

WOMEN ARE BITCHES, MEN ARE LEADERS: HOW MEN AND  
WOMEN VARIED IN LEGISLATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN THE  
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<b>Abstract</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. Literature Review</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>II.1 Political Culture</i>	5
<i>II.2 Political Institutions</i>	7
<i>II.3 Representational Priorities</i>	10
<i>II.4 Societal Expectations</i>	12
<i>II.5 Psychological Effects</i>	14
<i>II.6 Behavioral Results</i>	16
<b>III. Expectations</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>IV. Research Design</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>V. Effectiveness</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>V.1 Effectiveness Explained by Numbers</i>	25
<i>V.2 Effectiveness Explained by Perception</i>	30
Opinions of Women vs. Opinions of Self: Perceptions of Confident Women	30
The Confidence Contradiction Continued	32
Gender Connecting with Legislating: The Male Story	34
The Institution Not Gender: Men on Confidence	35
<b>VI. Explaining How Women Are Different</b>	<b>40</b>
<i>VI.1 Recruitment</i>	41
Deciding to Run	42
The Invitation to Run	43
<i>VI.2 Socialization</i>	46
Family Background: Traditional vs. Non-Traditional	47
Socialized Personality Not Socialized Gender	50
<i>VI.3 Qualities in Legislating</i>	52
Women Are Better Consensus Builders	52
Legislating, Just Like Recruitment for Wome	53
<b>VII. Conclusion</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Appendix: Interview Questions</b>	<b>60</b>

## **Abstract**

If you don't have a seat at the table, you are probably on the menu. Many have said this before I have, but women will not be treated as equals to men until there are a greater number of women at the political table. This study tested legislative effectiveness through observing data from the Colorado General Assembly database. The data was then compared to differences in effectiveness, tested by conducting interviews with current state legislators. By conducting semi-structured interviews with Colorado state legislators, this study was able to investigate qualitative reasoning behind the gender gap in U.S. politics. Others have argued that lack of confidence leads to not only fewer female politicians, but also to the demise of their effectiveness once women are elected into office. This research disproves this notion and also exposes exciting new evidence of abstract reasoning behind the confidence dilemma in politics today. I define the confidence dilemma as the difference between perceived confidence and confidence in reality. This research suggests that women are in fact a lot more effective and confident than they give themselves credit for. Socialized norms clearly influence the way women legislate but when talking about oneself, neither confidence nor effectiveness of the female legislator is diminished. In contrast, the male subjects did not recognize these differences at the high levels that the female legislators did. The conclusions of this study show women's opinions do not adversely influence confidence levels or effectiveness as we originally believed, but rather raise confidence levels. This heightened confidence makes women more effective legislators.

## I. Introduction

*“Behavior in a man that is admired; oh he’s really proactive, she’s a bitch or he really gets after it, well she is out to get all of these people, and she’s a ball-breaker” (female legislator five).*

A leader is defined as someone who leads or commands a group. By definition, when male politicians are confident they are praised for being authoritative and a leader, but if a woman acts in the same way she is branded as bossy and dominating (Sandberg, 2013). This exists as the ultimate double standard in contemporary politics today. While men dominate the political scene,<sup>1</sup> women are fighting for a seat at the table. Additionally, when women are elected into public office they are branded as bitchy, regardless of how effective they are at the job. This outdated yet present idea that women are bitches and men are leaders, hits a critical question in this research, providing answers in explaining the disconnect between confidence levels and effectiveness of female state legislators in Colorado.

The question this paper investigates is, how does legislative effectiveness vary between male and female state legislators? I first argue that it is confidence that stipulates the greatest difference between men and women’s legislative effectiveness. However, my discovery turns out to be somewhat more abstract. By surveying central factors in the interviews: recruitment, socialization, qualities in effective legislating and confidence levels it is evident that confidence is not the answer to the puzzle. In general society thinks confident women are bitches and

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<sup>1</sup> Women continue to make gains in fields such as education and health, but remain significantly behind in representation in all levels of public office positions. Women are not only less likely to consider running for public office, but this leads to less women actually standing for elections, and in turn creating a perception that women are less qualified to hold a public office position than men (Fox & Lawless, 2014).

confident men are leaders, therefore it is this perceived confidence rather than confidence in reality, which causes these negative cultural norms to transpire.

As a result of my research, I hope to enlighten my readers with the often unmentioned but important idea of perception. I want to set the record straight that women are just as effective and confident legislators as men. By doing this, it will be easier to solve the political gender disparity problem in US politics today, and will help reach a future with a political body that is representative of both genders.

This paper will first give the reader a general background of current research and literature on women in politics. Next, it will discuss expectations pre-data collection and the research design that was executed. After examining the conclusions that were found, competing narratives will be introduced. These factors also explain how perceived confidence has formed and what it causes. Finally, once the qualitative data is surveyed and there is a better explanation of how men and women vary in legislative effectiveness, the implications will be discussed.

## **II. Literature Review**

From political institutions and representational priorities to behavioral and psychological barriers, the many sociocultural factors that are plaguing women in politics today are vast. In what follows, I outline some existing literature and research behind why men and women differ in politics today.

### **II.1 Political Culture**

Political culture is the set of beliefs and ideas that make up any given political process. In the United States, women legislators feel they have to be more like men to fit in with the current political culture. In 2003 in Florida, the state legislature passed a law called the “Scarlett Letter

Law,” making it a requirement for all mothers of children being given up for adoption to place ads to notify the father. The women legislators supporting the bill actually outnumbered the women legislators opposing the bill. Was this a result of the women’s real opinions of the bill or were they trying to fit in with their male counterparts? Or could this result possibly be attributed to women having a lack of confidence to stand up for what they believed in? The world will never know, but what we do know is that a woman being elected in to office does not always contribute to legislatures producing greater substantive differences for women (Osborn, 2012). There are two types of political efficacy, external and internal. Internal efficacy is the belief that an individual can understand politics and therefore participates. External efficacy is the belief that an individual is effective when participating in politics. Political culture could be a real factor in understanding external efficacy and the amount of women in state legislatures. Scholars have shown that women are more likely to seek elected office in a moralistic political culture (Atkeson & Carrillo, 2007). This type of culture has active citizens and a government working to benefit the state. Overall, a moralistic culture produces an electorate with greater feelings of external efficacy (Hill, 1981; Nechemias 1987).

In contrast, women are less likely to be elected in traditionalistic cultures, most likely because of the strong emphasis on maintaining the status quo, which does not include women (Atkeson & Carrillo, 2007). Louisiana for example has a very traditionalistic political culture, resulting in the state legislature being made up of only 12% women. Democratic states tend to be more moralistic, and generally have more women in office. If a state has greater external efficacy it instills that women have a better chance and are more accepted into politics. This in turn produces female candidates. Depending on the kind of political culture a state has, men and women have different attitudes about women’s roles (Fox & Lawless, 2014). This points to

political ideology, and the differences between liberals and conservatives. A more conservative political culture tends to be less accepting of women in politics. If this is the case, why did more women support the “Scarlett Letter Law” than go against it? We could find an explanation of this in the sole reason that Florida is a conservative state, and that the women who supported the bill were from the Republican Party, a party that represents conservative views, usually not complacent with women friendly policies. In the minds of the female state legislators, for these particular women to be reelected by their constituents they have to be true to their Party and not necessarily to women. Political culture across the US is also not conducive to women running for office in general. If women have a small amount of political efficacy they may not even run. Even though a woman may be in a moralistic state, socialized attitudes about women do not disappear. For example, there is no middle ground on the age spectrum for women. They either run for office before they have children or when their children are fully-grown (Carroll et al., 2009). The average age of a female state legislator is 50 years old, and this stands true in all 50 states. Unfortunately, no matter what kind of political culture a state stems from, women are still losing the race.

