship remains applicable to contemporary conversations within leadership theory because of the persistence of themes such as the relationship between leaders and followers. The application of these dynamics within Follett's work are also found within transformational leadership theory. Given the significance of her legacy, several key concepts introduced by Follett were analyzed to illustrate the feminist inclinations present within her work, as well as how this orientation challenged the epistemology of leadership.

Follett's feminist inclinations. Understanding Follett's feminist orientation requires consideration of the socio-historical context of the development of her work. During the 19th century, opportunities for women to acquire a formal education were limited (Madigan, 2009). After being denied access to study at Harvard because it did not accept female students, Follett secured entrance into the Harvard Annex (Tonn, 2003). The Annex, later known as Radcliffe, was comprised of 44 male professors who agreed to teach female students (Lefkowitz & Horowitz, 2012). This background is relevant because it reveals how Follett was essentially an “outsider-within” (Collins, 1990). While social class afforded her the capacity to access knowledge, as a woman her non-dominant status situated her within the periphery of the Annex. This pattern extended to her unconventional approach to writing, characterized as being “outside the mainstream at a time when male champions dominated” (Bathurst & Monin, 2010, p. 115). This

dichotomous status as an outsider afforded Follett inside access, where she produced unconventional scholarship reflective of her marginalized standpoint within a discourse dominated by men.

Given these parameters, what in Follett's body of work reveals an orientation toward feminism? If feminist theory involves addressing "gendered patterns in human relationships" (Morton & Lindquist, 1997, p. 349), then Follett's ideas about the relationships between leaders and followers illustrate a feminist bent. Her critique of male-normed notions is exemplified with the idea of "everyman" because she included all individuals as potential leaders and, in doing so, questioned the dominant standpoint of male leaders. Her support of diversity—"[g]ive your difference, welcome my difference, unify all difference in the larger whole" (Follett, 1926, p. 40)—was also reflective of a feminist stance, one which evoked social equity not only for herself but for other women as well. The "everyman" ideal, coupled with her support of diversity, reflects an inclusive nature of humanity which distinctively deviates from the hegemonic stance present in leadership discourse of her time.

Another illustration of her feminist inclinations is found in her 1933 lecture, *The Essentials of Leadership*, which critiqued the traits of aggression and dominance as "synonymous" with leadership as "old-fashioned" (Follett, 1987, p. 48). This stance demonstrates not only the dated nature of these attributes but traits aligned with male leaders which served to maintain a dominant paradigm. By critiquing leadership in this manner, Follett advanced a feminist orientation which supported "emancipatory or equitable relationships that move[d] beyond dominance or subordination" (Morton & Lindquist, 1997, p. 350).

An additional argument demonstrating her feminist inclinations is Follett's concept of "power with" (Follett, 1924, p. 187), not "power over" (p. 193). This idea inserts both an

egalitarian and democratic dynamic into the relationship between a leader and his or her followers (Eylon, 1998). In this respect, she reframed this relationship beyond the traditionally ascribed dominant and subordinate roles to present a circular relationship, where both entities are bound by what best serves the organization (Bathurst & Monin, 2010). However, given that women were more likely to be employed as followers, this model also implies a more equitable dynamic between men and women, as employees working toward common goals. As such, Follett's body of work illustrates an orientation toward egalitarianism at a time when equality between the sexes did not exist. By questioning the hegemonic hold within leadership theory, using constructs such as everyman, diversity, power, and circular relationships, Follett's philosophical framework challenged the dominant status of male leadership and in doing so, inserted a feminist orientation into leadership theory.

Follett's epistemology and its implications for leadership. What does the feminist bent in Follett's work reveal about her epistemological stance on leadership? Examining the construct of empiricism provides an answer to this question. Empiricism, the school of thought which prevailed during the 19th and 20th centuries, utilizes facts and objectivity to determine what was true in the production of knowledge (Code, 1991; Harding, 1986). Empiricism falls within the positivist tradition which views epistemology as a means by which social science could explain the natural world (Holmwood, 1995). Within positivist thought, the methodology by which scholars arrived at the truth is what matters and "[t]hese means must be objective, empirical and scientific" (Ryan, 2006, p. 15). Other facets of the positivist tradition subscribed to the notion that there must be distance between the researcher and the subject of study, as well as the idea that knowledge is revealed during scientific inquiry rather than being generated by scholars (Ryan, 2006).

Rather than being bound by the conventional parameters of science to construct meaning-making, Follett posited that “Experience is the power-house where purpose and will, thought and ideals, are being generated” (1924, p. 133). This suggestion is a clear deviation from the established norm of empiricism because she espoused a more progressive epistemological stance, which suggested the acquisition of knowledge occurs through one’s life experiences (Morton & Lindquist, 1997). This idea was in direct opposition to the scientific notion of objectivity which viewed knowledge as being a neutral, detached scientific exercise to determine what was true. In contrast, Follett advanced a subjectivity which did not separate the knower from what is known but instead embraced the value of one’s experience as a leader.

Follett further challenged the construct of objectivity by associating it with the operation of power (Morton & Lindquist, 1997). She explained the affiliation between objectivity and power this way: “Facts have intimate connection with the whole question of power. Parallel to the history of the use of facts must be written the history of the use of power” (Follett, 1924, p. 14). This stance reveals the integral linkage between the production of knowledge to those who have the power, and, in doing so, articulates the inherent bias within meaning-making. Furthermore, Follett challenged the position of “power over” being granted to leaders by critiquing the leadership traits of domination and aggression (Humphreys & Einstein, 2003). She asserted that power was the chief challenge of society (Follett, 1940). In this respect, Follett’s stance critiqued the prevailing epistemology as inherently biased given the dominant standpoint of White men being assigned the power to determine what was true within society. As such, Follett’s stance on objectivity and power advanced an epistemology of leadership which argued that one’s capacity to be objective and to exercise power with, not power over cannot be achieved by the constraints of empiricist thinking.

As a counter to these epistemological limitations, Follett advanced a leadership philosophy of “integration” which suggested leaders must be equipped with knowledge of “the total situation” (Bathurst & Monin, 2010, p. 115). This idea embraces an epistemology whereby a leader must understand how the disparate “sense-making thread[s]” which construct an organization’s structure are connected as a system (Monin & Bathurst, 2008, p. 447). In this respect, a leader references his or her repository of experience to generate knowledge of how to respond to a specific situation, and practices power with his or her followers, not power over them, to accomplish a common objective. Follett’s integrative leadership theory also advanced the idea that there is no “ideal” leader since any individual can become a leader (Monin & Bathurst, 2008, p. 451). Illustrative of her feminist orientation, Follett’s leadership theory argued on behalf of the diverse perspectives of everyday people as both agents and recipients of knowledge. Collectively, these facets of integrative leadership illustrate how Follett challenged the epistemology of leadership by endorsing a more systematic “total” (Monin & Bathurst, 2008, p. 447) approach to leadership, based on one’s subjectivity as a learner, and through shifting the balance of power between a leader and follower.

Contemporary feminist critiques of epistemology. While the feminist orientations within Follett’s work provide a historical snapshot and epistemological context for how she challenged the positivist tradition, how have contemporary scholars addressed the epistemology of leadership theory? Beginning in the 1960s, feminists and other scholars from varied disciplines began to critique the positivist tradition (Bernstein, 1976). These critiques were motivated by the shortcomings within positivism, specifically how the constructs of objectivity (Harding, 1986; Haraway, 1988), subjectivity (Code, 1991, 1996), and value-neutrality (Longino, 1990; L. H. Nelson, 1993) were utilized as epistemological requirements within social

science to determine what is true. In order to counter the limitations of positivism, feminist scholars questioned the “social processes” which determined what was true within epistemology, specifically how the process itself was framed within a patriarchal framework which excluded women (Holmwood, 1995, p. 413). Rather than accept this established framework, feminist critiques utilized a post-positivist approach (Janack, 2017) to count women as knowers.

Elements of post-positivism. While the post-positivist approach developed from the school of positivism, the inclusion of multiple methodologies distinguishes it from its predecessor (Morris, McNaughton, Mullins, & Osmond, 2009). Central characteristics aligned with this research approach include the integration of practice with theory and a clear shift from the narrow research focus of positivism (Ryan, 2006). An integral element of post-positivism is how researchers engage subjectivity, rather than employing objectivity (as positivists did) to insert distance between the researcher and the subject of study. This distance is intentional because positivists believed such separation inserted a neutral aspect within the analysis of data, to more accurately discern what is truthful in the production of knowledge (Fox, 2008). In contrast, post-positivist subjectivity was approached through the intentional removal of distance between the researcher and her subject, and with the understanding that the construction of knowledge should consider the experience of a subject (Schratz & Walker, 1995). This intellectual shift forced scholars to examine their epistemological stance in order to understand how their respective “assumptions about knowledge” impacted their research interests (Ryan, 2006, p. 18). This reflexive component of engaging one’s epistemology is another variable related to the post-positivist tradition (Fox, 2008).

In order to determine what is truthful, post-positivist researchers must also understand how they make sense of their daily realities (Ryan, 2006). The process of reflexivity occurs when

researchers understand how they engage their respective subjects of study (Fox, 2008) as well as discern how they utilize their subjectivity and power when researching a subject. Finally, while positivism argued that there was one, single, definitive truth derived from empirical research (Fox, 2008), post-positivists believe there are multiple truths to explain our social reality (Ryan, 2006). Unique to this approach is how scholars engage epistemology from a stance framed in “learning” (Ryan, 2006, p. 18) or “understanding” (Fox, 2008, n.p.) the experiences of their subjects of inquiry, as opposed to the “testing” component affiliated with the positivist tradition (Ryan, 2006, p. 18). Collectively, the constructs of subjectivity and reflexivity, as well as an expansion of the boundaries of how to define truth, illustrate the complexity affiliated with how post-positivists engage the production of knowledge.

Epistemological impact of post-positivism. These varied tenets illuminated a new, post-positive strategy feminists utilized in their critiques against the traditional epistemological stance of positivism. This assertion was supported by Fox (2008), who argued that the components affiliated with post-positivist thought have been instrumental to feminism. As a result, a modern body of work, led by feminist theorists, counters the constraints of positivism through an array of new ideas and theories, situated within the post-positivist tradition. Principal facets warranting review include standpoint theory, discourse, power, context, and reflexivity because they illustrate the impact of feminist critiques on the epistemology of post-positivist thought.

Standpoint theory is representative of one intellectual shift which critiqued the epistemology of the philosophical canon. Feminist scholars utilized the post-positivist stance to reexamine the requirements of what was deemed knowledge by questioning how one’s social stance, with a specific focus of gender, impacts one’s access to knowledge. The integration of

this perspective is important because it reveals how subjectivity matters in the construction of knowledge. Feminists specifically argue that the life experiences of women are not only valid but that the knowledge they acquire as a result of these experiences have epistemic value. In essence, standpoint theory critiques how the construction of knowledge has been gendered, framed within a hegemonic White male framework, and established a dominant discourse which excluded women from being counted as knowers.

The element of discourse is also impactful within the school of post-positivism. Discourse is a mechanism that illustrates the connection between language and meaning. This connection is significant because it has shaped how individuals think within a given historical timeframe (Ryan, 2006). According to Ryan (2006),

Discourses are regimes of knowledge constructed over time. They include the commonsense assumptions and taken-for-granted ideas, belief systems and myths that groups of people share and through which they understand each other. Discourses articulate and convey formal and informal knowledge and ideologies. (p. 23)

Discourse, then, is significant within the context of standpoint theory because it frames the socio-historical context challenged by feminist scholars and demonstrates how they disrupted the prevailing philosophical narrative related to the intellectual relationship between epistemology and women. According to Smith (1989), standpoint theory constructs “a systematically developed consciousness of society from within, renouncing the artifice of standing outside what we can never stand outside of” (p. 34). Central to standpoint theory is the suggestion that social science should consider how the subjects of gender and power were relevant foci, to reexamine the existing limitations of scientific investigation (Harding, 2003).

Power, another theme central to the post-positivist position, is also employed by feminist scholars to critique the philosophical canon. This utilization of power occurs not only in terms of dictating which discourse was predominate within the canon, but emphasizing how the process

of establishing a discourse is one of privilege—power in operation (Lazar, 2007). Ryan (2006) maintained that while “[d]iscursive forms of power are less visible than legal and material ones...[t]he production of knowledge is political and has real effects” (p. 24). Thus, the application of power within post-positivism highlights how scholars have emphasized what standpoints were absent from current scholarship, as well as demonstrating the search for new knowledge.

Beyond the reexamination of variables like power in the corpus of epistemology, feminist epistemologists also considered the importance of context. Niaz (2017) suggested that context “is culturally situated and therefore reflects the gender and racial ideologies of societies” (p. 98). For feminist scholars, situating context within an analysis of epistemology emphasizes understanding “whose knowledge” prevails in the discourse and understanding what socio-historical factors contribute to this reality (Pressley, 2005, p. 3). As such, feminist epistemologists utilize varied contextual factors, such as gender and power, to reconsider how women were situated outside the margin and to reframe gender as a central facet in the construction of knowledge. The practice of reexamining the epistemology of knowledge is itself a discursive process. This process involves individuals’ positioning others, who in doing so position themselves, as others position them (Ryan, 2006). While feminist scholars focused on gender, the process of positioning oneself and others includes the incorporation of a wide breadth of discourses, notably socio-economic class, ethnicity, and race, amongst other identity affiliations (Slack, 1996).

Another noteworthy aspect of post-positivism is the element of reflexivity, which is central to feminist critiques of epistemology. This construct proved valuable to feminist scholars as they illustrated how dominant discourses utilize the variables of subjectivity, objectivity, and power to exclude marginalized perspectives in the production of knowledge. Scholars challenged

this prevailing paradigm with a range of intellectual strategies and theories aimed at providing a more complete depiction of the standpoint of women. Arriving at this more complex understanding of how truth is constructed within epistemology required scholars to utilize reflexivity to examine how their intersubjective nature impacts their research. Smart (2010) suggested that reflexivity aimed to “produce an awareness of the complexity, historical contingency, and fragility of the practices that we invent to discover the truth about ourselves” (p. 76). Ryan (2006) added that reflexivity is central to the post-positivist stance because it reminded scholars to examine the assumptions present within their respective research projects. Understanding how these varied feminist critiques fall within the spectrum of post-positivist thought is critical to linking their impact to epistemological shifts within leadership theory.

Epistemological implications for leadership. Feminist critiques, framed within the post-positivist tradition, were also utilized as arguments to challenge the epistemology of leadership theory. Theoreticians argued that the epistemological foundation of leadership is fundamentally flawed because of the inherent bias in a system of knowledge whose creation excluded non-dominant perspectives. The most apparent shortcoming is the gender bias perpetuated against women within the epistemology of leadership discourse (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Hogue & Lord, 2007; Metcalfe & Altman, 2001). This status quo is the result of an established hegemonic hold within leadership, which was historically maintained by those who established the norm itself—White men (Collinson & Hearn, 2014). Sinclair (2005) suggested that the discipline of leadership made the construct of gender “invisible” and asserted that this practice is by no means “accidental” (p. vii). She added: “By making these dimensions of dominant leadership invisible, they become undiscussable and beyond critique, challenge and change” (2005, p. vii). This practice of exclusion is reflected in the prevailing epistemological

pattern that continues to discount women as knowers (Rusch et al., 1991). Storberg-Walker and Haber-Curran (2017) supported this assertion:

Talk with any scholar of women's learning, leadership, or development, and you will hear laments that we are too reliant on decades-old theories created by White men and that we need more nimble, contemporary theories to understand and discuss women's leadership. (p. x)

In this respect, theories framed from a feminist perspective have served as the intellectual counter to the marginalized representation of women and individuals of color, within the canon of leadership (Rusch et al., 1991).

Beyond challenging masculinist norms, feminist scholars also engaged the construct of subjectivity to illustrate how women count as knowers and how they reference their subjectivity as leaders. Given the socially constructed nature of leadership, the frameworks underlying leadership theories are closely connected to "traditional assumptions of masculinity" (Sinclair, 2005, p. 1) which results in a "gendered construction" of leadership (p. 2). Sinclair (2005) asserted the canon constructed "dominant archetypes" of White male leaders with attached and "embedded assumptions" related to aggression, dominance, and privilege (p. ix). This epistemological framework situates leadership theory within an archetype which has acquired "mythic power" and "resists deconstruction" (Sinclair, 2005, p. ix).

Another invisible aspect of this "archetype" is the presumption that leadership theories are gender-neutral. Acker (1990; 2006) posited that the idea of neutrality serves as a cover for how the operation of power impacts gender. Furthermore, the alignment of gender neutrality mirrors how epistemology assigns value to the construct of objectivity. In this respect, in order to determine what is objective knowledge, social science assumes a gender-neutral stance. The basis of this stance is to establish distance between the object of inquiry and the scholar

attempting to discern what is true. This approach is flawed given the predisposed epistemological bias within leadership to assign a greater value to male perspectives of leadership.