## **II.2 Political Institutions**

The institutions that make up state politics have a clear bias towards the party and not to the legislator. Existing literature suggests that the Party agenda outweighs the legislator’s agenda. At the end of the day regardless of a legislator’s gender, their main goal is to be reelected (Osborn, 2012; Caiazza, 2014). In the example of the “Scarlett Letter Law” a woman in the Republican party had to support the bill, in defense of holding her office seat, no matter if she agreed with the bill or not. Political Party structure and control is placing institutional constraints on women’s behavior regarding women’s issues. On the other hand, the Democratic Party

generally runs on platforms that consist of female friendly issues, thus acting as a positive for many Democratic women (Caiazza, 2007). Not only is the Democratic Party a large advocate for women in general there are more women Democrats than women Republicans. This has resulted in both men and women Democratic representatives pushing through a greater number of female friendly policies in state legislatures. It also has ensued female representatives more likely to be elected by Democratic voters and therefore pushing more female friendly policies when in office. With more women elected and the dominance of the Democratic Party, we see on average better policy for women.

Women's rights are often at the forefront of Democratic politician's agendas regardless if they are a man or woman. This produces a double-edged sword, especially for female Republicans. For instance, a Republican female may be pro-choice but because it is a Democratic issue and usually on many Democrat's platforms they will not take a stance on it due to losing votes among their Republican constituents. This applies to men as well, where they find themselves pressured to have to vote a certain way to maintain their political seat in office regardless of what their true opinion is on a particular issue. Another way how political institutions may hurt or help women legislators is whether they are part of the minority of majority party. Female legislative styles generally consist of more collaborative governing and consensus building than men. This serves women who are in the minority party well (Volden et al., 2013). By women exhibiting this legislative quality more than men, women in the minority party have an easier time reaching across the aisle to get things done with the majority.

The literature shows that more research needs to be done in this area, but it is telling that party can be a strong indicator of how effective a female legislator can or wants to be. Lastly, much of the literature in this area is in agreement that commissions, caucus's and NGO's are

important to women being elected and influence their effectiveness when in office as well. These kinds of institutions often perpetuate women's confidence to lead (Sandberg, 2013). In addition, some studies have found impacts of women's caucus's in state legislatures, and the results are promising. Women involved in caucuses are better able to push through female friendly legislation, actively representing the female electorate (Reingold, 1992). An understanding of representation is important when discussing women in politics. There are two types of representation; descriptive and substantive. Descriptive representation is the representation of women through electing women to public office and substantive representation refers to when representatives advocate for policies that represent women (Pitkin, 1967). In the California state legislature the women's caucus provides an example of the link between descriptive and substantive representation, showing how women represent women friendly policy two fold (Reingold, 1992). First, women were more likely to join a woman specific group when in elected into office, which shows their initial commitment to women's issues. Second, women were more likely to produce bills that had to do with women friendly policy such as healthcare and education. Then again, in some cases even as we see an increase of women in office, and also see a greater increase of legislative attention to female policy priorities, unfortunately this does not result in policy outcomes (Atkeson & Carrillo, 2007). Most research concludes that more women in office produce better representation of women's interests, but a conflicting study shows that this does not occur. Some argue if there are more women in office, a female legislator may feel less likely to feel the need to act for women. When looking at Arizona and California, we see a much higher percentage of female legislators in Arizona, but because of California's women's caucus and Democratic leaning state legislature, a greater number of women friendly policies are introduced in California than Arizona. Lastly, numbers of women in many state

legislatures don't even meet the critical threshold<sup>2</sup> of 15%, resulting in not having enough women to make a considerable affect in office, even if they were to form a woman's caucus. The critical threshold is simply a mark of having enough individuals to be effective as a mass.

### **II.3 Representational Priorities**

Overall, women legislators are attitudinally predisposed to represent their female constituent's concerns (Osborn, 2012). Women legislators hold commitment to women as a constituency group, and feel they are more uniquely qualified to handle concerns of women than men are. Furthermore, some researchers claim that increased levels of women state legislators do not result in more women friendly policy, but that it is purely coincidental (Caiazza, 2004). A reason for this could be that it is both men and women Democrats that are producing women friendly policy not just women. Representational priorities stand as an interesting topic to investigate the question of women representing women in the state legislature. Jeffrey Harden, lays out four dimensions of how legislators prioritize representation; descriptive, policy, service, and allocation. It is interesting that descriptive representation is a main form of how an individual can prioritize their representation, because in this particular research we don't see all women prioritizing this necessarily, even though it would make sense if they did. Women are better than men at listening and addressing problems of constituents through service rather than allocation, and we see this pattern among legislator's political relationship with the poor as well (Harden, 2013).

A legislator, male or female will often concentrate more on service if their constituents are poor and more with allocation if their constituents are wealthy. For example, someone who

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<sup>2</sup> Critical mass is also known as the 15% critical threshold. This is the percentage that is needed of a mass of people to be able to effect tangible change in a certain issue (Sandberg, 2013).

has less money may need help finding a lost social security check, or directions on how to register to vote, where the wealthy are more concerned with allocation funds for better roads or schools. (Harden, 2013). An intriguing conclusion from Harden's list experiment demonstrates that legislators emphasize that citizens in professional legislatures tend to use service and allocation more. Nevertheless, this contrasts with Reingold's study of women state legislators, with a conclusion that women tend to be elected in to less professionalized legislatures more often. If women are more effective legislators by using service to represent their constituents but less likely to be elected to professionalized legislatures, a disconnect is revealed. Thus, it is possible to conclude that it is more difficult for women to seem effective if they do not have the resources to aid constituents in the ways they want, and are skillful at. However, this component of legislative style can clearly be linked with the way someone is socialized. Women legislators place a higher priority on personal relations and helping others (Freeman & Richardson 1995). Women often focus on the public interest and pursuing civic goals, than allocating bulk sums of money (Diamond, 1997). Freeman and Richardson's analysis of women in four state legislatures conclude that women place an overwhelming focus on casework and direct constituency service.

“Women are more likely to support agendas that address traditional issues of concern to women, including health care, social services, women, family, and children's issues, and the environment. They are less likely to focus on taxes, budget matters, public safety, institutional regulation and matters of insurance or product liability” (Little et al., 2008, p. 29).

The wide variety of literature in this area, tells us that gender has significant impact on the work that legislators do and how they do it. Female political agendas are not only affected by gender but also constrained and highly affected by the institutional structure of government. This is

something crucial to be aware of, that it is not just gender at stake in the way's women represent women. Nevertheless, as a greater number of women are in office, more research will have to be done to see the effects and differences of gender on representation.

## **II.4 Societal Expectations**

Society expects. Society expects how we are supposed to dress, how we are supposed to act and the decisions we are supposed to make. We are socialized before we are even born, with parents buying pink outfits for girls and tractor toys for boys. Girls are taught to sit pretty while boys are taught to excel at sports. From birth to death, almost every aspect of our lives is socially constructed, even if we don't realize it. Patriarchy stems from the moment of conception, and it seeps into every aspect of life from that point on; especially politics. For instance, choice feminism is increasingly coming to the forefront of a woman's defense as to why she chooses to stay at home when she has children over continuing her career. Many women believe it is simply an issue of self-determination and free will that leads them to staying at home instead of furthering their careers, and it has little to nothing to do with the way they are socialized (Hirshman, 2006). Anti-choice feminists argue that it is embedded socialized norms that lead a woman's choice to stay at home, and this in turn perpetuates the social normativity of less women being in careers like business or politics.

The nature of female legislators begins partially to the way we are socialized and of what society expects from us (Volden et al., 2013). Literature discusses how women in politics have "feminized" the way they go about their political jobs. Women tend to be more passive individuals, and they generally silence themselves, pull back and collaborate quietly in the corner more than men. Some would say this is good and in many cases in politics it is, but female legislative strategies such as collaboration and consensus building have also hindered female

state legislators in many aspects of politics (Reingold, 1992 & Volden et al., 2013). In some cases it has established less respect from their male counterparts and from the media. It is important to note that a lot of the research on this matter points to the important notion that embedded patriarchal norms vary from state to state. For instance, a moralistic political culture has less patriarchy giving way to a greater number of female legislators. In contrast, a traditionalistic political culture often has less female representation in the legislature. A traditional society has greater ingrained social cues that women do not belong in politics where a moralistic society is more accepting of progressive ideas and policies (Atkeson & Carrillo, 2007).

The greatest societal expectation of women is to be a mother. Being a mother of children when in public office is a hot topic that is often brought up in today's media and much of the literature in this area. Feminism began nearly one hundred years ago, so it would only make sense to see an equal amount of women and men in elite workplaces like business, law and politics, in spite of this we do not. Law schools have been graduating classes made up of 40% female for decades, but in 2003 major law firms had only 16% female partners, according to the American Bar Association (Hirshman, 2006). We see an increasingly large number of educated and privileged women not pursuing a career after they are married and/or have children. Additionally, if a female politician has children, she is often questioned about the myth of doing it all. Where a male politician is applauded for having children, a female politician is questioned and sometimes looked down upon for it (Sandberg, 2013 & Reingold, 1992). For example, we rarely see a woman's children on her campaign sign for the fear that she would be ridiculed for taking time away from caring for her family (Carroll et al., 2009). There is also a massive leadership gap between men and women, where leadership in politics and business is expected of

men and optional for women (Kay & Shipman, 2014). It is important to recognize this and for there to be more research done in this capacity, so a greater number of individuals understand that societies expectations are inaccurate and unfair to the women aggregate.

Sheryl Sandberg, author of New York Times bestseller *Lean In*, includes a discourse around the social penalty that most women face in business and politics. There is the common assumption that raising children is the woman's job and this ultimately inhibits many females from even thinking about or running for political office. By internalizing social norms, all women are subject to feeling they have to meet societies expectations, especially in the political world. Women have not customarily sat at the political table, therefore societies expectations must change to accommodate the changing political landscape and make equal room for females. There is still a great need for more research to bring about further awareness in this area and hopefully invoke responsiveness and change in its readers.

## **II.5 Psychological Effects**

The psychological effects that women feel and experience because of entrenched patriarchy in today's society acts as the foundation of this research. Various scholars point to increased levels of self-doubt, fear and low self-confidence as major hindrances on women in politics (Kay & Shipman, 2014; Sandberg, 2013; Carroll et al., 2009). The psychological effects of societal expectations as a result of embedded patriarchal views have shaped the world we live in, and have put women on the backburner of politics. It is not that women can't win in politics once they run; it is that they aren't even trying. Women need extra encouragement from peers, colleagues and society to even consider running for office than men do (Carroll et al., 2009; Fox & Lawless, 2014s). In a study done at the Center for Women in American Politics one female legislator said, "We (women) are not really ones to just throw ourselves at something if we don't

think we can be successful at it.” This stems from the psychological effects of self doubt and fear that women often have too much of, and men have too little of. Sandberg argues that when pursuing a goal, women strive to be 100% confident and men only need to be 75% confident. For example, if a man and a woman of equal merit wanted the same promotion at a job, the woman would wait to ask her supervisor until she knew she was 100% confident she would get the job, and a man would ask when he thought he was 75% confident he would get the job. Because the man asked first, he is given the promotion. It is easy to see how women can get behind. Thus, the problem is two sided. Men tend to be overconfident and women are overly insecure (Sandberg, 2013). Furthermore, twice as many female state legislators than men (53% compared to 28%) are pure recruits. Men are habitually referred to as self-starters, those who make the initial decision to run for office out of their own will. In contrast, women generally need an extra push to run for public office (Carroll et al., 2009).

Some of the existing literature begins a discourse on women being perpetrators of sexism. Women need to get used to women leaders (Sandberg, 2013). Women are giving up their power before they even have any, and it becomes a psychological game with only women as the players. While men tend to overestimate their intelligence, women underestimate their confidence (Kling et al., 1999). By having a sustained lack of confidence, many women fulfill their own prophecy by producing fewer women in office and perpetuating the vicious cycle of women not representing women (Fox & Lawless, 2014). One study shows that women are more reluctant to claim they have strong support from a constituency group, even though the groups had stronger support for the women legislators than the men (Reingold, 1992). This perception of lack of support is a result of women’s high tendencies to feel highly undervalued. As a consequence, women often do not push their ideas as much as men, in fear of being rejected.

Women's self confidence is on average much lower than males, with external efficacy of female state legislators feeling the negative direct effects. Female legislators are less likely to believe that oneself is very effective, resulting in women holding back when they should be pressing forward. Again, this is a woman giving up her power before she even has any.

## **II.6 Behavioral Results**

Various scholars hit the nail right on the head, when they say women are overcompensating for a job that they are more than capable of doing (Carrol et al., 2009; Sandberg, 2013). Women have the life experience and policy perspective to not only represent women but also the entire electorate just as well if not better than their male counterparts. Women are more collaborative, resulting in minority party women reaching across the aisle more than men to get things done (Caiazza, 2004; Osborn, 2012). Some argue that when elected to the legislature, women create and pass more legislation aimed toward improving women's place in society (Osborn, 2012; Atkeson & Carrillo 2007). Other research shows that women's legislative effectiveness and style can hinder the path to significant law making (Volden et al., 2013). The combination of political culture, institutions, societal expectations and psychological effects all result in certain behavioral traits that are exhibited by many female state legislators. In what follows, I will survey behavioral results of women in politics that may shed light on what my research is all about.

The Tiara Syndrome constantly plagues women. This is when women think if they do a perfect job they will eventually be awarded a tiara, a promotion or for political sake an election (Sandberg, 2013). Unfortunately, for anyone this is not true. In many cases an individual is not awarded for doing a perfect job, they just have to have the confidence to keep going. Men have

an easier time doing this than women. If women are not told they did a good job, they think they are doing a bad one.

Women's relationships with constituents are at a much higher rate than males as well. For example, women's competency with compassion issues stands much higher than men's, with women focusing more on family-related issues and household tasks (Freeman & Richardson, 1995; Atkeson & Carrillo, 2007). In contrast, male legislators are more individualistic and competitive. Both male and female traits in politics can serve as both positive and negative attributes depending on the context of the issue or state, but because men have been outnumbering women for so long, the political world is used to the way men lead and therefore are more welcoming to it. Advocating for women's issues can often backfire, leaving women worse off than they were to begin with (Osborn, 2012). Women may be better at representing women than men, but because of a massive lack of confidence, fear of succeeding, and a double standard we don't see the tangible results as much as we should (Carroll et al., 2009) Because of the above traits shared by many women, the gender discount problem arises (Sandberg, 2013). Women are paying a professional penalty for the desire to be collaborative and collective. They are labeled as controlling, bitchy and bossy. They are judged at unfair standards and held to unreasonable expectations. They have to be soft like a woman but hard like a man to be taken seriously. This holds women back from doing the things that are beneficial to them and ultimately their constituents.

Even though women representation is on the rise, we continuously see patterns of descriptive representation not translating in to substantive results for the women electorate (Atkeson & Carrillo, 2007). On one hand, many scholars discuss the importance of descriptive representation in politics. They argue we need to concentrate on raising the actual numbers of

women in office before we start concerning ourselves with how women are actually representing their female constituents. Others argue, what is the point of numbers if they do not translate to more attention to female policy priorities. One study shows the significance of female state executives, and how female citizen's attitudes towards government responsiveness becomes more positive, regardless of what kind of job the woman legislator is doing in office (Atkeson & Carrillo, 2007). Conflicting literature argues that if more women voted than more women would be elected (Caiazza, 2008). Still, greater numbers of women vote than men so how can this be true? Even if there were more women in office, Beth Reingold says we should consider attitudes rather than behavior. Arizona has the second highest percentage of women in their state legislature, but less women friendly policy than most states. Some research claims that having greater numbers of women in office leads causes a legislator to less likely want to or feel they need to act for women. Therefore, even when a critical mass is met (15%), it may not necessarily correspond to positive changes in how female legislators govern.