It is this gendered archetype, framed within a hegemonic structure, which Sinclair (2005) challenged in order to liberate individuals to do leadership differently. This stance is reflected in how historically marginalized groups, inclusive of women, have referenced their “whole self” (Sinclair, 2005, p. x) in the practice of leadership, in order to deconstruct the established archetype. This notion of “whole self” opened the door to considering how women lead differently by referencing their gender. Consequently, the insertion of subjectivity into leadership is relevant because “[g]ender matters to how leadership is understood and done... because gendering processes constitute subjectivities” (Binns, 2008, p. 605).

The inclusion of a feminist standpoint by Harding (1987) represents another intellectual approach to cull from feminist epistemology in order to negate the entrenched norm of the White male leader. Feminist standpoint theory, situated within post-positivist research design, examines the production of knowledge from the experiences of non-dominant perspectives, particularly women’s perspectives. Given their social location as a historically oppressed group, and the resulting inequity of residing in this space, women see the world differently. Utilizing this lens as the focus of inquiry, feminist scholars noted the gender injustice present within the production of knowledge. Feminist standpoint theory suggests the location of women provides them with the capacity to compare their non-dominant perspectives with the dominant viewpoint, providing a more objective account of what is deemed true in knowledge production (van der Tuin, 2016). This intellectual position represents a departure from established social science which assigned value-neutrality and objectivity as criteria to determine what was true within epistemology.

Feminist scholars also argued that science was not neutral because it relegates value to a White male dominant perspective which historically controlled what is deemed true within the production of knowledge (Harding, 1987). Given that knowledge was produced within a structural system led by men, by virtue of their privileged status they constructed an intellectual system which maintains their dominance. As such, the construct of neutrality cannot exist in a system that remains androcentric and predisposed to bias one gender over another. Nor is social science objective, because it defines White males as the basis of comparison by which all other non-dominant perspectives are othered and deemed less objective.

This pattern persisted because that which was deemed feminine was categorized as ruled by emotion, preventing women from being perceived as having the capacity to exercise objectivity. Furthermore, the perception that women lacked objectivity constructed epistemological barriers within leadership discourse which limited their capacity to access knowledge. In this respect, the constructs of value-neutrality, objectivity, and subjectivity, feminist critiques served to spotlight how the epistemological ideology of leadership theory was and remains framed within an androcentric system.

Leadership Research Paradigms

An analysis of key research paradigms, specifically the positivist, post-positivist, and post-structural orientations, illuminates the epistemology of leadership theory. As noted in Table 1, these research paradigms are illustrative of the breadth of intellectual discourse seeking to understand and expand the discipline itself.

Table 4.1

Key Research Leadership Paradigms

Paradigm	Epistemology	Theories & Timeline
Positivist	<i>Scientific knowledge determines what is universally true; remove values from research in order to strive for objectivity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Great man (1840s) · Trait theory (1930s) · Behavioral theories (1940s & 1950s)
Post-positivist	<i>Researcher investigates one's own epistemology and considers how that impacts/influences one's research; there is no one universal truth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Contingency theory (1960s & 1970s) · Servant leadership (1970s) · Relational leadership theory (1990s) · Social identity theories (1990s) · LMX theory (1990s) · Shared/distributed leadership theories (2000s)
Post-structural	<i>Research seeks to determine what is true, but reality can never be fully explained which results in an array of meanings; posits knowledge is socially constructed by recognizing the role and power of discourse. All values are relative and, as such, value judgments are improbable; knowing is relative.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Feminist post-structural theory (1980s) · Critical race theory (1990s & 2000s) · Critical leadership studies (2000s)

Positivist leadership theories. In the positivist tradition, leadership is a social process whose meaning is constructed by concepts like objectivity to determine what is true and factual within the production of knowledge (Creswell, 2007; Crotty, 1998). Crotty (1998) noted that the construct of objectivity is central to a positivist position since it engages knowledge as being empirically constructed and provable. Lloyd-Jones (2011) extended this analysis further by suggesting positivism subscribed to the notion that people acquire knowledge through a shared group of attributes, with these commonly held characteristics being inserted into the lexicon of leadership theory to define what it means to be a successful leader. Support for this assertion is found within the positivist orientation of dominant leadership theories, particularly the great

man, trait, and transformational models. What then does this positivist orientation reveal about the epistemology of leadership? A review of these theories makes the link between positivism and leadership more distinct. Bass' leadership theory posits that there are essentially three manners in which individuals can become leaders (Bass, 1990; Stogdill, 1989). One pathway to becoming a leader lies within the great man or great events theory, which asserts that critical or key events in a person's life can prompt exceptional leadership attributes to emerge within an otherwise ordinary individual and compel that individual to engage leadership through action (Northouse, 2013). However, the presumed subject in this leadership epistemology is male (Blackmore, 2005; Fildes, 1983). When placed within a historical context, this leadership theory illustrates the prevalence of a masculinist model within the discipline (Barman, 2009). Another epistemological limitation of this leadership strand is its positivist orientation, which utilizes empiricism to validate a male-normed standard of leadership (Blackmore, 2005). Historically, the great man theory has perpetuated the commonly accepted epistemology of leadership framed within a masculinist model and affirmed by the positivist tradition (Blackmore, 2005).

Another epistemological strategy which explains how an individual becomes a leader is trait theory. This theory suggests that personality traits influence not only how an individual behaves, but how that individual is naturally predisposed to possess characteristics assigned to a leader (Northouse, 2013). Trait theory is an extension of great man theory because it examines the characteristics of how great men lead. Baliga, Dachler, and Schriesheim (1988) associated the attributes of dominance, competition, and aggression with this theoretical model. Witte (2012) supported this assertion, contending that these attributes are perceived by humanity as reflective of the male gender (Witte, 2012).

A limitation of this theory is that it presumes individuals inherit their capacity to be a leader, which consequently assigned men key leadership traits. Given the androcentric presumptions of great men theory and the belief that leaders are born, this stance presumes that women are unable to become leaders because they lack the attributes associated with leadership. Trait theory aligns itself with a positivist epistemology (Lloyd-Jones, 2011) where the subject is male, and assigns credibility to a subject utilizing a scientific standard. Influenced by the scholarship of Creswell (2007) and Crotty (1998), Lloyd-Jones (2011) posited that this theoretical framework is typified by a perspective which framed leadership as reflective of the real world and relied upon knowledge deemed factual, utilizing the construct of objectivity to generate “predictable outcomes” (p. 13).

An alternate pathway to become a leader, regarded as another dominant theoretical strand, is transformational leadership theory, which proposes that people utilize their specific traits to compel followers to take on tasks and that this process could be learned (Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2013). The relationship between the leader and follower is utilized to engage a higher, “collective purpose” (Burns, 1978, p. 3). According to Allix (2000), the operation of transformational leadership characterizes the relationship between leader and follower as distinctive, with the leader directing the flow of the relationship.

When integrating the variables of power and subjectivity within transformational leadership, the leader is in the dominant position by virtue of his or her power. Placing the subjectivity of this leader within a socio-historical context dictates that this leader is most likely male. A meta-analysis conducted by Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) reveals the irony of utilizing the term transformational to describe this theory. They examined gender with transformational leadership and noted minor, but compelling, evidence that women, in

comparison to their male peer leaders, tend to be more affiliated with this specific style of leadership. In other words, while women are more apt to align themselves with this leadership theory, in practice this theoretical strand is likely to exclude them. Situating this theory within a positivistic tradition illustrates how the epistemology of transformational leadership serves as a source of exclusion (Allix, 2000). The scholarship of Burns (1978) incorporates psychological analysis to better understand how the operation of power and the practice of authority impact the relationship between a leader and follower. According to Allix (2000), the epistemology of Burns' transformational theory did not differ "from the positivist/empiricist foundation on which traditional conceptualizations of leadership have been formulated" (p. 8). Transformational leadership theory thus maintains the marginalization of women as outsiders within a theoretical strand dominated by male leaders, who exercised their power to advance an epistemology of exclusion.

Epistemic impact of positivistic leadership theories. Predominately male authors are responsible for the development of major leadership theories such as great man, trait, and transformational theories, and the androcentric stance of these theories maintained patriarchal norms (Fildes, 1983; Ford, 2006, 2016; Ford, Harding, & Learmonth, 2008). This standpoint, of course, presumes that the leadership trajectory for women is the same as their male counterparts. It also establishes an androcentric norm (Eagly & Karau, 2002) which relegates women to the status of marginalized Other (Fulop, Linstead, & Lilley, 2009). This assertion was supported by Egan et al. (2017) and Fulop et al. (2009), who suggested that a theoretical analysis of gender had not only been consistently overlooked within the discourse of leadership, but relegated to the periphery. This sustained practice resulted in the marginalization of women as subjects worthy of study and was perpetuated by a biased "norm" within leadership (Alvesson & Billing, 2009).

This patriarchal pattern within leadership constructed an epistemic bias against marginalized standpoints. In this respect, the discourse of leadership reveals a pattern of exclusion relative to marginalized standpoints (Lopez, 2003; Lumby & Morrison, 2010; Rusch, 2004). Bailey (2014) supported this suggestion by noting how this epistemic bias against non-dominant groups constructed “unlevel playing fields” and assigned an epistemic privilege to “socially dominant groups” (i.e., men; p. 62).

Another impact of this positivistic tradition is its emphasis “on the nature, the types, and the need for leadership,” which resulted in the a discourse framed within a masculinist tradition which presumed “gender blindness” but in actuality established a male-normed model of leadership (Ford, 2016, p. 225). This contention was supported by Lloyd-Jones (2011), who maintained: “Trait theories provide an explanation for the exclusion of women of color from leadership positions. Traditional leadership research literature was not inclusive of women given men’s dominance in leadership roles” (p. 14). The effect of this normed practice of exclusion was that nominal attention was granted to “diverse subjectivities and power relations within which people in organizations operate” (Ford, 2016, p. 225).

The construct of subjectivity, when analyzed within the epistemology of leadership, historically excluded women as subjects of knowledge within the positivist tradition. Relying upon a single-axis of identity, in this case, gender, also served to limit the epistemology of leadership because identity framed in this manner fails to consider the interconnection of gender with other identity classifications. Furthermore, the application of an intersectional lens to the subjectivity of these varied identity affiliations must consider how social location impacts one’s subjectivity within larger structures of power and privilege (Code, 1991). This assertion suggests that leaders, as subjects, cannot be relegated to one role, but instead operate within shifting

identity roles which vary according to social context (Ford, 2006, 2016; Ford, Harding & Learmonth, 2008; Fournier & Grey, 2000; Raelin, 2008, 2014; Watson, Chemers, & Preiser, 2001).

The impact of these exclusionary practices within the positivist tradition of leadership discourse is the promulgation of an intellectual system which sustains a hegemonic order that assigns privilege to a White male constituent base. This exclusionary stance resulted in other standpoints, those which exist outside this established norm, being afforded secondary, outsider status. Sustained by the operation of power and privilege, these epistemic practices illustrate the exclusion and marginalization of women, as well as how leadership theorists failed to consider the intersectional nature of identity in the production of knowledge.

Post-positivist leadership theories. Given the epistemic limitations of positivist leadership theories, the next level of inquiry examines post-positivist leadership theories, specifically servant leadership, relational leadership theory, and social identity theories. With this focus, an analysis of the epistemological impact of these theories was conducted to determine their influence on the construct of gender, particularly in terms of the theoretical implications for women in leadership. This analysis also identified the unique theoretical attributes of post-positivism.

Leadership theories which fall within the spectrum of post-positivism have a philosophical orientation (Putzer & Voegtlin, 2013). This philosophical aspect engages leaders' behavior within an ethical framework (Trevino & Weaver, 1994). Woven into this post-positivist paradigm is a critical review of how power relates to leadership (Putzer & Voegtlin, 2013). Leadership theories in this research framework represent a distinctive shift from the social science stance found within positivist inquiry, as they apply a philosophical, critical lens which

examines the value of qualitative inquiry within post-positivism (Epitropaki, Martin, & Thomas, 2018).

Servant leadership. Introduced by Greenleaf, servant leadership is “a philosophy and set of practices that enriches the lives of individuals, builds better organizations and ultimately creates a more just and caring world” (Center for Servant Leadership, n.p.). This philosophical attribute is evident in the manner in which leaders assign themselves the role of servants whose primary function is serving others (Greenleaf, 1977). Integrating philosophy into the epistemology of leadership places this theory firmly within the post-positivist tradition. This post-positivist shift is in sharp contrast to the positivist orientation, which frames trait and behavioral theories as leaders engaged in the acquisition and exercise of power over followers, as is evident in the “leader-follower” binary (Gronn, 2002). By comparison, servant leadership espouses a shared distribution of power between leader and follower (Greenleaf, 1977). This operational shift in power reflects a departure from the “subject-objective dichotomy” (Collinson, 2005, p. 1420) found within the positivist orientation, which frames the leader as subject and follower as the object (Prince, 2005).

In shifting the power differential between leader and follower, Greenleaf added a new level of complexity to leadership theory. First, eliminating the hierarchal framework in the traditional epistemology of positivism reframes the binary of leader (assigned power) versus follower (presumed passive). This “revolutionary paradigm shift” recalibrates leadership theory because it removes the distance between the leader and follower (Boyum, 2006, p. 8). The insertion of philosophy into servant leadership results in the integration of values, distinguishing it from the positivist tradition, which articulates a different set of beliefs to discern what is true or false within epistemology (Ruona & Lynham, 2004). While the positivist paradigm utilizes the

construct of objectivity to maintain space between the subject and object, in order to scientifically validate what is true in knowledge, the post-positivist stance of servant leadership proffers a narrative that truth was relative.

This suggestion was supported by LeTourneau and Allen (1999), who posited that “post-positivists view truth as ultimately unknowable” (p. 624). Beyond the elimination of distance between subject and object, servant leadership theory also examines how altering the power within this relationship could more effectively serve the organization. In this respect, the social construction of knowledge, and what is deemed true is continually evolving, given the ongoing social shifts within one’s environment. The impact of these shifts relative to value, power, subjectivity, and objectivity illustrate how servant leadership altered the epistemology of leadership discourse.

LMX theory. Beyond servant leadership, Uhl-Bien and Ospina (2012) suggested that Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory, social identity theories, and relational leadership also fall within the post-positivist research paradigm. Developed by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), LMX theory suggests leaders have a distinctive dyadic relationship with their followers, depending on their assignment within an in-group or out-group category. In essence, this theoretical strand seeks to differentiate how these groups differ and understand the rationale for why followers were assigned an in-group or out-group status, along with the implications for this assignment (i.e., greater or less authority and latitude as followers; Lunenburg, 2010). LMX theory falls within the spectrum of leadership theories examining a relational aspect, thus justifying its placement within the post-positivist tradition (Sparrowe, Soetjipto, & Kramer, 2006). Dinh et al. (2014) suggested that LMX theory is the “archetypal social exchange leader-follower dyadic approach” (p. 39). Within LXM theory, the focus is understanding the

relationship between a leader and follower, in contrast to the positivist orientation which focuses on the traits and behavior of an individual leader (Epitropaki, Martin, & Thomas, 2018).

Examining the relationship between leader and follower has multiple impacts within leadership discourse. First, by placing emphasis on the “relational” (p. 654) aspect between them, Uhl-Bien (2006) argued that leadership was not just an individual but rather an “entity” exercising its leadership (p. 655). This modification is distinct from the positivist orientation of great man or trait theories because it asserts that leadership is socially constructed and has to consider social environment first, rather than the individual. This contention is important because it marks a shift beyond the positivist tradition and stresses the “acceptance of leadership as a social change process” (Uhl-Bien, 2011, p. 65). In challenging the entity perspective of great man and trait theory, LMX theory advances a different epistemology for leadership discourse. This change is clear when considering great man and trait theories, which utilize the construct of objectivity to establish an epistemological boundary between subject (leader) versus object (nature; Bradbury & Lichtenstein, 2000). The positivist orientation of these leadership theories utilizes this demarcation to insert “objective truth” within the epistemology of leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006, p. 655). By comparison, LMX theory flips the order and puts nature first by considering how social factors unique to one’s environment impact the social construction of knowledge, thus introducing an alternative epistemology within leadership discourse.

Social identity leadership theory. Social identity leadership theories are also representative of post-positivist research. Hogg (2001) aligned specific facets of this theoretical strand with post-positivism, especially in how it “views leadership as a group process generated by social categorization” (p. 184). This idea suggests that depending on one’s social identity, one could choose to align oneself with an “intra-group” reflective of that identity, and this interaction

created a prototype (p. 184). A prototype was defined by Nugent (2013) as an individual who leads a group or organization and is deemed by other members of his or her group as reflecting attributes specific to the group. Van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003) added that it is the leaders' capacity to engage prototypical members of their groups as followers which results in the linkage between social identity and leadership. Furthermore, to be effective as a leader means being seen as a representative of the specific prototypical group with whom a leader aligns them self (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003).