There are a vast array of hypotheses of why women do the things they do, and reasons to why there is such a low representation of women in state politics even though we are one of the most progressive countries in the world. However, for the purpose of this research psychological and behavioral claims seem to be at the core of this mystery of American politics. For this reason, the research pulls out a greater understanding of confidence levels of female legislators and the effect it has on the job they do once elected into the state legislature. One thing is clear, by not even sitting at the political table, a woman is sending her meal back before she has even take a bite.

### III. Expectations

The question this paper investigates is, how does legislative effectiveness vary between male and female state legislators? The original hypothesis to answer this question is stated as follows:

*Women are less effective at legislating than men because of confidence levels. By testing for levels of confidence through qualitative data the mediating variable will be significant in regards to the effectiveness of state legislators.*

Confidence is the mediating variable in this study. This research tested a mediating variable rather than a moderating variable, because mediator variables explain how internal psychological reasoning causes external physical events. Additionally, a mediating variable explains a relation or casual link between other variables. What this research focuses on, are the reasons behind why women legislate the way they do. This research is proposing that the explanations behind female legislative effectiveness are psychological, and it is in this sense that we find a stark difference between men and women. What sets this research project apart from the many others on women in politics is that it explains how gender influences legislative effectiveness through a third variable. This third variable is confidence. It is important to investigate the significance of this relationship, because it will act as a stepping-stone to approaching the issue of gender inequality in current state legislatures across the United States. It is crucial to note, that gender inequality is not just in numbers but it can be in ideas as well. Once women become elected into public office inequality does not disappear. Explaining the ways in how women legislators are influenced by confidence levels can help us understand how effective they legislate.

The reasons behind lack of confidence stem from the entrenched patriarchy of which women have both directly and indirectly felt since the beginning of time. Self -doubt and fear are

at the root of this hindrance, and as a result women don't lead as effectively as they should or could (Kay & Shipman, 2014; Sandberg, 2013; Carroll et al., 2009). This research expected to find a strong relationship between self-confidence and legislating. I argue the way an individual feels about oneself is directly correlated to the way one acts. A legislator that is not confident about their ideas will be less likely to follow through on them and less likely to stand up for themselves (Sandberg, 2013). Ideas come in the forms of bills in the state legislature and if an individual cannot defend his or her bill with confidence than it will be more likely to die than turn into a law. Women repeatedly have too much fear and men not enough, which in the political world has faired well for many men and not so well for women. This research expected the same attitudinal framework to exist in the state legislature; with women acting in much lower levels of confidence than men. Simply stated, this study expected women to be less likely to lean in at the political table than men, resulting in being less effective legislators as their male colleagues. If women are less likely to be confident in the political world they will not only be less active state legislators, but also less effective. For purpose of this research, an effective legislator is someone who has a high percentage rate of passing bills and/or is in a leadership position.

Women and men learn behaviors depending on what gender they are. Boys are taught to be leaders and girls are taught to be pretty (Sandberg, 2013). If a woman is pushy and confident she is bitchy and bossy, but if she is quiet and reserved she is not taken seriously. In both scenarios, women are pushed to the bottom of the political totem pole. This double-edged sword creates consequences for women in regards to desire for power and personality when in the state legislature. The way women legislate begins and ends with the way women are socialized in present day society (Volden et al., 2014; Fox & Lawless, 2014). Women politicians are

feminized in ways that undercut their knowledge and ideas. Their looks, the way they speak and if they tear up or not is immediately attached to their gender. In 2008, America remembers when Hillary Clinton had her famous cry during her candidacy for President. So many various media, news and political outlets analyzed this; there was no telling how it would change her campaign. In contrast, men politicians rarely show emotion and when they do, it is automatically thought of as a very positive characteristic. If Hillary's tears were real or not we will never know, but it is a perfect example of why this research is so important. The psychology behind women politicians is a mystery that needs to be uncovered. It is crucial to show the American people the true political landscape that women state legislators live in. How women legislators feel about themselves and how this differs from men is a critical issue that needs to be observed. This in turn has a direct effect on the way women present not only themselves but also their opinions in the political world.

Some scholars claim, women's legislative style is dictated by political institutions, such as political party or committee (Volden et al., 2013; Osborn, 2012). Conflicting literature argues that women's political approaches are the answer to why women legislate differently than men (Freeman & Richardson 1995; Reingold, 1992). In this case, the competing hypothesis to this study would be that women are less effective at legislating than men because of institutional barriers. However, party is controlled in this research by holding political party constant across my sample. This was done by only conducting interviews with subjects from one political party. In effect, this was a simple way to control for a major institutional barrier of women that many political scientists argue is causing gender disparity in politics. In addition, this research's argument is that gender still comes before any institutional barrier that may affect a legislator's actions. The political institution alone was designed to favor men, with women not even allowed

to vote until the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment which was signed into law in 1920. Nearly ninety years later, women have control of only 20% of the US Congress, and only 24% of total state legislators are women across the United States. Hence, fewer women in political office lead to lower confidence levels in women. Therefore, it is our societies environment that must change in order to have higher numbers of women sitting at the political table. We are left with the chicken and the egg scenario; what came first political institutions or confidence? This research is purposing that in order for women to legislate effectively they need to hold the confidence to do so.

Without this, it does not matter if they are in a caucus or not, if they are in the majority party or not. Without confidence a woman would not even consider running for public office in the first place. It is a woman's confidence that is reflected in her personality that creates change in state legislatures. In turn, this paves the path to this researches hypothesis that confidence is at the root of how women legislate. In summary this research will explore female legislator's confidence levels and how this drives their behavior in state legislatures.

## **IV. Research Design**

The question this research is working to answer is, how does legislative effectiveness vary between male and female state legislators? To test this, I started with a model of legislative effectiveness explained by gender. Breaking this down by the major concepts involved in this theory, the dependent variable is legislative effectiveness and the independent variable is gender. Legislative effectiveness was measured by gathering data from the 2014 Colorado General Assembly database. I determined legislative effectiveness by comparing the number of bills introduced versus number of bills passed between men and women in the house and senate chambers during the 2014 legislative session. I also compared the current number of men and

women in leadership positions in both chambers. Rather than measuring why women vary on certain outcomes, this research looks at why we observe a *difference* in outcomes. This resulted in having three variables at play. The research question is therefore a second level question.

Where X is gender and Y is legislative effectiveness, there is a mediating variable in between X and Y, which I call Z. Z, served as confidence.

In terms of research design, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved this research as an exempt study before I conducted interviews. The decision to conduct interviews with lawmakers in the Colorado state legislature was the most effective way to conceptualize abstract differences between female and male state legislators. The interviews paired with the existing data from the Colorado General Assembly database was the most effective way to produce the highest quality of data in terms of representativeness, significance and generalizability. The reasons for not constructing a data set from scratch relied mostly on time and representativeness. Collecting first hand data would have allowed for more targeted questions to be asked, as well as the ability to concentrate on questions that have not been examined in existing survey. Then again, the data would have been much less generalizable and less representative given time constraints and lack of resources. Additionally, conducting my own experiment would have only produced a likely response rate of 10-15%, which for the purpose of drawing conclusions would not have been very effective. Furthermore, I believed that interviews were the most effective way to fill out current cases more qualitatively under the constraints I just discussed.

In summary, I tested for effectiveness by examining data from the Colorado General Assembly page, and tested for differences in effectiveness through responses collected from interviews from state legislators. The key-mediating variable of interest as already stated, was confidence. This is where data collection became less theoretical and more abstract. By

comparing the qualitative responses to the data collected from the Colorado General Assembly database, abstract results were produced which were useful in determining insightful differences between male and female legislators confidence levels. 55% of the Colorado state legislature is made up Democrats. By conducting ten interviews with Democrats, I was able to sample 18% of the Colorado state legislature democratic caucus. This is a fairly representative sample, justifying the overall representativeness of the qualitative responses I analyzed for this study. Additionally, interviews yielded psychological explanations related to the socialization of both men and women state legislators, at the lowest cost of \$0.

The study population was drawn from elected public officials that were currently serving in the Colorado state legislature. Because of time and constraints, the research was limited to only Colorado legislators. Potential participants were recruited via email, with an equal amount of Democrats and Republicans contacted. Only Democrats were responsive to the recruitment emails, resulting in an all-Democratic subject base. This serves as a constant in this study. I managed all communication to schedule the participation date, time and location of each interview with the potential subjects. There were ten subjects in total, five females and five males. This provided me with a diverse account of qualitative answers from both male and female legislators. Each subject was emailed the interview questions prior to the interview (see Appendix: Interview Questions). Some of the interviews were done in person at a neutral meeting location and some via phone. In each interview after developing rapport, the interview seemed to develop into more of a conversation, which I encouraged. This allowed for the expression of more frank opinions and perceptions. I recorded each interview with a voice recorder, in addition to taking notes. Largely, this form of acquiring data played an extraordinary role in providing an area of discourse for abstract answers to be found.

## **V. Effectiveness**

Legislative effectiveness was measured by analyzing data from the 2014 Colorado General Assembly database as well as conducting interviews with state legislators to produce qualitative data. The qualitative responses from the subjects were then compared to the effectiveness results levied from the Colorado General Assembly database. In what follows, I will discuss my results both numerically and critically.

### **V.1 Effectiveness Explained by Numbers**

I determined legislative effectiveness by comparing the number of bills introduced versus the number of bills passed between men and women in the house and senate chambers during the 2014 legislative session. I also compared the current number of men and women in leadership positions in both chambers. I then compared this data to the qualitative data from my interviews. The results were shocking. After conducting ten semi-structured interviews with Democratic representatives in the Colorado state legislature, it became clear that my original hypothesis did not have a clear trajectory. The data from the Colorado General Assembly database showed that in the 2014 legislative session, the women were far more effective legislators than men, via a higher percentage of bills passed and a greater number of women in leadership positions. What was so interesting was the female subjects had an overwhelmingly low morale about women in politics, but when talking about themselves they all stated that women are more effective legislators than men.

The question this study investigated was as follows, how does legislative effectiveness vary between male and female state legislators? It turns out there is not a distinct answer to this. From the evidence on levels of the dependent variable (effectiveness) by the dependent variable (gender) there was little difference between men and women's effectiveness among the ten

subjects in the study. In fact, all the subjects interviewed at high confidence levels as seen in their qualitative responses as well as showing similar effectiveness levels in the amount of bills they enacted. When looking at the small sample size of the ten subjects, the men on average enacted 5.8 more bills than the women subjects in the 2014 regular session. In other words the women subjects passed 53% of the bills they introduced and the men passed 58% of the bills they introduced. However, this is a very small sample and not representative of the entire Colorado state legislature. Therefore, I examined the data from the entire House and Senate to have a more representative sample size to compare to my qualitative interview responses. Thus, this data presented me with a strong, affirming argument that the women are just as, if not more effective legislators than the men.

**Table V.1 House Chamber (65 Members)**

Gender	Male (37)	Female (28)
Bills Introduced Total	486	399
Bills Enacted Total	270	231
Bills Introduced Average	13	14
Bills Enacted Average	7	8
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>58%</b>

**Table V.2 Senate Chamber** (35 Members)

Gender	Male (22)	Female (13)
Bills Introduced Total	491	339
Bills Enacted Total	267	211
Bills Introduced Average	26	22
Bills Enacted Average	16	12
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>62%</b>

**Table V.3 House & Senate Chambers** (100 Members)

Gender	Male (59)	Female (41)
Bills Introduced Total	977	738
Bills Enacted Total	537	442
Bills Introduced Average	17	18
Bills Enacted Average	9	11
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>61%</b>

Table V.1 and Table V.2 illustrate a break down of the total number of bills introduced and the total number of bills enacted separated into the House and Senate chambers in the 2014 Colorado legislative session. The 65 members in the Colorado House of Representatives are comprised of 37 males and 28 females. The 35 members in the Colorado Senate are comprised of 22 males and 13 females. There are a total of 100 members. In order to achieve a comparable measure between male and female legislators, effectiveness was derived from the number of bills

introduced and the number of bills enacted averaged by the total number of male or female legislators in each chamber.

By looking at the row titled 'Effectiveness' in each table, we can see that women are more effective than male legislators in both the House and Senate Chambers. These percentages were determined by averaging the number of bills introduced and the number of bills enacted by the total number of females or males in each chamber. Once this average was calculated I divided the average number of bills enacted by the average number of bills introduced to obtain the percentage of bills that were passed into law by each gender. For purpose of this research, I call this legislative effectiveness. In Table V.1 the males introduced 486 bills with 270 of them being passed into law.  $486 \div 37 = 13$  bills introduced per male legislator.  $270 \div 37 = 7$  bills passed into law per male legislator.  $7 \div 13 = 55\%$ . In other words, male representatives passed 55% of the bills they introduced into law. In conclusion, I produced six percentages showing how likely a bill was to be passed into law after it was introduced for both males and females. It is clear that in the 2014 legislative session the women were more effective at passing their bills into law than the men. In the House the females passed 58% of the bills they introduced and the males passed 55%. In the Senate the females passed 62% of the bills they introduced and the males passed 54%. Additionally, Table V.3 depicts the overall effectiveness of women versus men in the state legislature. The women were 8% more effective than the males in the 2014 legislative session. The women passed 61% of the bills they introduced while the men passed only 53%. This confirms that women were as effective, if not more effective than the male legislators in the 2014 Colorado state legislature.

**Table V.4 Leadership Positions (100 Members)**

Chamber	House	House	Senate	Senate
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female
Committee Leadership	40%	60%	45%	55%
Leadership Position	36%	63%	55%	45%

In regards to leadership positions in the House and Senate, women are in general in more leadership positions than men in both chambers. Committee leadership was measured by holding a position of chair or vice-chair on a committee. Leadership position was measured by being in leadership in a chamber. For example, the President of the Senate or Speaker of the House would be considered a leadership position. There are 22 committee leadership positions held by members in the House and 20 committee leadership positions held by members in the Senate. Table V.4 illustrates that 60% of the committee leadership positions held by representatives are females and only 40% are males. Similarly, 55% of the committee leadership positions held by Senators are females and 45% are males. When looking at leadership positions, there are a total of 11 leadership positions in the House and 9 leadership positions in the Senate. Females hold an overwhelming 63% of House leadership positions and males hold only 36%. The Senate leadership is the only entity that holds more males in leadership than females, with the Senate leadership being made up of 55% males and 45% females. Yet, when accounting for overall leadership in the House and Senate by looking at both committee leadership and leadership positions, women hold 55.7% of leadership positions and men only hold 44%. The overall amount of women in leadership in the 2014 Colorado state legislature is truly outstanding, and it

strengthens my argument even further that women are as if not more effective than men in the Colorado state legislature.