This shared group identity is also reflected in “group-oriented behavior” (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003, p. 243) by the leader, which further crystalizes how a prototypical leader's actions are “perceived to benefit the group” (p. 243). It is this relational aspect of social identity leadership theory which frames it within the post-positivist tradition. This theoretical strand also critically examines how this relationship benefits “in-groups” within an organization and establishes a prototypical leader. As such, “in-group” status is perceived as having influence by setting the standard of an effective leader. In contrast, the social identity of the “out-group” acquire the perception of less influence within an organization. Underlying this “in-group” and “out-group” status is the construct of power—another attribute aligned with the post-positivist tradition (Hogg, 2001). This examination of the operation of power within social identity leadership theory illustrates how in-group identities have been historically assigned preferential status within the theoretical terrain of leadership discourse. Understanding the epistemological implications of this practice is critical to assess the leadership impact for individuals relegated to status of an out-group.

Epistemic limitations of post-positivist leadership theories. This review demonstrates how post-positivist thought, though it integrated a critical lens into the construction of

knowledge within leadership theory, failed to fully consider how the construct of gender is equally worthy of consideration. As a historically situated “out-group,” women have been marginalized, occupying a social location that compromised their capacity to impact the epistemology of leadership. For this analysis, a re-examination of the constructs of social identity and power with a gendered lens illustrates the epistemic limitations of post-positivist leadership theories.

Identity. An analysis of identity, specifically gender, highlights the epistemic limitations found within servant leadership, LMX theory, and social identity leadership theories. This practice is evident in the language and discourse of servant leadership which Eicher-Catt (2005) argued: “perpetuates a theology of leadership that upholds androcentric patriarchal norms” (p. 17). Given this theory is grounded in a Christian theological narrative, the gendered roles found within this religious tradition have historically deemed men as dominant and women as passive. This assertion was countered by Rhodes (2001), who posited that “servant-leadership was gender neutral because true service was genderless and true leadership was gender blind” (p. 3). This argument is flawed given the gender-neutral association within leadership presumes that both men and women can equally access the role of servant leadership. Intrinsic to this notion is the idea that men can choose servitude, a choice aligned with power. The capacity to exercise choice assigns men privilege and, by default, sustains a leadership discourse situated within the male-centered, dominant paradigm. The religious and historical contexts associated with this theory assign women to a (sub)servient role (note the emphasis on the latter part of this term). As such, this standpoint implies a lack of choice and hence a lack of power. Given the gendered nature of these roles, women and men engage leadership differently, even when it was in service to others.

One epistemological implication of this practice is that servant leadership theory excludes women from equally accessing leadership. While this theory aims to eliminate the distance between the leader and follower (Boyum, 2006), this strategy presumed everyone could uniformly access servant leadership. Simply stripping away the space between subject and object in order to validate what is epistemically true misses the mark, because it fails to consider how the subjectivity of women places them at an epistemic disadvantage. Given that truth is relative within the post-positivist tradition, the truth of servant leadership theory is also relative. While the role of servant may have been a novel approach for male leaders, for women, this marginalized stance remained an established reality.

An examination of how identity operates within LMX theory illustrates further epistemic gaps. While this theory examines the relationship between leader and followers situated within in- and out-groups, the socio-historical context of how individuals acquire the designation of leader or follower is worthy of examination. Since history and contemporary reality have situated women as marginalized within leadership roles, this social status relegated them to the category of follower. Thus, examining the roles of in-group and out-group status is essential. While in-group members have the ability to form a more social relationship with their respective leaders, out-group members maintain a formal working relationship with their leaders (Kim & Organ, 1982). Upon one's selection to in-group status, these members incur an enhanced professional status (Goertzen & Fritz, 2004). The construct of gender becomes a factor when leaders are more likely to select individuals of the same sex to the in-group (Wayne, Liden & Sparrowe, 1994). This assertion was supported by Goertzen and Fritz (2004), whose research revealed that gender disparities between groups and a leader were more likely to result in an out-group designation. Jones (2009) likewise noted, "gender dissimilarity has a direct effect on LMX

quality” (p. 7). This contention was supported by Tsui and O’Reilly (1989), who argued that a gender mismatch between followers and their respective leaders resulted in poorer performance evaluations for followers.

Given LMX theory’s relational focus, understanding the relationship between in-groups and out-groups to their respective leaders is critical. Similar to servant leadership, this gendered standpoint situated women, by virtue of their socio-historical status, most likely within the out-group. While this group has a role and access to leadership, it occurs as an outsider who is not privy to the same accessibility and benefits as the in-group. This placement is important because it reveals how identity, even in a relational-based theory, should be considered as a variable which impacts the epistemology of LMX theory. Thus, one’s capacity to engage with a leader or to aspire to leadership, as an out-group member, is compromised by an established hierarchy relative to non-dominant perspectives. While the epistemology of LMX theory aims to remove the distance between subject and object in order to consider the impact of nature (i.e., the social environment) on leadership, it fails to examine how identity is situated within a social hierarchy. This hierarchal paradigm impacts who has access to knowledge and, by default, who can become a leader.

Social identity theory also has epistemic challenges related to the subject of identity. Similar to LMX theory, prototypicality emerges as a variable within social identity theory. This practice is evident in how individuals align themselves within an intra-group that shares a similar social identity (Hogg, 2001). Within an intra-group designation, the practice of prototypicality materializes because individuals self-select groups based upon a shared social identity. As a result of this formation, intra-groups are more likely to select leaders who reflect their respective intra-group identities. In turn, these intra-group leaders are more likely to engage in

“group-oriented behavior” beneficial to their intra-group (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003, p. 234). As a result, “prototypical leaders are better supported and more trusted, and perceived as more effective by members than are less prototypical leaders” (Hogg et al., 2012, p. 258). When framed within an epistemological lens, this self-replicating pattern maintains a dominant discourse given the entrenched White male paradigm that serves as the prototypical example of leadership. As such, this standard referent within the operation of social identity theory established a hierarchal narrative of androcentrism, resulting in an epistemic bias against women.

A shortcoming within the epistemology of social identity theory is the single-axis orientation of leadership identity. This strategy is a prevailing practice within this theoretical framework and examines social identities in isolation from one another. The limitation of this approach is the inability to fully consider the implications of how the varied identities intersect with one another to construct a leader identity. Additionally, the single-axis approach establishes a hierarchy that places identity categories in competition with one another. Framing pluralistic identities within this social hierarchy serves as another shortcoming within the epistemology of post-positivist leadership theories. Collectively, these epistemological gaps maintain the subordination of marginalized identity affiliations.

Another epistemological strategy utilized within social identity leadership theory is the multicategorical perspective. This perspectival standard developed in response to the limitations associated with the single-axis approach. An example of this practice is the dual consideration of race and gender within leadership theory. The flaw of this strategy is its presumption that the add-in-stir approach was sufficient, by virtue of sheer inclusion, to redress the exclusion of varied standpoints to leadership identity. At the same time, it presumes an identity hierarchy. This intellectual course proved short-sighted because it maintains an epistemological perception

that one identity can have more value than another identity affiliation. When referencing women's leadership, the single-axis practice constructed a hierarchal standard which situated White women as the norm. When examining more than one identity, however, the model fails to consider the implications of more than one marginalized standpoint. Furthermore, this hierarchal approach situated all identities, whether privileged or marginalized, against one another in a competitive stance. By considering identity in isolation, this approach increases the likelihood that dominant perspectives prevail and fails to understand the impact on non-dominant out-groups, nor consider the implications of socio-historical context. The result of this multicategorical standard is the failure to recognize the epistemological impact upon marginalized individuals most likely relegated to out-group status. As such, both the single-axis and the multicategorical approaches to social identity maintain the dominant paradigm, where men serve as the idealized norm of leadership and are considered the prototypical leaders within the post-positivist tradition.

Power. Understanding how post-positivist leadership theories maintain the marginalization of women requires defining and reviewing the construct of power. According to Lenski (2013), power is defined as the capacity of an individual or group to achieve goals even in the face of opposition from others. This section thus reviews how the construct of power operates within servant leadership, LMX theory, and social identity theories to determine how the epistemology of post-positivist theories impacts women. Additional consideration of how religious contexts influence the development of servant leadership theory to the social positioning of women within leadership theory serves as another point of analysis. Judeo-Christian beliefs and the principle of servitude to others served as inspiration for this

theoretical strand, but the implications for how the practice of servitude impacts men and women as leaders also merit further analysis.

When framing the subject of gender within a religious context, the role of women is subservient. This stance is the result of religious doctrine which traditionally ascribed men with authority and power, and extended into the discourse of leadership. Greenleaf's attempt to proffer servant leadership to the masses fails to consider the power of language. The inability to equally access power within servant leadership is the legacy of unequal power within religious texts. Thus, the term servant further situates women within leadership discourse as marginalized subjects. This subservient standpoint, when considered within the epistemology of leadership theory, maintains the dominant paradigm where men are privileged by the socio-historical context of religious tradition.

While Greenleaf may have intended to situate both men and women as equal servants, the unequal distribution of power is embedded in the operation of this theory, resulting in an epistemological bias skewed to assign men more power than women. By assigning leaders (more likely men) the label of a servant in service to their followers (more likely women), the model fails to consider or address the social-historical context related to the unequal distribution of power between genders, representing another epistemological shortcoming. Furthermore, if the objective of this theory is to remove the power dynamic between a leader and follower, then servant leadership reinforces the gendered nature of leadership by co-opting language to reinforce a socio-historical bias which favors men as leaders. Endorsement for the idea that knowledge is socially constructed is associated with this theoretical stand. The implication is that knowledge imparted upon women by this unequal distribution of power only served to entrench

women within a marginalized role, incapable of accessing leadership knowledge. This dynamic compromises the capacity of women to equally engage the epistemology of servant leadership.

By comparison, LMX theory espouses a relational shift between leaders and followers which aims to remove the distance between these two subjects. Key to this shift is whether a leader assigns a follower in-group or out-group status. Intrinsic to the leader's role within this theory is the capacity to choose what group to assign a follower, an ability to delegate predicated on power. This theory presumes that a leader would exercise fairness in the selection process, but the construct of prototypicality illustrates how men are likely to select in-group participants who are members of the same gender or race. These in-group participants were then positioned in a privileged insider status with all the requisite perks aligned with this position, perpetuating a cycle of marginalization for out-group members. This group selection process only serves to further compound the distance between genders by maintaining the gendered social stratification found within society. As a consequence, LMX theory reinforces an epistemology where dominant perspectives prevail in the construction of knowledge.

Beyond servant leadership and LMX theory, the construct of power also impacts social identity theories. The marginalization of identity, specifically gender, limits the capacity of individuals to access the epistemology of leadership theory equally, because the inability to incorporate "diverse" perspectives within research restricted the "validity and generalizability of findings and the inclusivity of theories" (Ayman & Korabik, 2010, p. 157). The social positioning of men with a historically elevated status affords them the capacity to acquire more power than women (Ayman & Korabik, 2010). The cumulative impact of this standpoint assigns men privilege (Ridgeway, 1992). Ferree and Martin (1995) added that this gendered stratification constructed "a hierarchical structure of opportunity and oppression as well as an affective

structure of identity and cohesion” (p. 125). Understanding this dyadic relationship between privilege and power is essential to grasping the epistemological implications for how social identity impacts leadership theory.

In the spirit of bricolage, culling the concept of a “distributive process” (Lenski, 2013, p. 39) from the field of sociology clarifies how privilege and power provides insight into “who gets what and why?” (p. 89). This theory, originally proposed by Lenski (2013), seeks to understand the root causes of social inequality. The application of a distributive process to leadership theory is noteworthy because it provides an intellectual mechanism to address the link between power and privilege. In essence, Lenski posited that comprehending the construct of power requires an understanding of the “structure” and “dynamics” which undergird its operation (2013, p. 39). Furthermore, understanding these different forms of power explain how the related structures and dynamics maintain long-standing social stratifications within humanity. In this respect, the manifestation of power occurs either through “force” or “institutional” power (Lenski, 2013). Force, according to Lenski, entails seizing power to “legitimize” one’s authority (2013, p. 105). In contrast, the manifestation of institutional power occurs within three institutions: rule of law, public opinion, or by consensus and coercion (Lenski, 2013).

For this analysis, the most relevant mechanisms shaping public opinion are educational institutions. This connection is noteworthy because it provides a potential explanation for how the constructs of power and privilege interconnect within higher education. Lenski (2013) argued that elites (i.e., dominant perspectives) have a vested interest in maintaining their privilege by exercising their power to maintain the status quo. The application of institutional power to academia, specifically the discipline of leadership, illustrates how social stratification occurs through the unequal distribution of power. Lenski (2013) characterized this stratification process

as a “multidimensional phenomenon” (p. 134) where groups are classified among social identity dimensions such as age, race, and gender.

When framed within this context, the stratification of gender within the epistemology of post-positivist leadership theories involves multiple dynamics. The marginalized status of women upholds an intellectual system whose “structure” granted “institutional power” to White men, thus establishing a distributive process whereby men were epistemically situated to more readily access knowledge and its benefits. The legacy of this distributive process is an intellectual discipline whose epistemology is primarily shaped by White men. While current social identity theories of leadership try to incorporate marginalized perspectives inclusive of women, the structural and institutional power which undergird leadership discourse has remained the same. Until these dynamics shift, the production of knowledge within leadership remains compromised because women access leadership from a disadvantaged standpoint.

Post-structural leadership theory. Epistemological shifts within this research paradigm illustrate what distinguishes post-structuralism from positivism. Crotty (1998) characterized the central differentiation simply as: “[p]ost-structuralism has abandoned positivism” (p. 204). The nature of this abandonment is made clear by examining how these two research methods differ. In essence, positivism presumes that the discourse of science can exercise neutrality to determine what is true in knowledge and offers the researcher the capacity to practice objectivity to determine what is valid and credible. By comparison, post-structural thinking questions the capacity of language to accurately reflect what is true in reality. Post-structuralism also suggests historical context influences the medium of language to shape modern social reality. This research paradigm also contends that society has become immured to this reality and accepts the prevailing status quo, without questioning how power was influential in the establishment of

contemporary reality. Thus, post-structuralism examines the role of the individual in relation to the social reality which constructs knowledge. In this respect, post-structuralism “employs deconstruction as an analytical tool and is concerned to challenge and question espoused foundational knowledge (Briggs & Coleman, 2007) and interrogates interrelations between individuals and society” (Elliott & Stead, 2015, p. 358).

How then do these elements relate to the discourse of leadership theory? Utilizing the example of educational leadership, Niesche and Gowlett (2015) suggested that “post-structuralist theorising can have a more generative effect on the field through both interrupting the dominant interests and, also putting forward how we might think differently” (pp. 372–373). As such, this research approach offers the opportunity to deconstruct how historical context embeds dominant perspectives within leadership theory. Post-structuralist thinking also creates a conduit to examine how the operation of power maintains a status quo which utilizes language, and thus leadership theory, as an instrument for excluding women.

An analysis of the elements associated with post-structuralism, specifically the language of leadership, illuminates the role of women within this research paradigm, and reveals how the construct of power is utilized to marginalize non-dominant perspectives. Given that critical leadership studies (CLS) fall within the spectrum of post-structuralist thought, the language of CLS serves as the preliminary focal point of inquiry. Understanding how the epistemology of CLS deconstructs identity and power within leadership is another area of review. The final focus of investigation explores how the complexity of CLS theory enables post-structural discourse to examine the nexus of identity and power, particularly as it relates to the standpoint of women in leadership discourse.

The language of leadership. The last ten years of post-structural scholarship on the subject of leadership has resulted in a broad range of new theories (Dinh et al., 2014). A review of top-tier leadership journals reveals that scholars focused their research on the areas of cross-cultural leadership, identity and identification process theory, and social identity theories of leadership (Dinh et al., 2014). Because these areas fall within the spectrum of critical leadership studies (Collinson, 2011; Ford, 2010; Ford, Harding, & Learmonth, 2008), CLS served as the focus of this epistemological analysis of post-structural leadership theories. Collinson (2011) defined CLS as “the broad, diverse, and heterogeneous perspectives that share a concern to critique the power relations and identity constructions through which leadership dynamics are often produced, frequently rationalised, sometimes resisted and occasionally transformed” (p. 181). According to Taylor and Ford (2016), research which falls within the spectrum of critical theory, including postmodern, postcolonial, and post-structural theories, is contained within the “catchall of ‘post’ perspectives” (p. 106).