## **V.2 Effectiveness Explained by Perception**

In my original hypothesis, I predicted that women would be less effective than male legislators because of confidence levels. However, the data from the Colorado General Assembly database showed that women were in fact much more effective than their male counterparts. There had to be an explanation for my findings, so this is where I turn to the qualitative responses I derived from my subjects. This is information that could only be collected by conducting interviews, and cannot be shown by tables or graphs. As explained in the research design section, the following is not a suggestion of an unusual sample size, but an important insight into the representative sample of interviews that were conducted. Where I expected confidence to be the mediating variable explaining how men and women are different, another variable appeared to take its place, perception.

### **Opinions of Women vs. Opinions of Self: Perceptions of Confident Women**

Female legislator two stated that she has never experienced discouragement, but she thinks that other women do. When asked if gender connects with her job at legislating she answered, “there is a glass ceiling, where men are automatically assumed to be leaders, women have to convince people.” But again, she reinforces her original opinion that she has never personally experienced this. “I don’t think its confidence, but women do approach things differently.” If she does not think there is a difference in confidence between men and women, than her statement about the glass ceiling would not be accurate. If women had innate confidence they would not need people to convince them otherwise. The overarching consensus among the women subjects was that women think that other women are less confident and face greater

barriers than men, but when referring to themselves and their personal experience this appeared to be null.

When discussing women in general, all five female subjects talked about outside perceptions of confident women. Female legislator one said that women who are confident are thought of as “vicious and pushy.” She also stated that men can be aggressive and women cannot. In spite of this, when talking about how she legislates she said that conflict is the name of the game, and the reason she is so effective is because she is better at building consensus around the idea of bills than her male colleagues. In fact, “most women are,” she said. A sudden reluctance back to her original thinking appears by the end of the interview with the same legislator saying, “we have to be a lot more diplomatic to get our point across.” Female legislator four illustrates the contradiction at even greater lengths, as she states her perception of fellow women legislators as follows, “Women are a lot more cautious than men, but I am assertive.” When asked for an example of this, she said that people will follow your lead if it seems you know what you’re doing and that this is what she does as a legislator, but in general men are more likely to show this quality than women. Female legislator five stated, “In my generation, politics was a man’s occupation, so we (women) had to negotiate the terrain. Confident behavior in men is admired, and a woman is just a bitch.” She later went on to say that the essence in legislation is negotiation, and this is why the stars in the Colorado state legislature are the women. Even though she alluded that confident women are thought of as bitches, she had the highest confidence level out of all the subjects in the study. She did not think she was arrogant, she just simply stated she was confident and always had been. “I always knew I would run for office” (female legislator five). It was clear that in her eyes there are negative stereotypes of confident women in politics but they do not apply to her. Also, it is important to note her

emphasis on how much more effective the women leaders in the state legislature are than the men.

### **The Confidence Contradiction Continued**

Repeatedly, lack of confidence was an indirect consequence that the women experienced throughout their lives, and the men did not. Whether it was a negative experience produced by socialization, or having to work up to having enough assurance to stand for an election, confidence was always what was motivating or hindering the female subjects. For instance, all of the female subjects immediately made note of how confidence can hurt women and not hurt men when discussing qualities in legislating. When talking about getting bills passed, female legislator one stated, “Women have to be extremely cautious in not being a bitch.” When examining confidence more closely she added, “You can be elected, but if you don’t have confidence you can’t be a good legislator. There is no substitute for confidence.” So while women can’t have enough confidence in fear of being a bitch, they also need a lot of it to be an effective legislator. This seems like a double standard that the female legislator was not only putting on other female legislators, but herself.

In another double standard example, female legislator three said, “As women you don’t think you are smart enough or well versed enough. Women just don’t have the confidence from day one to run for public office.” Regardless of what this legislator thinks of women as an electorate, this legislator had enough confidence to run for office herself, and in her dialogue about her experience in college she stated that she was smarter than all of the boys. Remember, the data collected from the Colorado General Assembly database showed that women were much more effective than men in bills passed and leadership held. Thus, female legislator three was qualitatively backing up the database with out even knowing, but contradicting the database with

her negative opinions of women's effectiveness in general. Therefore, her perception of women's confidence is that many women don't believe they are smart enough to be involved in politics. However, to be in politics she said you need a high degree of confidence and that the negative stereotypes that she believes women hold do not actually apply to her. As a final nail in the coffin, female legislator four claimed,

“You are a better negotiator if you have confidence. There is a standard that if a woman is too assertive she is labeled as problematic. And for the man it's okay and it's just that he is a leader. Women are a lot more cautious in what they are saying, and more cautious about speaking up. But I am an assertive person.”

So, there you have it, a clear contradiction between her perception of women's confidence in general and a perception of her confidence individually. Four out of the five female subjects all made sure not to leave out that they personally assert confidence as a legislator, and that is why they are so effective. Then again, when speaking about the female electorate it was a common assumption that women generally lack a high degree of confidence, while men are automatically born with it. Another important factor to point out is when the female subjects spoke about being socialized and qualities that are important in legislating, the notion that women are better negotiators than men frequently came up. If this were true, than the statement above would not be compliant with the general idea that women are less confident than men. How can women be better negotiators than men but have less confidence, if negotiation requires confidence? The female subjects arguments repeatedly went like this; to be effective, one has to exert a lot of confidence, but women are socialized to have less confidence, but as a female legislator I have a lot of confidence. This is an extremely contradictive argument, yet it illustrates the perception of confidence versus the reality of it.

This presents us with a grappling and contradictive question of female legislators. On one hand they are constantly questioning women's ability to be effective and the perceived notion that women are less confident than men. Then again, in reality every female legislator stated that they are in fact very confident and not just as effective as men but more effective than men. Not only do all five subjects strongly agree that confidence is a greater hindrance on women than it is on men, but they contradict these thoughts in their own actions as legislators. Every female subject said they think that women are better consensus builders, and therefore more effective legislators, but they also claimed that their female colleagues experience the confidence dilemma. Is it pure coincidence that all five female legislators had the same reactions to the question of confidence in the way women legislate, or could the five women be the only confident women in the Colorado state legislature? We turn to the male legislator's responses to dig a little deeper at this question.

### **Gender Connecting with Legislating: The Male Story**

The female subject responses in regards to confidence in effectiveness of legislating have solidified two things; strong opinions of negative connotations of women's confidence levels and that gender strongly connects with the way women legislate. However, all five women subjects claimed they have broken these stereotypes and are in fact very confident, effective legislators. All five female subjects stated that women in general are more effective at getting things done than men. In contrast to the women, four out of the five male subjects had a distinctly different view of both confidence levels and how gender connects with legislating. Where the women had an overall consensus that there were drastically large differences between men and women in the state legislature, the men subjects overwhelmingly said there was no difference between genders in confidence levels. Additionally, overall the men had very little to say in consideration of a

gender difference in the way men and women legislate. Below are examples of three out of the five male subjects' very brief responses to the following questions: *How do you feel your gender connects with your job in the state legislature? What barriers do you feel you encounter, and is there a difference between genders of the barriers you face?*

Male legislator two response: "Barriers are the same for both men and women in regards to legislating."

Male legislator three response: "I don't think there are any barriers that women face that I don't."

Male legislator four response: "I don't think gender connects to the job."

This shows a very tangible difference between the male and female subjects. Where the women all gave very long breathered answers to the questions, the men simply answered in one sentence or less (as seen above). Clearly gender differences in confidence levels and effectiveness between men and women are a lot less prevalent in the eyes of men. As we see this wide gap between overall perceptions of men versus women diverge, the opinions ultimately switch when asked what happens in reality. When talking about women in general, the female subjects believed that confidence was low, but when talking about themselves they believed they had high levels of confidence. Furthermore, all the female subjects attributed their high confidence levels to their gender. Being undervalued because of their gender motivated them to break negative stereotypes and in turn made them more effective legislators.