Collectively, post-structural thought reveals how the research on leadership evolved to become a “complex phenomenon that operates across multiple levels of analysis (Cho & Dansereau, 2010; Wang & Howell, 2010)” (Dinh et al., 2014, p. 37). Furthermore, this intellectual shift is characterized by the manner in which complexity becomes a “framework” for analysis, through the recognition that “leadership occurs within a social context created by individuals, groups, and larger organizational systems, and the nature of leadership processes may vary with each level” (Dinh et al., 2014, p. 37). Support for this suggestion is found in the scholarship of Dugan (2017), who asserted that leadership theory is socially constructed. Dugan (2017) posited, “[c]ritical social theories are concerned with understanding the flow of power in society, how this contributes to social stratification, and ways in which we can create more

democratic and equitable social arrangements” (p. xvi). This integration of critical analysis within leadership theory presents academics with the capacity to infuse social equity within the discourse of leadership (Dugan, 2017). Engaging critical theory in this fashion situates scholars “as valid knowers in their own right and, through the deconstruction and reconstruction of theory, begin to craft their own theories of leadership” (Dugan, 2017, p. xvi).

Examining the epistemology of CLS illustrates the influence of this emerging area of scholarship within critical management studies (CMS; Ford, 2016). In this respect, Collinson (2014) suggested, “CLS builds on CMS to highlight the numerous inter-related ways in which power, identity and context are embedded in leadership dynamics” (p. 37). What CLS offers to this analysis of post-structural leadership theories is a paradigm shift to “redress the imbalance” (Ford, 2016, p. 225) of the positivist approach by examining the subjectivity of leaders, to “reconsider the dominant discourses of leadership” (p. 226). Key to this shift in theorizing about leadership is the requirement that scholars move away from a positivist approach “of the objective pursuit of truth, and towards a more active and reflexive role” (p. 226). In this regard, “a post-structural approach offers a theoretical basis for analyzing the subjectivities (the very identities) of men and women in relation to language as well as other cultural practices and material conditions” (Ford, 2016, p. 227). Ford added that this epistemological strategy provides the opportunity to examine leadership theory with “fresh lenses” (p. 227) and consider the impact of androcentrism to critique how “exclusionary practices” construct a “standardized, one-dimensional definition” of leadership (p. 228). These new lenses serve as a source of inspiration to examine the role of women within leadership theory.

The role of women in leadership theory. CLS provides an epistemological mechanism to counter entrenched epistemological biases regarding the role of women within the discourse of

leadership theory because critical leadership theory presumes that leadership is socially constructed (Alvesson & Spicer, 2012; Collinson, 2011). This practice is evident in how CLS questions the established social order of leadership, particularly the production of knowledge. Grint (1997) argued that this social construction should be examined by questioning who has the capacity to “lead” and the “context” in which they do so. Critical scholars challenged the positivist presumption of objectivity by suggesting the language of leadership was derived from different interpretations by scholars, and as such was subjective (Grint, 1997). Beyond a critique of the socially constructed nature of leadership and its capacity to be subjective, CLS also challenged the assumed androcentric subjectivity of male dominance (Alvesson, Bridgman, & Willmott, 2009; Fournier & Grey, 2000). These collective attributes of CLS construct an epistemological platform to revisit the role of women in leadership.

CLS also deconstructs leadership theory through its critique of the status quo, particularly the role of women. Given that the integration of a social justice lens is central to post-structuralist thought, CLS specifically questions the structure of knowledge production. CLS interrogates not only whose voices dominate the construction of leadership theory, but examines “the flow of power in society” (Dugan, 2017, p. xvi). These practices challenge the dominant narrative of White maleness and enable additional consideration of the erasure of women’s perspectives. While there has been progress in addressing this absence, Ford (2016) asserted: “In many ways, mainstream organizational theory continues to be constructed as non-gendered, although there remains ample evidence that it is written from the perspective, culture, and discourse of a male” (p. 228). When examining the discipline of leadership, the theoretical focus of gender has been widely “ignored” by scholars, which Ford (2016) attributed to a traditional gender identity focus on “heroic masculinity” (p. 229). This heroic pattern established

a male-gendered orientation of leadership in which the presumed prototype of leadership was male (Collinson, 2011; Collinson & Hearn, 1996). Bowring (2004) extended this leadership prototype further by suggesting the framing of maleness as a standard referent which inserted a gender-neutral subjectivity to leadership. This emphasis highlights the entrenched male orientation of leadership that integrated “asymmetrical gender relations” into the epistemology of leadership discourse (Ford, 2016, p. 229).

The epistemological impact of this practice is the construction of leadership theories which purport to espouse a neutral stance to gender, but actually interject male traits as the “norm” (Fulop & Linstead, 2009, p. 522). Given the limitation of this theoretical tradition, Ford (2016) proffered for consideration a leadership strategy which is both “critical and reflective” and a post-structural stance framed within a feminist standpoint (pp. 229–230). The benefit of engaging such a standpoint is its focus on challenging and contesting “oppressive knowledge and meaning” (Ford, 2016, p. 235). Weedon (1997) favored a similar stance because it presents “a mode of knowledge production which uses post-structural theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change” (p. 40). In this respect, a post-structural inquiry utilizing a feminist standpoint provides the ability to note and contest “hierarchal social networks that use power to silence and marginalize discourses related to gender” (Ford, 2016, p. 232).

Critical theory also expanded the scope of identity beyond the singular dimension of gender to consider other dimensions, such as ethnicity, race, and class (Ford, 2016). Bowring (2004) suggested that leadership research warrants a more fluid understanding of leadership identities, which are varied, interconnected, and continually evolving. Within the post-positivist realm, these varied expansions of the epistemology of leadership are beneficial because they

serve to deconstruct the dominant paradigm, in order to question the role of women and other historically marginalized groups. Simply put, Ford (2016) observed that post-structuralism “enables fresh light to be shed upon leadership theories” (p. 233).

Power and post-structural thought. Beyond gender, a review of the construct of power is integral to an analysis on the epistemology of leadership theory (Burns, 1978; Carroll, Ford & Taylor, 2015; Ospina & Foldy, 2009). While French and Raven (1959) characterized power from a behavioral viewpoint, Foucault (1984) considered the standpoint of sexual power. In contrast, Jackson and Carter (2007) examined the intersection of power and knowledge, while Collinson (2014) asserted that power is central to the study of leadership. Within a post-structural stance, the development of knowledge occurs within a social context (Gavey, 1997; Venn, 1984). Ford (2016) established a link between knowledge and power: “Thus, knowledge is ephemeral and inherently unstable; it is not neutral and is closely associated with power, with power generating knowledge and knowledge initiating power” (pp. 234–235).

Elliott and Stead (2015) maintained that the construct of power should also be considered within “pedagogical processes” (p. 360) because its exclusion fosters unjust practices within learning environments (Reynolds & Trehan, 2001). This contention aligns with previous challenges against gendered practices of exclusion within the positivist and post-positivist traditions. Post-structuralism goes further by deconstructing the relationship between power and gender (MacKillop, 2017). Stead and Elliott (2013) suggested that post-structuralist thought advanced a strategy which highlights how the identity of women should be considered within the socialized nature of leadership. In this respect, identity and subjectivity are mutually considered when examining “the role of power and knowledge in leadership practices and the context within which leadership is enacted” (Ford, 2016, p. 233). The impact of power within post-structuralism

resulted in critiques which deconstruct how men dominated the construct of leadership theory. It further reinforces how examining the nexus between power and identity is essential to a more inclusive epistemology within post-structuralist leadership theory.

Another element worthy of review is how post-structuralism grapples with the operation of power, particularly the social impact of this construct, and its resulting “social stratification” (Dugan, 2017, p. xvi). Unlike other research paradigms, post-structuralism questions the inherent inequities of knowledge production. For this study, critical leadership theories serve as the theoretical bricolage to observe this gendered injustice in leadership discourse. In highlighting this bias, CLS scholars noted how an asymmetrical power imbalance between male and female leaders both perpetuated and entrenched this epistemological practice. Post-structuralism thus “views the world as complex, chaotic, ambiguous, fragmented” and “stresses the importance of questioning anything framed as truth because objectivity and universality are impossibilities” (Dugan, 2017, p. 7). Post-structuralism thus serves as an intellectual counter-narrative, arguing that the truth constructed by the dominant paradigm is worthy of reconsideration. Through the lens of critical leadership studies, post-structuralism attempts to alter the epistemic injustices within leadership theory. In this respect, power serves as an ideal conduit to examine how the literature on leadership seeks to address inherent intellectual inequities.

Epistemic limitations of post-structural leadership theories. One of the primary elements utilized to deconstruct epistemological limitations of post-structural leadership theory, specifically CLS, is the construct of language. Although post-structuralism interrogates the language of leadership, it ironically lacks definitional clarity as a research paradigm. In advocating on behalf of using post-structural leadership theory as a mechanism to advance organizational change, MacKillop (2017) noted that the absence of a definition of leadership was

problematic. She pointed out the challenge in critiquing a discourse where there was ambiguity about how to define the term itself. As empirical support for this assertion, MacKillop referenced the work of Rost (1993), who noted that two-thirds of scholarship on this research juncture did not define leadership. This predilection, which has remained in practice, has constructed a “slippery” context whereby leadership can be “understood as nearly anything” (Spicer & Alvesson, 2011, pp. 194-195). Given the growing interest in leadership discourse, the lack of a definition “reinforced conceptual confusion and endemic vagueness” (Alvesson & Spicer, 2012, p. 369).

Though interest in the discipline itself continues to proliferate, an “acceptable” definition of leadership has historically eluded scholars (Ford, 2005, p. 237). Previous attempts by scholars representing the positivist tradition (e.g., Stogdill in the 1970s and the post-positivist paradigm; (e.g., Bass in the 1980s) were unsuccessful in finding “a commonly agreed definition” (Ford, 2005, p. 237). This sentiment was echoed by Bennis and Nanus (1985), who maintained: “Decades of academic analysis have given us more than 350 definitions of leadership...but no clear and unequivocal understanding exists as to what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders” (p. 4).

The inability to establish a universally accepted definition of leadership has epistemological implications for post-structuralism. Understanding “the inner mechanics” of a theory involves addressing how the discipline defines itself (Dugan, 2017, p. 4). This assertion was supported by Bogenschneider (2016), who described this lack of definitional clarity as critical because “[t]he problem as developed here is that such definitions of leadership generally do not constitute a workable epistemology” (p. 4). While there can be varied truths, the incapacity to define leadership diffused the impact of other elements within post-structuralism,

like power. In order to deconstruct the (dis)operation of power one must understand the relationship of power to leadership. Thus, the inability to define leadership impacted researchers' ability to critique its relationship to power. This epistemological disconnect compromises the capacity of post-structuralism to address how leadership and power perpetuate epistemic biases against women as leaders.

Another epistemological limitation is how the discipline engaged the subject of social identity. According to post-structuralist thought, language is the medium that socially constructs knowledge. Within post-structuralism, the term identity and the constructs of male and female negate the necessity of gender binaries (Weedon, 1997). The elimination of these terms was intentional because it attempted to dismantle a system of meaning-making which diminished the perspectives of historically marginalized perspectives. Moreover, the objective of this approach was to assert that the production of language had to be understood within the context of how the construction of identity occurs within social systems. This anticategorical stance extended to feminist theorists like McCall (2005), who posited that other identity categories like class, race, and sexual orientation were not real given their social construction. When applied to critical leadership studies, this stance diminishes the capacity of post-structuralism to sufficiently critique categories which do not exist.

Butler (1993), a feminist scholar aligned with the post-structural tradition, extended this argument by challenging the concept of gender given that the label of woman serves as a mechanism of exclusion. If these identity labels serve to articulate epistemic injustices against historically marginalized groups within the discourse of leadership, then removing these labels eliminates the epistemological merit of attempting to redress these inequities. Likewise, if one of the primary objectives of CLS is to address male prototypes within the discourse, then critiques

against power are moot because of the elimination of gendered binaries. Further, the social justice orientation advanced by both critical leadership theories and post-structuralism also compromise this effort to deconstruct language. In this respect, the post-structural elements which argue for the social construction of knowledge, question the role of power in the production of knowledge, and critique the status quo, particularly the role of women within leadership, become questionable.

The Epistemological Status Quo Within Leadership Discourse

What specific areas within the epistemology of leadership merit theoretical expansion? Research reveals that the current theoretical focus within leadership remains primarily skewed toward male interests, even as increasingly diverse perspectives have found their way into the canon. To systemically alter this male-normed pattern within leadership warrants a review of knowledge production that considers varied accounts of determining what is true. One way of changing this historically normed White male prototype is to acknowledge the epistemic bias present within the epistemology of leadership theory. Understanding this leadership reality for non-dominant perspectives invites opportunities to include these standpoints, as well as to empower marginalized subjects to alter the epistemology of leadership. Key to this paradigm shift is an examination of how the epistemology of leadership theory inserts an epistemic bias against women as leaders, based on the construct of credibility.

Revisiting the construct of credibility. While a broader analysis could include the epistemological variables of objectivity, subjectivity, and investigation to determine what is true relative to leadership, this epistemological inquiry focuses on the construct of credibility as a representative example. According to Bailey (2014), “Understanding how the unlevel knowing field produces and maintains epistemic oppression (and privilege) requires a set of nuanced

conceptual tools for explaining the impact epistemic exclusion has on marginalized knowers' ability to produce knowledge" (p. 62). The lack of credibility ascribed to marginalized constituents contributes to this intellectual disconnect.

Within leadership, the construct of credibility is considered a critical variable (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Joyce (2017) asserted, "[c]redible leaders are leaders who know how to build trust in their leadership and do this on the basis of their honesty, their competence and their ability to inspire" (p. 17). Considering this context, Kouzes and Posner (2007) and Joyce (2017) argued that credibility is gender-neutral and individuals have equal access to acquiring leadership credibility. Ely et al. (2011) challenged this stance by noting the acquisition of credibility is a challenge for a woman leader within a "culture deeply conflicted about her authority" (p. 277). Ely, Ibarra, and Kolb (2011) supported this assertion by suggesting that "[r]elative to their male counterparts, aspiring women leaders have less social support for learning how to credibly claim a leader identity" (p. 477).

The impact of this unbalanced allocation of social power is that it distorts the credibility of marginalized groups (Langton, 2000) and results in a hermeneutical injustice (Fricker, 2007) against women as leaders. Hermeneutical injustice is a secondary form of epistemic neglect, which Fricker (2007) defined as an intellectual inequity "wherein someone has a significant area of their social experience obscured from understanding owing to prejudicial flaws in shared resources for social interpretation" (p. 6). This hermeneutic injustice is evident within the discourse of leadership, where the subject of gender is often overlooked and minimized (Fulop, Linstead, & Lilley, 2009) or framed within a masculinist paradigm (Egan et al., 2017). As a result of epistemic injustices, specifically hermeneutic, women, as leaders, function within a discourse that is "fragmented, contradictory, and androcentric" (Ford, 2006, p. 78).

The social operation of power. Power is another construct worthy of review when considering how to expand the parameters of the current epistemology of leadership.

Understanding how the operation of power functions within leadership is important to investigate the gendered assumptions present within its epistemology. This assertion is supported by Sinclair (2013), who suggested that in reaction to new intellectual contributions to leadership theory such as the “relational,” “collaborative,” or “post-feminist,”

[w]e may be tempted to sigh with relief at this point and say “Oh they’ve finally got it.” Mostly “they” haven’t. Many of these maneuvers are about providing a veneer of doing leadership differently, of looking more enlightened but without any systematic analysis of power, who has it and how it gets reproduced. (p. 7)

The construct of power permeates all of the research paradigms examined within this analysis. Within each paradigm, leadership theories attempt to grapple with the construct in different ways. Positivist and post-positivist thought illustrate the challenges of how power situates non-dominant perspectives, specifically women, in a subordinate position. In contrast, post-structuralism attempts to remedy the disoperation of power by advocating for the elimination of the construct of gender. Yet, what is common to these paradigms is how the social construction of power maintains a dominant prototype within the epistemology of leadership. In this respect, the long-term, dysfunctional relationship between power and meaning-making illustrate the embedded nature of privilege.

Second-generation gender bias. Reviewing the construct of second-generation gender bias illustrates how the epistemology of leadership is replete with the social (dis)operation of power. Beyond asserting the connection between second-generation gender bias to power, this analysis reveals how the operation of this epistemic bias impacts the identity development of women as leaders. Ibarra et al. (2013) defined second-generation gender bias as the “powerful but subtle and often invisible barriers for women that arise from cultural assumptions,

organizational structures, practices, and patterns of interaction that inadvertently benefit men while putting women at a disadvantage” (p. 60). Ely et al. (2011) extended this argument further by asserting that second-generation bias derives from viewpoints which utilize gender to ascribe a lack of fit relative to leadership development, as well as from the operation of implicit bias. If the adoption of a leader identity is considered essential to the developmental process of a leader identity (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Ibarra, Snook, & Guillen Ramo, 2010), then the impact of this gender bias is the potential obstruction of:

The identity work necessary to take up leadership roles. The result is self-sealing: women’s underrepresentation in leader positions validates entrenched systems and beliefs that prompt and support men’s bids for leadership, which in turn maintains the status quo. (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011, p. 475)

Given the epistemological gaps within the discipline of leadership and the resulting bias—hermeneutic or second-generation gender bias—the collective impact is a discourse predicated on the exclusion of marginalized standpoints. Further compounding the practice of second-generation gender bias is the constraints of analyzing identity utilizing either single-axis, additive, and multicategorical categories.

Connecting intersectionality to leadership. Intersectionality theory provides a series of compelling arguments to redress the stratifications of identity and offers new insight into how this intersection benefits leadership discourse. Furthermore, intersectionality addresses how privileged and marginalized aspects of identity coexist within the framework of various social identity affiliations. Intersectionality thus presents a more nuanced insight of how identities intersect reflecting how society shapes human development. It also provides a clearer epistemological lens to examine the complexity of leader identity and theory. Intersectionality represents an epistemological shift which departs from the additive and multicategorical frameworks. These approaches examine identity groups in isolation from one another or by

adopting an additive approach, which either fails to examine the distinctiveness of specific identity groups or presumes to establish a hierarchal order where one identity affiliation is assigned more value than the others (Debebe & Reinert, 2012). Furthermore, the additive approach constructs a hierarchy which elevates one identity at the expense of other identity facets. This strategy runs counter to grasping the inherent value of how various categories interact with one another (Debebe & Reinert, 2012).

Intersectionality theory is valuable to leadership because it reveals how a focus on a single attribute of identity is insufficient (Burman, 2003). It also illustrates how the engagement of multiple dimensions of an individual's identity influence one another, as well as providing insight regarding their collective impact upon one's identity (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010). Collectively, then, intersectionality theory provides leadership discourse with the capacity to engage the complexity of societal realities, surpassing the limited and partial perspectives exemplified by single, additive, and multicategorical analyses of identity. Furthermore, the benefit of intersectionality to leadership discourse is evident in how the intersection of identity is considered within the context of larger social systems. The system serving as the primary focus of this analysis is the construction of knowledge which excludes women within the positivist and post-positivist traditions or suggests the removal of gender binaries in the post-structuralist perspective.

Understanding how epistemological gaps within these varied research paradigms perpetuate power motivates another systematic analysis. While leadership discourse addresses the subject of power, its relationship to other systems warrants further attention. Specifically, this analysis examines how epistemological structures within the formation of knowledge reinforced male-normed dominance and resulted in entrenched norms which have historically marginalized

non-dominant perspectives. This self-perpetuating system resulted in a sustained practice of epistemic bias which discredits the capacity of women to access leadership. Utilizing bricolage to explore the connection of intersectionality to leadership theory provides new intellectual mechanisms to deconstruct this disjointed reality.

Summary

This review of the architecture of theory provided a roadmap to build a bricolage between intersectionality and leadership. The building of this bridge occurred through a review of the epistemology of several leadership theories, specifically those in the positivist, post-positivist, and post-structural research paradigms. These research orientations were selected to demonstrate the epistemological gaps that each subsequent paradigm attempts to address. However, positivist and post-positivist models still missed the epistemological mark given their incapacity to address pervasive epistemic bias against women within leadership theory. While post-structuralism attempted to remedy this oversight, it went too far in its attempts to deconstruct language, specifically the construct of gender, in order to rebuild.

This analysis of research paradigms within literature of leadership illuminated a few key points. First, the epistemology of leadership has conferred upon White men a privileged and dominant status. This positioning, in turn, constructed a prototype that established a theoretical tradition excluding non-dominant perspectives. This omission occurred on multiple levels as illustrated by the example of credibility: a critical variable that is used to determine who and what is assigned validity in determining what is true in knowledge. This state of being, excluded from the corpus of leadership literature, is maintained by the disoperation and manipulation of power to serve one privileged group at the disservice of others. While there are assorted outcomes related to the entrenched practice of epistemic neglect, key impacts noted within this

discussion include the resulting second-generation gender bias and the marginalized capacity of non-dominant perspectives to acquire a leadership identity. These findings highlight the need to extend the parameters of the current epistemology of leadership theory by incorporating an intersectional lens within the discourse of this discipline.

Chapter VI. Intersectional Leadership

This final chapter links intersectionality to leadership through the development of a conceptual model. Inspiration for the development of an intersectional leadership model derived from piecing together varied methodological elements associated with bricolage such as complexity, interdisciplinarity, and reflexivity. The formation of this model connected the elements of agency, structure and epistemology to illustrate how the production of knowledge compromised marginalized standpoints within leadership theory. This model also provides new strategies such as epistemic friction, meta-lucidity and epistemic resistance to provide a counter perspective and construct mechanisms which alter the epistemology of leadership theory.

The Building of a Bricolage

The inspirations for building this leadership model are the central elements affiliated with bricolage research methodology. Critical constructivism is integral to this design because it examines the process by which the construction of knowledge occurs and suggests there are multiple ways of knowing and acknowledges that knowledge derives from varied disciplines. Given this context, the elements most influential in the development of this theoretical bricolage are complexity, specifically when examining the constructs of identity and agency; interdisciplinarity as it relates to the social construction of knowledge; and reflexivity with a particular emphasis on illustrating how to change the epistemology of leadership theory. A more detailed analysis of each variable reveals how they were instrumental in the creation of an intersectional leadership model.

Complexity. How intellectuals have attempted to explain and make sense of social reality is ideally suited to a bricolage research design because it naturally embraces the idea of complexity. It presumes that there is no single answer nor one single pathway to determining

what is true within the production of knowledge, but instead employs an epistemology grounded in the understanding that to make sense of the lived world is a complex undertaking. As a bricoleur, engaging complexity serves as a tool to help make sense of this complicated social reality.

Within this design, epistemology served as the entry point to identify gaps within the construction of knowledge. These gaps were highlighted by feminist epistemologists, who critiqued how the production of meaning neglected the standpoint of gender. This epistemological pattern of exclusion was then applied to the discipline of leadership to discern whether and in what ways these gaps sustain the practice of epistemic bias against women. In this regard, complexity was instrumental in the design of an intersectional leadership model because it provided the mechanism to design a pathway between epistemology, feminist epistemology, and leadership.

The element of complexity further afforded access to cull epistemological tools from various theories to design this model. From the discipline of epistemology, the scholarship of Fricker (2007) presents the idea of epistemic injustice while the work of Medina (2013) offers a pathway out of biased practices within knowledge production, utilizing epistemic friction, meta-lucidity, and epistemic resistance. From feminist critiques of epistemology emerged the ability to re-examine how larger socio-historical constructs impact the variables of identity and social group affiliation and a re-examination of the role of women in meaning-making. Linking agency to socio-historical context served as a conduit to connect leadership to intersectionality and illustrate how gendered prototypes within leadership theory are sustained by the operation of power and privilege. The focus on a specific category of intersectionality theory, structural intersectionality, highlighted how social systems intersect with individual agency to restrict the

roles of historically underrepresented groups. Connecting these epistemological tools and determining how each piece fit with one another provided an incremental pathway to leadership theory and the formation of an intersectional leadership model.

Interdisciplinarity. Another element utilized in the design of this model is interdisciplinarity. This element linked diverse, seemingly disparate bodies of intellectual work in order to construct new knowledge. The recognition that knowledge does not reside solely within one discipline presented the opportunity to explore the intellectual connections that marginalize women within different theoretical strands. Epistemology served as the common thread because it illustrates the epistemic gaps present within the disciplines of philosophy and leadership. These gaps revealed another common connection—the pattern of epistemic injustice. Understanding the impact of epistemic limitations within the discipline of leadership served as an entry point to examine how leadership theory is complicit in maintaining a masculinist model. Beyond the capacity to cull from disparate bodies of intellectual work and to note patterns and epistemic gaps present within the production of meaning-making, engaging interdisciplinarity as an epistemological tool offers the ability to alter the practice of epistemic injustice. Within the development of this model, interdisciplinarity engaged intersectionality theory as a means to critique and change meaning-making within leadership theory.

Social construction of knowledge. This element served as another facet in the development of the model. The social construction of knowledge provided the mechanism to evaluate how the construction of knowledge is flawed and biased against historically marginalized groups. Discerning how this impacts the agency of women and how socio-historical constructs maintain this status quo was critical to understanding how epistemic biases were not only prevalent within the corpus of leadership theory, but sustained by unjust social

systems. Collectively, these components of agency, socio-historical context, epistemic bias, and epistemic injustice were all byproducts of the social construction of knowledge. As such, they served as key building blocks in the development of the model because they offer the opportunity to disrupt prevailing epistemic practices in lieu of a more expansive and inclusive leadership model.

Reflexivity. This element was critical in the construction of the model because it warranted that scholars question their social position as researchers. Understanding one's social position means examining how one is privileged and marginalized by one's identity affiliations, and how the intersection of this position impacts one's scholarship. Within leadership theory, the reflexivity of scholars revealed a White male prototype constructed predominately by White men. This prototypical standard was instrumental in the construction of knowledge and the systems which generate knowledge to sustain this privileged countenance against historically marginalized groups, inclusive of women. Understanding how scholars are socially situated helps clarify how meaning-making not only became compromised but established a hegemonic hold, sustained by the operation of power. Thus, understanding how scholars utilize reflexivity is key to understanding how epistemic biases and injustices within leadership theory came to fruition and remained in practice. Reflexivity was influential in the development of this intersectional leadership model because it provided this analysis the capacity to utilize a reflective lens to critique unjust epistemic practices, as well as change the epistemology of leadership theory.

Identity. Identity was instrumental in the development of this model because it presented a mechanism to examine the exclusion of women from the corpus of knowledge production. Examining how privilege and power sustained epistemic injustices against women revealed the

impact of epistemic bias against women within leadership theory. Determining why a pattern of epistemic exclusion exists within the production of knowledge provided new meaning-making tools, like meta-lucidity and epistemic resistance, to dismantle these practices.

The construct of identity is essential to this model because it highlights how previous additive and single-axis strategies were limited in their capacity to address the complexity of identity. These incomplete and partial accounts of identity illustrate the benefits of utilizing intersectionality theory to provide a more complete composite of identity. Analyzing the intersection of identities within leadership theory provides an epistemological strategy to not only counter these limitations, but to expand the epistemology of leadership. The capacity to provide an intersectional account of identity by examining how privileged and marginalized aspects of identity interconnect to construct a leadership identity highlights this epistemological expansion.

Change. Change was the last variable necessary to complete the construction of this framework. Given the epistemic biases within leadership theory, change is the vehicle to alter the disparate representation of women. Medina's (2013) idea of epistemic friction illustrates the element of change in practice. Within this model, friction challenges epistemic bias and injustice within leadership theory by highlighting the limitations of existing exclusions relative to gender and other historically marginalized perspectives. In this regard, change is exerted using epistemic friction as a reflexive tool to reexamine cognitive fissures within leadership theory. Friction challenges intolerance and provides individuals with the ability to exercise meta-lucidity.

Meta-lucidity is also critical to the practice of change within this model because it illustrates how cognitive shifts are necessary to exert epistemic resistance against oppressive epistemologies. By understanding how privilege and power construct and sustain epistemic bias,

the exercise of meta-lucidity offers leaders the capability to exercise epistemic resistance against this status quo to advance more inclusive epistemological perspectives. In this respect, epistemic friction and meta-lucidity function as epistemic tools to change leadership theory.

The Nexus of Intersectionality and Leadership

Intersectionality presents leadership theory with the ability to expand its epistemology. As such, this theoretical merger explored varied ways in which intersectionality informs leadership, specifically how intersectionality engages the construct of power, how it considers the socio-historical context of knowledge production, and how agency and social structures inform the development of an intersectional leadership model.

Power. Present within the positivist, post-positivist, and post-structural research paradigms of leadership theory is the construct of power. Men dominate the discipline of leadership and this elevated status has constructed a self-perpetuating cycle which not only affords them the capacity to construct the norm of leadership identity, but situates them in roles to create a leadership epistemology which sustains their privileged position.

The limitations of positivist, post-positivist, and post-structural leadership theories illustrate the potential of intersectionality to shift this power dynamic by recognizing the complex and relational aspects of how individuals operate in society. Intersectionality offers leadership theory the capacity to engage the complex nature of identity, e.g., the socio-historical constructs in which an individual's varied and interconnected identity affiliations operate, and to consider how power impacts the operation of identity within social contexts like the construction of knowledge.

This holistic level review of the individual, the social groups with which they align themselves, and the structural systems which undergird society served as the mechanisms to

contest the epistemological limitations of leadership theory. In this way, intersectionality provides a new theoretical tool to critique and challenge how meaning-making marginalized non-dominant perspectives and can be utilized to deconstruct the (dis)operation of power. Extending this level of analysis to leadership theory illustrates how intersectionality makes power more explicit.

Intersectionality recognizes the complexity of identity and explains how privilege and oppression can mutually coexist within the intersection of one's identity. This more nuanced perspective of identity furthers our understanding of how power can privilege an individual based on the social location of one identity and marginalize him or her based on his or her association with a non-dominant identity. The capacity of intersectionality to interconnect both privilege and oppression, and to understand how power influences these and other identity affiliation illustrates the value of intersectionality to leadership discourse.

By focusing attention on established epistemic biases and limitations within leadership theory, intersectionality is the appropriate intellectual instrument to alter these epistemological traditions. The interdisciplinary facet of intersectionality utilizes its power to extend new insights to varied disciplines, with the intent of disrupting marginalizing practices within the production of knowledge. This power is evident in the epistemic friction which results when intersectionality theory connects to leadership theory. This pedagogical interchange between two theories generates cognitive critiques which enable intersectionality to contest male-normed propensities and the position of gender neutrality within leadership theory. The resulting friction challenges a hegemonic framework to contest epistemic omissions against women and disrupts the existing cognitive framework of leadership theory.

By contesting the perception of what is true, intersectionality not only challenges existing epistemic biases against women as leaders but inserts new tools to address these cognitive cracks. In this respect, the power of creating new knowledge aims to disrupt the traditional canon of leadership theory by highlighting structural limitations within existing research paradigms. This act of contestation is in itself an act of power against an exclusionary system of knowledge production. It is practiced by culling new ideas relevant to liberating women from the sidelines of leadership theory in order to alter leadership epistemology. Thus, intersectionality makes power explicit by illustrating exclusionary epistemic practices, highlighting the impact of this exclusion, and providing alternate pedagogical strategies to construct an inclusive, intersectional research paradigm.

Socio-historical context. Intersectionality also clarifies how the integration of socio-historical context illustrates historical patterns of exclusion for non-dominant perspectives and the intellectual impact of this legacy. An analysis of structural intersectionality reveals how micro and macro level factors affect the epistemology of leadership. At the micro level of leadership theory, the practice was to examine identity in isolation, utilizing a single-axis approach or an additive strategy. These approaches ignored the intersectional nature of identity because the single-axis approach failed to consider the impact of how identities connect with one another. In contrast, the add-and-stir approach presumed that the consideration of various identity aspects created an equilibrating effect. The additive strategy also assumed that engaging multiple identity points provided a more egalitarian consideration of identity within leadership theory. Instead, these approaches situated identity affiliations in competition with one another because they constructed a hierarchal standard, in which one identity superseded another in the formulation of leadership identity. By default, this strategy assigned value to one identity over

other identity affiliations. The integration of intersectionality theory emphasized the impact of these epistemic shortcomings within leadership theory.

Intersectionality also advocated that single and additive strategies for engaging identity resulted in inherent epistemological limitations against non-dominant perspectives. This level of engagement represents an original way of thinking about how the integration of identity impacts the formation of leadership identity. These contributions denote an epistemological shift in how to equitably engage the construct of identity because it affords scholars a more complex understanding of the intersection of identities.

Beyond enhancing identity at the micro level of identity and social group affiliations, intersectionality supports the examination of macro level structures, specifically socio-historical context and the social systems which generate knowledge. For example, it examines the context, the agency and structure, of what established male-normed standards within the epistemology of leadership theory. Understanding the construction of this epistemology requires an evaluation of the socio-historical factors which contributed to its development.

Within leadership, this male-normed bias was the standard referent, which relegated marginalized non-dominant perspectives to the periphery. Another result of this standard was the utilization of a gender-neutral stance, which omitted women as leaders since the prototypical male served as the established epistemic default. The formation of a prototypical leader within the scholarship of leadership theory is evident in all major research paradigms and remains an entrenched practice within the discipline. Men, historically assigned a dominant status, acquired a privileged position within the production of knowledge. Intersectionality emphasizes how this social reality reflects the hegemonic framework within which women function in society, particularly Crenshaw's (1991) categorizations of representational, structural, and political

intersectionality. These forms of intersectionality demonstrate how systems of social oppression are interconnected. Likewise, these socially constructed mechanisms demonstrate how social locations within these systems can sustain the marginalization of non-dominant perspectives.