### **The Institution Not Gender: Men on Confidence**

Women saw their gender as a motivating factor in being confident and therefore effective legislators. In contrast, the men did not see gender as being a large factor in confidence or effectiveness. All the men subjects agreed that consensus building is the goal in being effective legislators, but that there is no stark difference between genders when trying to build coalitions

in getting bills passed. Male legislator one said, “Don’t wait to be invited to the table, just pull up a chair up. I have not had to pull up a chair, because a lot of times I’ve been given a chair.”

When I asked if he thought this connected with his gender, he said he hoped it was because of his expertise but he didn’t know. He said that task forces are overwhelmingly male dominated, and he believes it is because most heads of organizations are men and therefore they bring together more men than women perpetuating the problem that politics is a man’s world. This somewhat agrees with many of the perceptions that the female legislators discussed, but this male legislator talks about how it is an institutional barrier and not a confidence problem. Being invited to be on a task force has nothing to do with an individual’s confidence.

Male legislator two also gave an example of effectiveness being an institutional problem and not a psychological one. In regards to getting bills passed he said, “Being in the majority helps, not gender.” He did not think there were any barriers that women faced that men did not in the legislature. Male legislator five added, “I would submit that the barriers in the Democratic caucus are less than the Republican caucus for women.” This agrees with existing literature that argues that party agenda outweighs legislators’ agenda, and that gender can have very little to do with effectiveness of politicians (Osborn, 2012; Caiazza, 2008). This reveals that a difference in political ideologies could account for different barriers among women, and that this attributes to effectiveness differences, not necessarily gender in general. Interviews were only conducted with Democrats, so therefore every one of the subjects is in the majority party, yet only the men brought up this observation. Four out of the five male legislators said they did not think their gender connected with their legislating in a large capacity. I argue that this is simply because men are less attached to their gender than women. Women see themselves as women legislators, where men see themselves as just legislators. “I don’t think gender has any bearing on how

successful that a bill may be,” stated male legislator five. This argument is conclusive with the overall male opinion of men versus women in the legislature. Women have high degrees of attachment to their gender in terms of legislating, and men have very low degrees of attachment to their gender. Women believe their gender helps and hurts them when legislating, while men believe it makes no difference. Men believe the qualities that make up an effective legislator exist across the entire spectrum of legislators, and women believe that when they are effective, it is for reasons that attach to their gender.

Additionally, all of the male subjects spoke of their confidence pertaining to the getting bills passed rather than general confidence pertaining to ones self. This was fascinating because when the men were originally asked about qualities in legislating they did not talk about confidence as much as women. All five subjects said it was important, but they did not expand on how it matters in getting bills passed like the women did in their responses. It was not until they were specifically asked about their confidence in general when they indicated that confidence directly pertained to getting bills passed. I argue that this is because of the perception of confidence between men and women. We see confidence as a socialized norm that comes more natural to men than women. Most of the male subjects most likely have not thought about their level of confidence as great of a level than the women subjects have throughout their lives. From the responses throughout the interviews, it was clear that women continuously dealt with the conceptualized notion that women are less confident than men. My original hypothesis was that confidence is the reason why men and women differ in legislative effectiveness, yet my results show a more complex reason. It is now clear that it is the perception of confidence that differs between men and women not confidence in reality.

**Table V.5 General Questions**

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5
	Confidence in yourself	Confidence in work	Effective at legislating	Gender affect legislating	Constituent support
Female	7.3	8.4	8.6	8.2	7.6
Male	8.1	8.7	8.2	4.3	6.92

The subjects were asked the series of questions below, which they answered on a scale of 1-10.

Table V.5 (above) depicts the averaged responses of the ten subjects separated by gender.\

Question 1: On a scale of 1-10 how confident in yourself would you say you are?

Question 2: On a scale of 1-10 how confident in your work would you say you are?

Question 3: On a scale of 1-10 how effective do you think you are at legislating?

Question 4: On a scale of 1-10 how much does your gender affect the way you legislate?

Question 5: On a scale of 1-10 how much do your constituents support you?

If it were actual confidence levels that quantified the difference in legislative effectiveness, women would be less confident than men resulting in being less effective legislators, in turn passing less laws. However, as the data has shown this is not the case. In Table V.5 all of the subjects show high levels of confidence in their responses that pertained particularly to confidence. Question #1 and #2 show that both genders have generally high confidence in themselves and in their work. The men show a slight increase in confidence levels in both categories, but it is not a large enough effect to be deemed significant. Question #3 shows a higher confidence among women in legislative effectiveness, but again there is not a large

enough effect size to call it significant. Even though the differences are small between the men and women legislators for questions #1-3, the small variance in the data does suggest something. As we know from the findings of effectiveness, men produced fewer bills on average and were in fewer leadership positions. However, their confidence levels produced in the short survey suggested that men and women were virtually equal in confidence and effectiveness levels. This demonstrates that men may be overconfident in themselves. Question #5 is interesting, because it competes with existing research. Scholars argue that women perceive to have lower support from their constituents than men do. Yet, the responses suggest the opposite, with the female subjects producing a higher average of how much they think their constituents support them. Again, the effect size is small enough where this data is not very significant, but I believe the minor variances do deserve a small explanation.

The only column, which shows any statistic significance, is question #4: *On a scale of 1-10 how much does your gender affect the way you legislate?* This is a question that reveals the clear difference of perception between genders. While we already know that women in the 2014 Colorado state legislature are just as effective as men in passing laws and taking leadership positions, they still think that their gender influences the way they legislate 52% more than it does for men. When we piece together this statistic with the quantitative responses given, we can assume that when the women say that gender influences the way they legislate, they mean it affects the way they came to the legislature, the way they approach getting bills passed or their overall confidence. Yet, we do not know whether the subjects were thinking of positive or negative influences due to gender, because the interview responses reveal contradictory responses. While the women subjects thought that women are less confident and face greater barriers than men, when referring to themselves and their personal experiences they appeared to

be the exception. Thus, it is hard to assume whether question #4 reveals opinions of negative influences of gender or positive influences of gender that affect legislating for the female subjects. One thing is clear, the very large effect size between the male and female subjects show a clear difference of perception of gender between genders. It is this exact perception that leads to the variances in legislating between men and women that this research set out to investigate.

While the women subjects thought that women are less confident and face greater barriers than men, when referring to themselves and their personal experiences they appeared to be the exception. All of the responses from the female subjects have something in common; strong opinions of gender differences. In contrast, the male subjects did not offer any comparably strong opinions on the subject of gender. As a result, this research reveals a contradictory question of female legislators. On one hand the female subjects are questioning women's ability to be effective and the perceived notion that women are less confident than men. Still, in reality every female legislator stated that they are in fact very confident and not just as effective as men but more effective than men. Not only do all five female subjects strongly agree that confidence is a greater hindrance on women than it is on men, but they contradict these thoughts in their own actions as legislators.

## **VI. Explaining How Women Are Different**

This research sought out to find how men and women vary in legislative effectiveness. The original hypothesis that confidence drives effectiveness differences was not completely wrong. Instead an abstract finding of perceived confidence was discovered. In this study, I have found that women perceive other women differently than they way they perceive themselves.

What is most intriguing about this is that the women subjects seemed to hold themselves to a higher standard than their overall opinions of the female aggregate. There are two sides to this story. When discussing women politicians in general, women perceive women as less effective because of socio-cultural factors. However, when talking about themselves they see women as being more effective than men because of the socio-cultural factors they discussed previously. This produces the idea of perception versus reality. In reality women are equally if not more effective than their male counterparts. Thus, women perceive themselves and each other through a gender sensitive lens, viewing themselves first as women and second as legislators, where the men see themselves as just legislators.