The incorporation of these socio-historical contexts within leadership theory reveals epistemic gaps for women's leadership. At the macro-level, understanding how the production of knowledge historically marginalized women as learners and leaders illustrates how larger structural impediments impact their social locations within leadership theory. These epistemic gaps are highlighted by intersectionality theory, which offers a strategy to both align and deconstruct these overlapping systems within the epistemology of leadership. Intersectionality thus brings to leadership theory a more complex awareness of how women and men engage leadership distinctively because of their socio-historical situated positions. Intersectionality not only articulates this epistemic disadvantage, but it offers new intellectual strategies at both the individual and system level, to understand how each construct impacts the other. This micro and macro mindset provide a more complete composite of how socio-historical factors contribute to the development of leadership identity and how leaders are situated within the current epistemology of leadership.

This nexus where identity and social location meet demonstrates how privilege and marginalization coexist within the framework of one's varied social identity affiliations. In this respect, intersectionality offers a more nuanced way of understanding how identities intersect, reflecting how humans are shaped by society, and as such provides a clearer epistemological lens with which to examine the complexity of leader identity. As a result, intersectionality proves beneficial to leadership theory because it demonstrates how socio-historical constructs have

inserted epistemic bias within leadership theory, and because it offers a new theoretical approach to dismantle this epistemic injustice.

Agency. In linking intersectionality to leadership, the agency of women as leaders serves as a source of inquiry, to examine how the epistemology of intersectionality informs leadership theory. Intersectionality thus serves as a mechanism to address how the intersection of identity, in concert with one's social location and the operation of power, connect to shape the agency of women.

The manner in which leadership theory has examined identity utilizing single-axis, additive, or gender-neutral strategies illustrates the importance of providing an alternate view of agency. Rather than being hindered by how these identity strategies assign a hierarchal value or deconstruct the binary of gender, intersectionality aims to insert an egalitarian framework within the epistemology of leadership identity. This is accomplished through the practice of epistemic resistance, which highlights how the positivist, post-positivist, and post-structuralist perspectives maintain dominant, male-normed research paradigms that result in epistemically biased accounts of knowledge. Intersectionality seeks to disrupt these intellectual practices by providing women with a more accurate account of their agency as leaders. This intersectional standpoint provides women with the ability to develop new ways of making meaning and exercising their agency within leadership theory.

In highlighting the persistence of epistemic injustices within leadership discourse, intersectionality also emphasizes the socio-historical constructs which maintain epistemic bias through the operation of power. This is accomplished by examining identity at the nexus of varied identity affiliations. This crossroads, while more complex, speaks to the multi-dimensional nature of women as leaders, sans hierarchy and the value system established

within that leadership structure. Understanding the agency of women as leaders thus has to be reconsidered within the context of how they could be accurately represented within the epistemology of leadership theory. This intersectional lens, when applied to the production of knowledge within leadership, alters the hierarchical structure and disrupts the value assigned to this framework, and diminishes the power of an entrenched male narrative by deconstructing its value.

This nexus between leadership and intersectionality generates epistemic friction because it highlights epistemic exclusions and consequently epistemic gaps, constructed by the operation of hegemony within leadership theory. An intersectional lens notes how the epistemology of leadership has limited women in their capacity to equally engage and be accurately represented equally. This epistemological shift situates women beyond just marginalized, non-dominant perspectives, to consider how the nexus of identity provides a more accurate epistemic representation of their location and agency. The application of intersectionality to leadership thus generates the epistemic friction to provide women with the cognitive agency to address ignorance and highlight intolerance within leadership theory.

Agency also occurs through the juxtaposition of how privilege and oppression intersect within the identity of women as leaders. Shifting the scope of identity to consider how dominant and non-dominant aspects interconnect offers additional insight into how women are situated epistemologically within leadership theory. This more complex perspective of identity presents women with the power to exercise their agency as leaders from an informed awareness of how identity, socio-historical context, and power determine their social location and erect a skewed system of knowledge production. Likewise, it empowers women to utilize an intersectional lens to disrupt oppressive educational practices within the formation of leadership theory. This

exercise in meta-lucidity, the cognitive capacity to understand the shortcomings associated with dominant perspectives, presents women with a conduit to enact their agency as intersectional leaders.

The application of representational intersectionality to leadership theory also furthers the cognitive development of women as leaders. Here meta-lucidity serves as an epistemological tool to reconceptualize agency and the metaphor of outsider within. While earlier understandings of identity and the socio-historical contexts constructed certain tropes of women as leaders, intersectionality disrupts the patterns which create inaccurate and incomplete representations of women. The utilization of meta-lucidity within this model serves as a mechanism to recalibrate the duality of outsider and insider to consider what the integration of these facets reveals about women as leaders and how this insight can advance the epistemology of leadership theory.

Structural intersectionality similarly spotlights systemic mechanisms within the epistemology of leadership that negatively impact the agency of women. This systems-based approach identifies epistemological barriers that led to the establishment of gendered norms which assigned White maleness as the representative example of the prototypical leader. In underscoring oppressive epistemic practices, structural intersectionality advances the agency of women by providing them with the cognitive capacity to note the limitations of their identity in conjunction with their social location within the epistemology of leadership. In this context, the acquisition of meta-lucidity occurs by recognizing that masculinist models sustain socio-historical patterns of privilege and power. While these practices advance an epistemology of gender neutrality or value neutrality, structural intersectionality illuminates how oppressive systems within the discipline of leadership sustain epistemic inequities.

Given that leadership development occurs at the individual, relational, and collective levels, the intellectual impediments noted at the macro level of knowledge construction provides further context to understand the agency of women as leaders. The macro level reflects structural intersectionality in practice. Here, the application of the tempered radical metaphor seems most appropriate. The tempered radical is a leader who exercises her agency to alter dominant, exclusionary practices within her respective organizations or communities. This radical utilizes her intersectional identity, as an outsider within, and balances both privilege and oppression to effect micro-level, incremental changes that alter oppressive epistemic practices at the macro level. Exercising structural intersectionality in this way presents the opportunity to alter structural impediments, and the resulting epistemic injustices, within the hegemonic framework of leadership theory.

Intersectional Leadership Model

This conceptual model for intersectional leadership demonstrates how key principles within intersectionality theory are beneficial to leadership theory. An explanation of the design, operation, and principles aligned with this model follows, as well as an analysis of how these principles enhance the epistemology of leadership theory.

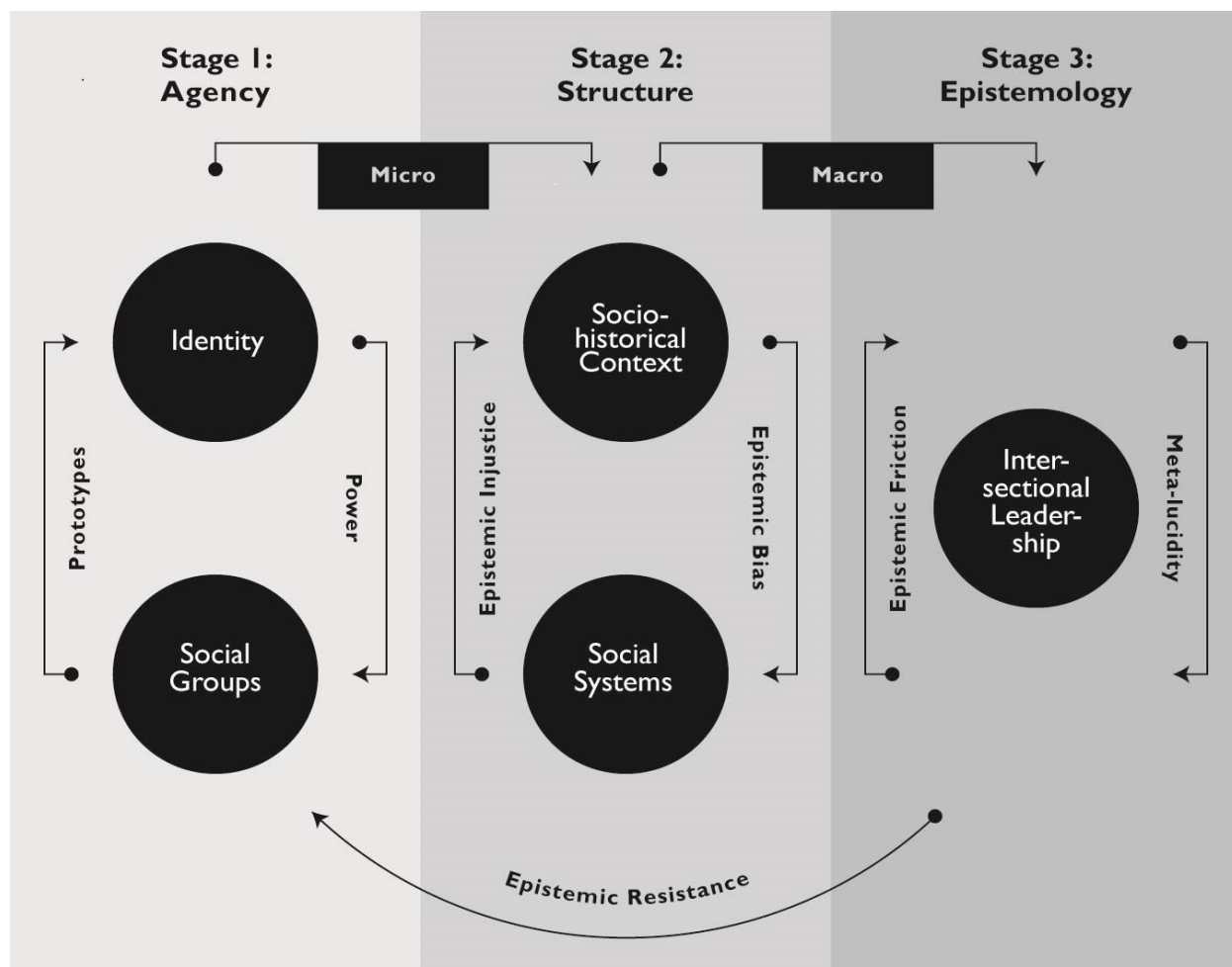


Figure 6.1. Intersectional Leadership Model.

Design. Inspired by a theoretical bricolage and falling within the spectrum of post-structuralist research, this model recognizes knowledge is socially constructed and invites critical thinking and analysis of the epistemology of leadership theory. Intrinsic to the model is the deconstruction of leadership discourse by examining micro and macro level variables which serve to construct social reality. While the model is not a silver bullet for the multiple realities that comprise leadership identity, it can help interrogate how the whole person is engaged within leadership theory. As such, its construction applies an intersectional lens to leadership theory, utilizing the subject of epistemology.

The focus on epistemology is intentional in order to discern how the integration of intersectionality theory can enhance the construction of knowledge within leadership. Examining how individuals learn to be leaders, referencing the intersection of varied identity affiliations, in concert with social location and the construct of power, informed the development of this model's key components. The insight acquired from understanding the links between one's agency, how one's respective locations situates one structurally within society, and how this intersection comes into contact with power also inspired this model. Similarly, the impact of agency and structure on the epistemology of leadership theory is another area of focus. As such, the integration of intersectionality to leadership provides an opportunity to interrogate androcentrism within leadership discourse and present for consideration of an inclusive, intersectional prototype of leadership. This charge for change advances a social justice agenda that affirms not only the uniqueness of women and other historically underrepresented groups, but presents a new prototype for individuals who aspire to leadership roles.

Operation. The operation of this model allows individuals to engage its structure in a non-linear fashion utilizing feedback loops which function across two overarching levels—micro and macro. The micro level addresses the individual, social group, and socio-historical context and how they collectively inform one's agency. The macro level addresses how structures, specifically social systems and the construct of power, influence agency. This structural layer of the model suggests that social systems maintained an epistemic bias against historically marginalized groups. The systems level reveals how epistemic injustices against non-dominant groups were sustained through the operation of power, which influenced the production of knowledge. At the macro level, the subject of epistemology is another variable within this model. This placement illustrates how individual and group agency, in conjunction with structures such

as power and social systems, influence epistemology. The impact of these dynamics demonstrates how epistemic biases develop into epistemic injustices within meaning-making. With the application of an intersectional lens, the resulting theoretical bricolage results in epistemic friction. This friction is a necessary byproduct for individuals to arrive at meta-lucidity and exercise cognitive agency through the practice of epistemic resistance. The resistance aspect of this model alters current single-axis, additive, and multicategorical approaches to leadership identity within the major research paradigms included in this analysis of leadership theory. Thus, the integration of agency, structure, and epistemology informs the development of this intersectional leadership model whose goal is to alter the epistemology of leadership theory.

Key principles. The principles of identity, social location, and structural intersectionality collectively offer a new level of epistemological insight into leadership theory and provide a pathway to engage the intersectional nature of women's leadership. The ability to address entrenched norms within the discourse of leadership constructs an opportunity to revisit how women engage their respective leadership identities, utilizing an intersectional lens.

Agency. In stage one, agency highlights the role of self in relation to society, specifically the epistemology of leadership theory. At the micro level, agency highlights the developmental process of identity at the individual and social group junctures. As such, it requires understanding how women, based on their gender and other identity affiliations, are situated as subjects within leadership discourse. This view of identity is more expansive because it utilizes an intersectional lens, providing women leaders with the reflexive capacity to critique theoretical limitations framed by single-axis or additive identity approaches.

The subject of identity also requires examining how power socially situates individuals at the group level. Based on the intersection of their varied identity affiliations, this location

provides a more complex and precise measure of how women reference multiple identity affiliations with varying degrees of privilege or marginalization. The shift from individual to social group affiliation merits understanding how these varied identities, as well as the social location of group memberships, construct prototypes. These prototypes, situated within the spectrum of marginalization and privilege, reinforce stratified gendered roles of women when examined in context with the standard White male prototype within leadership theory. By framing women within a subjugated role, such prototypes constructed a gendered hierarchy which assigned higher value to the preferred masculinist model found within leadership. The construct of power operating at the individual and social group levels maintained this hegemonic hold.

Understanding agency entails consideration of how the intersection of individual identity aligns with the location of a social group within society. In this respect, this more holistic framing of agency aspires to introduce complexity to the epistemology of leadership theory. By analyzing agency in this manner, women leaders have the capacity to critique how the discourse of leadership is complicit in advancing a White male-normed standard of leadership. This redefinition of the prototypical leader, through the process of deconstruction, along with the insertion of complexity, aims to create a new intersectional prototype within leadership theory.

Structure. Within stage two, discerning how socio-historical context is influential in the construction of prototypical standards and represented within leadership theory is essential to the operation of this model. The insertion of social and historical context examines how the intersection of identity, group affiliation, and socio-historical context are interconnected and collectively influence the agency of individuals as leaders.

Beyond examining how social identity and location function at the micro level, this conceptual model analyzes the structure of how society functions at the macro level. This particular facet is vital because it establishes how socio-historical context and oppressive social systems impact leadership identity. This stage of the model articulates the value of understanding how both constructs, maintained by power and privilege, impact the identity of individuals and frame their lived experiences as leaders.

While a clear focus of this analysis is to acquire insight relative to the operation of oppression within social systems, linking structural intersectionality to leadership also helped identify how the construct of privilege operates in tandem with oppression. This complicated duality is necessary to acquire knowledge regarding how they work in operation with one another and understand the implications of this juncture within leadership theory.

Social systems are driven and maintained by the operation of power, so altering the system requires altering who has power. To apply this model to leadership theory warrants changing the prototype of White male leadership. Deconstructing this prototype presents an opportunity to address the epistemic bias of leadership theory that presents only half the story of humanity. As such, this model supports the elimination of hierarchies related to oppression and the establishment of more egalitarian epistemology to understand the intersection between individuals, social locations, and social systems. This epistemic shift provides non-dominant perspectives, particularly those of women, with the capacity to cognitively frame how social systems construct epistemic biases that result in sustained, entrenched epistemic injustices within the discourse of leadership.

Epistemology. The final focus of analysis occurs at the macro level and examines the impact of agency and structure on the epistemology of leadership theory. This model asserts that

the epistemic injustices perpetuated by agency and social systems influence the production of knowledge within leadership. In order to alter this epistemology, this model employs the application of an intersectional lens. This addition utilized theoretical bricolage to explore the usefulness of intersectionality to leadership. This practice, defined as epistemic friction, puts bodies of knowledge in contact with one another that result in questions and challenges directed against the beliefs associated with each theory. Friction proves beneficial in this regard because it highlights for leaders the cognitive disconnect and epistemic injustices within leadership theory.

The cognitive agency acquired through epistemic friction introduced another epistemological strategy within this model: meta-lucidity. This tool provides marginalized leaders with the capacity to note the epistemic shortcomings within leadership theory, by comparing non-dominant perspectives to the dominant discourses and noting any cognitive gaps. These gaps highlight the interconnection between identity and social systems and how they exert an influence within the epistemology of leadership.

The application of an intersectional lens shifts the bifurcated scope of oppression and privilege by considering how both facets can co-exist within a leader. This standpoint warrants engagement with reflexivity to note how one is socially situated as a leader within leadership theory. Understanding the epistemic gaps related to these marginalized and/or privileged perspectives is an exercise in cognitive agency and offers an awareness provided by meta-lucidity to introduce new intersectional knowledge to the epistemology of leadership theory.

Meta-lucidity, the recognition of gaps within leadership epistemology, also enables intersectional standpoints to utilize intersectionality theory as a mechanism to practice epistemic

resistance. This form of resistance presents individuals with the capacity to exercise their cognitive agency to acquire new beliefs related to making meaning within leadership. The application of intersectionality offers additional insights into how epistemic gaps within leadership theory can be altered to reflect “intersectional standpoints,” specifically those of women as leaders who have the capacity to be both privileged by certain identity affiliations and marginalized by other social identity choices. This intersectional consideration provides an epistemic mechanism to contest established norms and prototypes related to White male leadership. Beyond interrogating epistemic injustices, epistemic resistance offers a pathway to change the inequity aligned with dominant discourses in leadership theory. Within the model, the exercise of epistemic resistance loops back to agency. Given the fluidity of agency and structures within society, this loop inserts a self-sustaining conduit to continually strive for the integration of inclusive practices within the epistemology of intersectional leadership.

Applied practice. This model is useful to leadership scholars and practitioners seeking to gain insight into the intersection of identity and the capacity to enhance the epistemology of leadership theory. Unpacking the model, step by step, explains how intersectional leadership can reveal the whole story of how individuals lead. This insight derives from an informed perspective of agency, how socio-historical structural impediments influence the intersection of identities, and understanding the how the epistemology of leadership, in concert with agency and structure, provides a pathway to resist incomplete representations of leadership. The model’s operation works in three stages: agency, structure, and epistemology. Each stage represents an incremental pathway to alter the production of knowledge within leadership theory, utilizing a non-linear process to advance the practice of epistemic resistance. A case study illustrates the application of the model utilizing a summer research program as a representative example. The

principal aim of the summer program is to provide underrepresented students with a pathway to access graduate education through research with a faculty mentor and to utilize their participation in the program as an opportunity to better understand the academic rigor and expectations of graduate school.

Case Study

This case study analyzes the selection process to determine which candidate best meets the underrepresented eligibility standard for admission into the summer research program.

Applicant A is an American Indian female who identifies as a member of the Haudenosaunee tribe, specifically the Cayuga Nation. She is a rising senior with a 3.63 grade point average and is a chemistry major. During the interview process, the student reveals she is from a higher socio-economic status and is heterosexual. In contrast, Applicant B is a White male from the Midwest who is a rising senior and a nursing major. This individual has a 3.76 grade point average and is a first-generation college student from a lower socio-economic status. At the interview, this individual self-disclosed he is gay and acknowledges a learning disability.

Given the volume of applicants across the United States, typically 1600 each academic year, the selection process for admission into this program is competitive. Affiliated with a larger consortium of primarily mid-west colleges and universities, this program began in the mid-1980s. While the consortium does not define the term underrepresented student, it does clarify in an affirmative action statement that the objective of this project is to increase the presence of minority and women representation in graduate education. In the administration of this research program, each respective member of the consortium has autonomy to define their program objectives, specifically with respect to its diversity goals. At University X, there is no definition of diversity, and there is no consistent definition for underrepresented student. Past

practices at University X advanced the alignment of this term with the consortium focus of U.S. minority groups and women. A more recent strategy in the selection process of applicants is the practice of holistic review. However, legal challenges related to the admission selection process, specifically *Fair Admissions vs. Harvard*, question the utilization of race as a criterion for admissions. As a result, the selection criteria for this program is currently under review.

Stage 1: Agency. The application of agency to this case study reveals challenges related to the eligibility process at University X. For example, when applying a single-axis orientation and considering only race or gender to determine eligibility, Applicant A meets the underrepresented standard set by the consortium. This level of candidate review constructs a hierarchal consideration of identity, where the situation of race and gender is in a competitive stance, and one is assigned a higher value. Regardless of the single-axis or hierarchal approaches, Applicant A becomes the ideal applicant. In the exercise of an additive approach, Applicant B, having more marginalized identities, specifically ability, class, and sexual orientation, would also be eligible for consideration. When considering criteria beyond identity and utilizing a holistic standard, then Applicant B, being male in a historically female-dominated nursing profession represents an underrepresented perspective and becomes the ideal candidate. Agency thus serves as a mechanism to highlight how these types of review—single, additive, and hierarchal—reveal the challenges related to creating an equitable selection process.

What then is the ideal strategy to ascertain a candidate's eligibility? Answering this question illustrates the utility of the model. Applicants A and B illustrate the operation of agency within the micro level of society by restricting the focus of review to identity and social group affiliation. Agency recognizes the equal coexistence of the varied identity affiliations of a leader. Within this model, race, ethnicity, and gender, along with any other identity affiliations, mutually

coexist and are inextricably linked. Further, it advances the notion that these identities do not exist in a hierarchal order such that one identity receives a higher or lesser value than the other. Rather than situating identity in this competitive stance and avoiding the construction of a hierarchy of oppression, this model recognizes the complexity of agency and emphasizes that the intersection of these identities is a more complete representation of who these individuals are as leaders. Situated in this manner, both candidates receive a more equitable review of how their intersectional agency shapes their capacity as leaders and as ideal candidates for the program.

Consideration of identity must also occur in relation to power and examining its disparate assignment to particular social groups. In this instance, the privilege afforded Applicant B as a White male must also consider his marginalized identities as a gay man with a learning disability. The duality of these social locations, dominant and non-dominant, results in the formation of distinctive leadership prototypes. In this sense, privilege constructs a prototype in which Whiteness, by virtue of race and power, is more apt to assign this individual the role of leader. In contrast, the marginalization assigned to the social category of class, sexual orientation and disability creates prototypes more likely relegated to the role of follower.

The capacity to reference both privilege and oppression provides Applicant B with the ability to engage both perspectives, note the disparity, and utilize epistemic insight to cognitively construct a more informed understanding of epistemic gaps within their role as a leader. Central to the operation of this model is understanding how different prototypes function in concert with one another and how the intersectional juncture of identity provides a richer representation of the agency of individuals as leaders. This model also proposes that current prototypes which situate leaders as either privileged or marginalized be eliminated in consideration of a prototype that recognizes the intersectional nature of leadership identity.

Identity. At this level, the elements of identity and social group categorizations mutually engage one another in the development of an intersectional leadership identity. Within this model, the operation of identity shifts from positivist leadership theory orientations, which focus on single-axis orientations within the great man or trait theories, to consider how varied identities coexist within the individual. Intersectional identity in this model does not presume one identity affiliation has a higher value than another or limit the multiplicity of identities one utilizes to formulate one's leadership identity. Neither does it establish a hierarchy and suggest one identity supersedes another, as found within post-positivist leadership theories such as servant and relational. Instead, this model advances the idea that the juncture of varied identities more accurately reflects who one is as an individual and that understanding this intersection yields insight into how this juncture influences leadership development. In this respect, intersectional identity advances a more complex engagement of identity relative to leadership. This complexity, a facet integral to the development of a bricolage between intersectionality and leadership, requires individuals to have an understanding of self.

Social groups. Within this case study, the selection of candidates illustrates the complicated nature of utilizing agency, specifically identity as a determinant for selection into this competitive program. An initial challenge is the inconsistent definition of diversity affiliated with the operation of the program at University X. While the research consortium does not define diversity, its emphasis on race, ethnicity, and gender highlight their primary focus. In the thirty-two years of the administration of this program at University X, the strategies to select applicants has varied. At one time determining eligibility meant an emphasis on Latinx, Black, women and first-generation students. More recently, the application of a holistic standard is the primary method of candidate selection. This holistic standard examines a multiplicity of variables

inclusive of agency, academic performance, as well as considers the recruitment goals of a specific program and their college.

The challenge in applying these varied selection standards to agency, specifically identity, is the utilization of additive identity strategies which assign a hierarchal value to underrepresented identity affiliations. The application of Candidate B, the White male who identifies as gay and is a first-generation college student serves as an illustrative example. While this applicant is privileged by race and gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic class and disability identities marginalize this individual. Furthermore, within this applicant's respective major and program, he would be categorized as a historically marginalized student. Given this context, should this candidate be excluded from consideration solely on the basis of his race and gender?

Applicant B further emphasizes how identity does not exist in isolation but rather situates individuals within varied social group categories. This inequity is due in part to history which has constructed patterns, maintained by society, that have privileged certain groups at the exclusion of others. In this respect, socio-historical constructs are partially responsible for the development of leadership prototypes.

Within leadership, the standard male referent has prevailed throughout the course of this discipline and serves as the dominant paradigm. Yet, this prototype also serves as a means of exclusion for White males as leaders. To presume that the privilege afforded them because of race and gender supersedes other marginalized aspects of their identity affiliation serves as a mechanism to sustain the historically entrenched prototype of White masculinist models within the epistemology of leadership theory. It also presumes that an American Indian leader is marginalized solely on this basis of her race and gender. These binaries only serve to maintain

the epistemic status quo within leadership and offer limited dualistic accounts of leadership reflected within the epistemology of leadership theory.

This model attempts to disrupt this pattern and deconstruct the existing by suggesting that intersectionality provides an epistemological mechanism to disrupt the hegemonic hold within leadership. This shift occurs through the recognition that while White men, like Applicant B, are privileged by race and gender, they can also be marginalized by their alignment with marginalized identity choices. This more inclusive and holistic perspective provides the ability to examine what the juncture, rather than a bifurcated identity, reveals. Within this model, comprehending the intersection is key to understanding how agency impacts leadership identity. The presumption that the privilege assigned to White men because of gender and race supersedes other identities essentially assigns a hierarchal order and value schema which maintains the dominant prototype within leadership. This paradigm discounts how a non-heterosexual orientation can marginalize this leader. Further, it remains unknown how this marginalized identity intersects with the privileged aspects of race and gender, or how it can influence leadership identity. An intersectional analysis of this confluence of identities has the potential to provide more complex insight into how this individual leads.

Power. Not all identities and social groups receive equal treatment; power serves as the medium which situates these elements within a marginalized or privileged stance. Unlike post-positivist leadership theories, specifically LMX and servant theories, which sustain the dominant paradigm of White male prototypes, this model attempts to disrupt this pattern. It does so by recognizing that White men can also experience marginalization. Further, it suggests that a leader like Applicant A, while marginalized by race and gender can also be privileged by sexual orientation and socio-economic class. In these examples, power illuminates the agency of

individuals as leaders who can reference the intersection of varied identity affiliations. Understanding the influence of power is pivotal because it provides insight on how to deconstruct the dominant paradigm, enabling the development of a more informed understanding of how power works in operation with powerlessness. For example, noting how a privileged socio-economic class intersects with the marginalized status of disability can illustrate how a leader culls from the intersection of both identities in his or her role as a leader. This synergy between two seemingly disparate social positions can more accurately reveal how an individual engages power in his or her role as a leader.

Prototypes. Working in concert together, the constructs of identity, social groups, and power created a prototype that established the norm of what leaders should aspire to—in this case, a paradigm premised on the exclusion of historically marginalized identities and social groups. This model asserts that the prototypical norm of White male leadership is false, not only because of its exclusionary practices but because it fails to consider the confluence of marginalization and privilege. This failure to fully understand the juncture of identity has implications for comprehending how leaders engage their leadership identities. Further, this intersection serves as the conduit to deconstruct current approaches to engaging leadership identity and how it is reflected in leadership theory. The recognition that leaders can dually reference both marginalization and privilege helps clarify how these intersections influence their roles as leaders. The presumption that White men rely solely on their privileged status presents the opportunity to alter this prototype by understanding how this privilege engages with marginalization. Alternatively, it can clarify how historically marginalized identities and social groups engage privilege by virtue of heterosexual orientation, socio-economic class, or ability, potentially constructing a prototype from the inverse order. The insights derived from this

approach could reveal previously undocumented intersections which help inform the development of new leadership prototypes constructed from a more holistic framework of the identities and social groups with which leaders align themselves.

With respect to Applicants A and B, understanding the prototypes of each respective applicant can help determine the most ideal candidate. By requesting applicants address how the intersection of identities and social group affiliations intersect, based on privilege and marginalization, provides detail regarding the development of their prototypes as leaders. Further, it affords applicants the ability to articulate the cognitive steps taken to construct an intersectional prototype. This insight can be noted in the application and discussed at the interview stage of the selection process to reveal how their intersectional identities and leadership prototypes can contribute to the program. Integrating these variables into the application review enables the selection process to consider a broader range of eligibility criteria to determine the most ideal candidate.

Stage 2: Structure. This macro-level stage considers the socio-historical and social systems within society that inform how epistemic bias and epistemic injustice impact individual identity and social group categorizations. Within stage two evaluating how power and prototypes inform the development of larger social mechanisms that perpetuate marginalization and privilege against individuals and social groups' serves as a focal point of analysis. Understanding the operation of these mechanisms is important because they reveal how individuals and social groups access leadership and how the epistemology of leadership theory reflects these perspectives.

Socio-historical context. This element clarifies how the combination of social and historical factors have created and entrenched patterns of privilege and marginalization within

leadership theory. An example of this historical precedent is found within the positivist tradition, which constructed a dominant narrative and prototype of White male leadership within trait or great man leadership theories. This privileged stance continued in the post-positivist tradition with LMX and servant leadership theories, which discounted the ability of marginalized others to be fully represented within the epistemology of leadership theory. While the post-structural tradition of critical leadership studies attempted to remedy this historical pattern of exclusion, it did so by nullifying the constructs of gender and the elimination of women as a gendered perspective.

In contrast, this model insists that the intersection of identity provides greater insight into how one operates as a leader. It answers how privilege and marginalization can coexist with an individual and how socio-historical context can impact an individual's standpoint. As opposed to the more common applications of identity development which engage multiple, overlapping layers of oppression, this model proposes that this approach constructs and maintains a prototype of othering which situates the dominant and subordinate perspectives in competition with one another. By default, this practice of situating identities within a have versus have not binary sustains the entrenchment of a White male-normed prototype. This practice is observed in the natural predilection to discount Applicant B, a White male, in favor of Applicant A, an American-Indian female.

As a counter to the White male prototype of leadership, this model suggests altering patterns that sustain this socio-historical reality. This change occurs by shifting how leadership scholars engage the juncture of privilege and marginalization and recognizing what the intersection reveals about leader identity. Advancing this epistemological strategy affords both applicants the opportunity to have all aspects of their leadership identities receive full

consideration. This approach does not discount the impact of multiple layers of oppression. Instead, it situates this historically underrepresented reality as equally worthy of consideration by deconstructing its counterpart: the White male standard referent of leadership theory. This dismantling occurs by recognizing that the identity choices of White men can also situate them in a marginalized stance. Discerning how these marginalized identity affiliations intersect with privilege, invites the complexity necessary to understand intersectional leadership identity. This standpoint illustrates a more informed representation of leadership identity by considering how the integration of elements like identity, social group affiliation, and socio-historical context can alter the epistemology of leadership theory.

Social systems. The social systems which construct leadership theory have also been influential in maintaining a dominant paradigm within leadership theory. As Lerner (1986) noted in chapter one, this pattern of exclusion permeates all knowledge structures regardless of discipline. Within the epistemology of knowledge production, the network of relationships formed by the individual, his or her respective social groups, and social institutions further sustain entrenched patterns of exclusion. In this regard, the discipline of leadership has been complicit in supporting a system of knowledge which has dictated that White men serve as the litmus test for leadership.

Within this model, a candidate selection process which favors historically marginalized racial and gender categories represented by Applicant A, and discounts Applicant B, solely on the basis of his race and gender supports a social system, in this case an educational system, which maintains the dominant White male prototype of leadership. This occurs when the selection process situates leaders and their respective identity categories in competition with one another and fails to consider how other identity affiliations, whether dominant or non-dominant,

intersect within a leader. This binary practice of marginalized versus privileged sustains the dominant prototype of White male leadership because it serves as the sole basis of comparison of leadership prototype within the epistemology of leadership theory.

By deconstructing the social systems which maintain these epistemological patterns, this model subverts the dominant paradigm. The benefit of acknowledging the social systems which maintain patterns of exclusion is it affords both Applicants A and B full consideration as potential participants in the summer program. By engaging this level of complexity, the model acknowledges the strands of bias and injustice which permeate the epistemology of leadership theory. The practice of integrating complexity through an intersectional analysis provides an epistemological mechanism to alter how University X determines eligibility within their summer research program.

Epistemic bias. Within this model, epistemic bias serves as a conduit to deconstruct the dominant paradigm within positivist and post-positivist leadership theories, as well as to illustrate the importance of gender as a construct in post-structural leadership theory. By noting how socio-historical context and social systems perpetuate cycles of exclusion for historically subjugated perspectives in leadership theory, the model highlights how the dominant paradigm of a White male prototype discounts their capacity to be the recipients of epistemic bias. When aligned with marginalized identities and social groups, White men can experience othering.

Examining this juncture of privilege and marginalization spotlights an epistemic bias against White men, as represented with the example of Applicant B. Dismantling this bias serves to deconstruct the dominant prototype within leadership theory. Conversely, it also demonstrates how an American-Indian woman, marginalized by race and gender, such as Applicant A, can also reference privileged affiliations such as sexual orientation and socio-economic class. Here

the intersection provides a clearer understanding of how leaders engage their varied identity affiliations. Rather than relying on simplistic categorizations which situate overlapping systems of privilege and marginalization as binary choices, this model shows how this strategy perpetuates epistemic bias for those who reference leadership identity from a confluence of both dominant and non-dominant identity and social group affiliations.

Epistemic injustice. Within this model, socio-historical context and social systems preserve epistemic biases that result in epistemic injustices against the intersectional identity of leaders. Within the nursing discipline, Applicant B being a male in a female dominated industry situates this applicant as the historically underrepresented perspective. This same rationale applies to Applicant A as a STEM major who also brings a historically underrepresented standpoint to her research field. Given these contexts and systems, both candidates should receive equal consideration; however, within the binary of privilege or marginalization which examines only race and gender, Applicant A will generally receive preferential consideration. In this capacity, epistemic injustice illustrates how larger structural dynamics can serve as mechanisms of exclusion, particularly in terms of the intersection of leadership identities. As such, stage two of this model articulates how epistemic injustice prevents the intersectional identity of leaders from being fully understood and reflected within the epistemology of leadership theory.

Stage 3: Epistemology. The final stage of this model illustrates how stage one, agency, and stage two, structure, impact stage three, the epistemology of leadership theory. This phase examines how leadership theory engages intersectionality and how the resulting bricolage between both bodies of knowledge creates opportunities to acquire meta-lucidity. This ability to understand the implications of epistemic gaps within leadership theory not only presents

opportunities for leaders to cognitively shift the dominant White male standard but also to understand what the juncture of marginalization and privilege reveals about leadership identity. This process, known as epistemic friction, represents another pivotal aspect of this stage. Specifically, the process of comparing oppression and privilege within the epistemology of leadership results in the generation of epistemic friction, ideally leading to meta-lucidity. The model seeks to change the epistemology of leadership theory through the practice of epistemic resistance. Here, leaders can replace the dominant prototype in leadership with an intersectional prototype and alter the epistemology of leadership theory.

Intersectional leadership. Intersectional leadership is an epistemological strategy to enhance the body of leadership theory. It does so by suggesting that the juncture of identity and social group affiliations can reveal a more exact location of the agency of leaders. This new form of leadership is focused on understanding how agency engages larger structures such as socio-historical context and social systems and influences the epistemology of leadership theory.

Intersectional leadership presents the opportunity to challenge the dominant prototype by emphasizing how this established prototype is insufficient to address the intersectional identity of White men. It advances the idea that the juncture of agency and structure within leadership represents a more realistic representation of the dynamics that impact leadership identity and hence leadership theory. This model proposes shifting from additive and hierarchal approaches of identity and from marginalized versus privileged binaries to consider how intersectional leadership advances a more epistemically just leadership discourse. Within the summer research program, this leadership strategy would facilitate the selection of candidates whose intersectional leadership identities can reinforce the construction of a new leadership prototype with the capacity to evolve the epistemology of leadership theory.

Epistemic friction. Friction represents the clash in thinking relative to two more bodies of thought and provides the opportunity to critically engage what this clash reveals about the construction of knowledge. The friction which results from comparing intersectionality and leadership illustrates how agency and social structures impact the construction of knowledge. Further, it reveals an inherent bias against understanding how systems of oppression impact marginalized perspectives within leadership theory. It also fails to consider how the dominant prototype of privileged White men can experience marginalization and the impact of this intersection. Friction, then, is a necessary by-product of noting who is assigned preferential status versus who is left out of leadership theory, and highlights the loss of failing to understand the intersection of identity within leadership. As such, epistemic friction enables a comparison between Applicants A and B and reveals how these candidates engage both privileged and marginalized identities within leadership theory.

This model highlights how epistemic gaps have not only disadvantaged historically underrepresented standpoints but have also served to entrench a dominant White male narrative within leadership theory. The friction generated from contrasting intersectionality and leadership theory provides leaders with the ability to reference marginalized and privileged identity perspectives and note the advantages or limitations affiliated with their identity affiliations. This comparison yields insight relevant to bias or preferential epistemological patterns within leadership theory, creating opportunities for cognitive shifts in thinking about how leadership engages the intersection of identity. Intrinsic to this process is the practice of reflexivity, in which leaders examine how they are positioned intersectionally by agency and larger social systems. In this respect, epistemic friction creates pathways for new and more epistemically just

thinking relative to intersectional leadership and affords both applicants full consideration into the summer research program.

Meta-lucidity. This element illustrates how awareness of epistemic gaps within leadership theory can result in cognitive shifts in thinking. These shifts generate new ways of engaging how intersectionality benefits leadership. Meta-lucidity thus serves as a corrective mechanism to challenge limitations within the current epistemology of leadership. It also provides leaders with the insight to comprehend how the failure to include an intersectional analysis of identity constructs epistemic gaps within leadership theory. Additionally, leaders acquire an awareness of how this shortcoming sustains the practice of epistemic injustice, as well as limiting the cognitive capacity to respond to bias and injustice within leadership theory. Lucidity thus represents a new way of engaging epistemic gaps, biases, and injustices relative to intersectional leadership. Within this model, these cognitive shifts also present an opportunity for leaders to epistemically recalibrate the omissions created by agency and social structures in leadership theory. Lucidity offers leaders the ability to demonstrate how intersectionality arms leadership theory with a more equitable and socially just epistemology.

In this regard, the application of meta-lucidity to the eligibility criteria of the summer research program would alter the selection process to create a more equitable selection process that considers intersectional identity. This change occurs by examining the larger frameworks of identity, socio-historical context, and social systems that situate individuals as leaders. Understanding the intersection of these varied standpoints provides a more comprehensive framework to consider how each respective leader has something to contribute to the program and enables a review process grounded in the practices of equity and inclusion.

Epistemic resistance. Within this model, epistemic resistance provides the conduit to alter the epistemology of leadership so that it not only provides a more accurate reflection of the intersection of identities but also constructs new prototypical reflections of leadership. This perspective integrates the facets of complexity and interdisciplinarity intrinsic to a theoretical bricolage. As such, it arms agents of change with an intellectual strategy to note epistemic gaps and how they construct epistemic bias against identity, whether it is framed within binaries such as privileged versus marginalized or relies upon singular White male prototypes or additive approaches that integrate an add-and-stir approach.

This model eliminates these meaning-making strategies by noting their insufficiency to address how agency and social structural systems impact the epistemology of leadership theory. Intersectional leadership also rejects the hierarchal order of identity and the value assigned to specific identity groups by illustrating how the intersection provides a more accurate representation of leadership identity. Within this case study, the application of these strategies informs the development of a program selection criteria which engages this framework, as well as promotes the construction of a new leadership prototype. As such, the practice of epistemic resistance serves as a critical feature of this model and presents a pathway to integrate stages one, two and three to alter epistemic limitations within leadership theory and provide scholars with the capacity to build an intersectional leadership prototype.

Conclusions

This theoretical bricolage between intersectionality and leadership answered the research question: What insight can intersectionality theory offer to leadership theory? The tools at hand utilized to engage this question began with the subject of epistemology, to determine what is true in the production of knowledge. It became clear in this review that science utilized specific facets

aligned with the production of knowledge such as objectivity, subjectivity, credibility, and justification to construct intellectual barriers restricting women from equal access and representation within epistemology. This epistemic exclusion is a long-standing tradition which endured for 25 centuries within the philosophical canon (Le Doeuff, 1989).

Seeking to alter the antecedents of androcentrism, feminist scholars challenged these pervasive epistemic biases by revisiting how the production of knowledge occurs and by constructing alternate intellectual strategies, notably feminist epistemology, to reexamine how women as subjects are epistemologically significant. This cerebral shift resulted in a body of scholarship that extended beyond subjectivity to consider how Harding's (1994) strong objectivity could counter the limitations of value neutrality advanced by the traditional canon. Feminist scholars further challenged the mental models of how justification was framed within a masculinist orientation to consider how gender, specifically the experience of women, affects our understanding of what is true in knowledge. Code (1991) characterized the epistemological practice of justification as an antiquated "artifact" of White men used to sustain their biased versions of the truth (p. ix). In this respect, the utilization of central facets within the traditional canon of philosophy to determine what was epistemologically significant became the subject of scrutiny.

Building on the foundation of feminist epistemology, Crenshaw (1989, 1991) introduced the idea of intersectionality which offered additional epistemological insights beneficial to the discipline of leadership and the formation of this bricolage. Rather than single-axis, additive or categorical approaches to examining identity, Crenshaw asserted that the intersection of identity presented a far more accurate composite of how privilege and oppression interconnect within an

individual. This intersectional lens was then applied to current theoretical approaches within leadership to discern how individuals, particularly women, construct a leadership identity.

Beyond the scope of identity, Crenshaw (2018) also introduced three categories of intersectionality (representational, political, and structural) to reveal how privilege and oppression operates within social systems. For the scope of this research inquiry, the primary objective was to consider the relevance of structural intersectionality to leadership to demonstrate how structural impediments within leadership theory erected male norms of leadership. A review of specifically great man, trait, and transformational leadership theories revealed how this pattern, both at the identity and structural levels, constructed a hegemonic hold within the discourse of leadership. This pattern within the positivist tradition of leadership theories highlights how an epistemology, situated as value-neutral, developed a leadership prototype that skewed the production of knowledge to privilege dominant, perspectives. Furthermore, these theories were constructed with the presumption that theory is universal and uniformly impacts all genders. Extending this review to post-positivism illustrated the persistence of epistemic bias and exclusion within servant, relational, and social identity theories.

This analysis asserts neutrality does not exist when one group, White men, have the power to establish norms that exclude non-dominant perspectives within the positivist and post-positive traditions of leadership theory. Furthermore, this study illustrates that the production of knowledge within leadership is neither neutral nor value-free. When one prototypical group, White men, can establish the norms of a discipline, they exert influence on what is deemed epistemologically significant. This influence exerts its authority and power by establishing dominance over non-dominant perspectives, which removes the value-free aspect of leadership theory. This capacity to determine what is true within the production of meaning-making in

leadership theory develops an incomplete epistemology. Heifetz (1994) asserted that leadership theory sustained this tradition of a presumed male order for two hundred years; the construction of an intersectional leadership model provides an opportunity to alter this epistemological practice.

Another area of inquiry within this bricolage examined how shifting leadership identity to encompass an intersectional lens warranted a review of the link between social identity and leadership. Given that intersectionality engages the juncture of how varied identity affiliations interface, a key benefit of introducing a merger between both theoretical frameworks is that intersectionality fills the epistemic gaps related to the complexity of identity. As such, this theoretical merger was ideal because it provides a more nuanced capacity to engage how the identity gaps reveal only part of the story. This omission is significant because, without a full account of the intersection of one's varied identity affiliations and their respective social stance it compromises the capacity to address leadership identity.

With this epistemic gap in mind, the introduction, stage one of the model articulates how the agency of leaders is critical for the formation of an intersectional leadership identity. Examining the relational aspect of identity to larger socio-historical context and social systems in stage two of the model illustrates how the consideration of structural dynamics noted within structural intersectionality are beneficial to expanding the epistemology of leadership theory. This expansion illustrates how larger systemic structures, such as the standpoint of gender within society, influenced the production of meaning-making within the discourse of leadership. This account of how systemic influences, such as power and second-generation gender bias, influenced identity development clarifies how the operation of structural intersectionality impacts leadership theory. Additionally, illuminating the relationship between non-dominant

perspectives and their respective social stances demonstrates how the construction of macro structures disenfranchise marginalized leaders as they seek to construct their respective leadership identities.

Beyond articulating the epistemic bias present within leadership discourse, this bricolage, linking intersectionality and leadership, offers new strategies within stage three of the model to counter existing epistemological limitations through the practice of generating epistemic friction to arrive at meta-lucidity and provide a pathway to exercise epistemic resistance. This epistemic strategy involved a comparison between intersectionality and leadership theories, noting the patterns and practices within each body of work, in order to discern existing epistemic gaps and construct new strategies to address the cognitive cracks within leadership theory. The incorporation of an intersectional lens demonstrates how friction, meta-lucidity, and resistance shift the cognitive agency of leaders to epistemically resist marginalizing practices and construct a more inclusive epistemology within the discipline of leadership. The introduction of an intersectional leadership model presents a modest pathway to accomplish this goal.

Limitations

One limitation affiliated with this research is the narrow range of existing scholarship available for the application of theoretical bricolage to leadership theory. This restriction within the literature on leadership restricted the scope of comparison available for developing an intersectional leadership model. As such, it is difficult to discern the impact of this bricolage between intersectionality and leadership.

Beyond the lack of a robust body of intellectual work utilizing bricolage within leadership, another limitation of this research approach is the absence of a traditional research methodology. There are no established procedural or design techniques for how to construct a

bricolage research design for leadership theory. As a protocol, bricolage eschewed the traditional methodological strategy in favor of an unconventional strategy to cull from a diverse array of intellectual materials. This strategy was intentional in order to create new and original ways of thinking about a specific subject. The challenge with this approach is the difficulty of discerning at what point one has established the appropriate procedural context and theoretical framework to study and analyze the subject of leadership sufficiently.

Another byproduct associated with this research design was determining which patterns and relationships bound certain bodies of thought together in a theoretical bricolage. Unlike a traditional methodology, bricolage utilizes key elements like reflexivity to examine the social position of the researcher and how it influences the focus of their respective research. Additionally, bricolage engages the construct of complexity by encouraging bricoleurs to seek knowledge from a variety of disciplines and then explore the connections, utilizing an interdisciplinary focus. This complexivist stance provides the bricoleur with the capacity to critique established patterns of knowledge production by examining how relationships in the social world influence what is epistemologically true. These elements, working in concert with one another, require a scholar to be comfortable working with the unfamiliar. The inherent challenges associated with this research design include the inability to reference a traditional schema to determine the viability of one's research or to engage the structure of conventional research procedures.

Recommendations for Future Research

This theoretical bricolage represents a new cognitive strategy to address how the intersectional nature of one's varied identities, both marginalized and privileged, could be more accurately reflected within the epistemology of leadership theory. This nexus between agency

and structure can empower historically marginalized leadership perspectives and highlight how the intersection of identity creates a pathway for both marginalized and privileged identity affiliations to mutually coexist sans hierarchy and value assignments. By providing a theoretical mechanism to resist and shift the dominant White male prototype epistemically, intersectional leadership theory represent a more inclusive and equitable epistemology.

This new theoretical approach could also provide additional complexity to the presumption that White men are solely situated in a dominant position, by virtue of their race and gender, and are unable to reference marginalized identity attributes. Integrating an intersectional lens into leadership theory could dispel this assumption by understanding how and in what ways marginalized aspects of identity intersect with the privilege afforded dominant identity affiliations. This level of complexity is warranted because empowering the disempowered is not sufficient to change the power dynamic which undergirds the production of knowledge. It also merits insight into the shaping of the dominant discourse and understanding why it persists in constructing an exclusionary narrative. Deconstructing the White male prototype, beyond race and gender, could provide additional insight into how their intersections compare to their non-dominant peers and illuminate the pathway for the development of new leadership prototypes.

Overall, the development of intersectional leadership theory could provide historically marginalized standpoints with the capability to construct additional narratives to fill in the other half of the leadership story. This empowered stance has the potential to generate the epistemic friction necessary to acquire a heightened level of meta-lucidity in terms of understanding leadership narratives. This level of meta-lucidity is driven to understand how intersectional identities, in concert with socio-historical context and social systems, need to be more accurately

framed within leadership theory. The resulting cognitive shifts would serve as an intellectual mechanism that utilizes epistemic resistance to reshape agency, challenge systemic social impediments, and ultimately alter the epistemology of leadership theory. In this regard, intersectional leadership theory can introduce an epistemology that more accurately reflects the experience of being a leader.

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