There is a clear difference here, so how is this perception of confidence caused? In what follows, I will survey additional findings of the study through three key factors; recruitment, socialization and qualities in legislating. I believe these are both competing narratives to the story of perceived confidence, as well as causes of the confidence dilemma. Influences like deciding whether to run for office or an individual's upbringing creates women's self-perception and in turn overall perception of women within the political world.

## **VI.1 Recruitment**

A pure recruit is someone who is asked to run for an election, where a self-starter is someone who decides on his or her own to run. Data has shown that women are more likely to be pure recruits than self-starters in their path to politics (Carrol et al., 2009; Sandberg, 2013). Self-doubt and self prejudice act as driving forces that keep women from leaning in to the political table. For women, a sense of fear from a lack of confidence often becomes the root of barriers for women in the political world. It takes a lot more encouragement for a woman to decide to run for office than it does a man, and my interviews proved this to be correct.

## **Deciding to Run**

In response to whether the subject considered himself or herself a pure recruit or self-starter, only one out of five male subjects said he was a pure recruit. When discussing one's path to the legislature, all five male subjects clearly stated they thought they could make a difference in politics, and this is why they decided to run for office. Male legislator two stated, "I thought there were some things I could do that could help the state." Male legislator five made a similar statement saying, "I had a commitment to invoking change." The most interesting of all was a response from male legislator four, expressing that politics was a calling to him. "It's just who I am I guess." All of the male subjects spoke of a strong passion and desire to make a difference, which fueled them to run for office. The saying that people can be called to the life of teaching or politics is commonly known. However, could it be that more men are called to the life of politics than women? I most certainly hope not, and I believe that it is the life of politics, which has been socialized to match the ideal male gendered life, leaving women out of the game all together.

In contrast, the female subjects did not express this as vividly. The female subjects mostly focused on how difficult it was to decide to run for office, instead of the reasons of why they wanted to run for office, like the male subjects voiced. The male subjects all claimed they decided to run because of the difference they thought they could make, not necessarily because they thought they were prepared to do so. It is not that the women have less of a desire to make a difference than men, but their decision for running was determined on if they had the skills to be a legislator, and not if they wanted to be. Where the male subjects made note of the change they could invoke while being a legislator, female subjects talked about the skills they had to do the job. For instance, female legislator two talked about her "neurotic path to the legislature." This included meeting with "everyone she could possibly meet with" and running focus groups on

what people wanted out of their legislator in the her district before she even filed to run. It wasn't until people were saying, "You mean you havn't filed yet?" when she filed the paperwork to run for office because she felt extremely prepared to do so. Female legislator four majored in government in college, was a practicing attorney for more than a decade and was on city council for four years before she decided to run for public office. "It was city council, which finally gave me the confidence to see myself as a viable candidate." In both scenarios the female subjects waited until they were absolutely positive they had the skills and experience to run, before they declared

### **The Invitation to Run**

The female subjects overwhelmingly stated they were pure recruits rather than self-starters. Therefore, it was no surprise when they mentioned being invited to run as an important factor in their path to the legislature. Female legislator three stated, "I was invited to party meetings, and was finally convinced to run because there was no one else interested." This was especially interesting, because if it were not for being invited to party meetings, this legislator would have most likely never declared to run for public office. It was not until further into the interview when she expressed the desire to help people as being a proponent to be in office. In addition, two of the female subjects spoke of the White House Project<sup>3</sup>, and how they participated in leadership classes and conferences. The philosophy they learned was women need to be invited to run, where men just wake up one day and decide to. In turn, the White House Project seeks out and invites women to run for office. As a result, two of the female subjects said

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<sup>3</sup> The White House Project was an American non-profit organization, which worked to increase female representation in United States government. The organization focused on leadership and campaign training to advocate for more women to run for public office.

their decision to run was partly due because of pressure from this particular organization, and leadership classes they were a part of.

Four out of the five female subjects claimed they were pure recruits, while only one out of the five male subjects did. The women who said they were pure recruits were 100% confident they were not right for public office before someone told them they were. Female legislator one said, “It had not occurred to me to do this, until a couple of my friends told me I should.” She then explained that originally she was a pure recruit, and would have never run for office if no one had put the idea in her head, but as soon as it was there she liked the idea, and therefore eventually declared to run. All five of the female subjects had a long background in politics. Female legislator two explained her vast experience as a precinct leader, house district chair and Party leader, but then stated, “I never thought I would get involved with politics myself, that was never my intention.” Female legislator three contacted the Democratic Party and said she wanted to work on a particular issue that she cared about, but when someone asked her to run her first response was “no, it’s not for me, but I will help search for a candidate.” Both women had to be convinced to run, even though they had the qualifications and backgrounds to do so.

When asked what qualifications someone needs to run for office, a majority of the female subjects responded with experience in the party or a background in government. All of the women subjects fit this description, so why was it so much harder to come to a decision to run than it was for the male subjects? One answer to this could be an interesting pattern that arose in the interviews. All the women discussed the importance of talking about the idea of running before actually declaring to run. Female legislator two stated, “the more you talk about it, the more you are comfortable with the idea.” Female legislator four had a similar experience when she was contemplating on running for office as well. “People were asking if I was interested, and

I was, but I hadn't vocalized it out loud before." This brings us to socialization without recognition. Because women internalize their gender, and are socialized to the ideology of what certain genders do and don't do, deciding to run for office was in fact an internal socialized barrier these women had to overcome without even realizing it. In addition, the idea that women need to be invited to run continuously kept coming up in the interviews. The one female subject who said she was a self-starter, commented that many women don't run because of a complex confidence issue "that is difficult to figure out." She explained that this is why women need to be asked to run more than men do. Interestingly enough, this answer was the most correct. Even though this one subject was able to overcome the internalized barrier a lot easier than the other four subjects, she still recognized that she was unique to most other female politicians. "I am a little bit unique in that way. Other women were challenged a lot more than me."

To an extent, recruitment confirms what others have found in terms of women being more cautious about entering an election and the importance of women in recruitment for public office. The lack of women in political office stands as a strong competing narrative to perception. Yet, what I argue is the roots of recruitment are also in levels of perceived confidence. By women perceiving other women as less confident, it instills the idea in an individual that because she is a woman she automatically has a low level of confidence. Thus, women face a larger psychological barrier of confidence than men. It is expected that more men than women are confident and want to run for public office, therefore it is harder for women to overcome this perceived socialized norm. If it were more obvious to the female subjects that females were more effective than men in the Colorado state legislature, it most likely would have been easier for them to acknowledge the idea of running in the first place, instead of questioning if they were smart enough to do so. The confidence story is quite obvious in the qualitative

responses about recruitment. However, I still argue that perception is the key difference between men and women legislators. In regards to recruitment perceived confidence levels of others manifest confidence in reality, resulting in men being self-starters and women being pure recruits.

## **VI.2 Socialization**

I had a purple jumpsuit with polka dots in my room before I had even taken my first breath in the world. My stuffed animals were outfitted in dresses while my brother's stuffed animals had fire fighter overalls on. We are socialized before we are born, and in turn we internalize society's expectations without realizing it (Volden et al., 2013). Our mother's are assumed to raise children at home, while our father's are outside of the house in the work force. This perpetuates a lack of confidence, self-silencing, and pulling back of women. The women who work and have children are questioned on how they do it all, while men are praised for it. As seen in the literature, all of the above adds to the leadership ambition gap, resulting in the expectation of men to be in politics and the option for women to be (Sandberg, 2013). The subjects were asked, in what ways were you or weren't you socialized to match your gender; and how do you think this has affected the way you legislate? The answers unmistakably line up with literature that has been written on how women and men internalize socialized gendered norms, in turn contributing to trends we see in present day politics. Women are bitchy and men are leaders, is a stereotype that is produced from the way men and women are socialized from birth. I see socialization as not a competing narrative to perceived confidence but a cause of the negative perceptions of women that are instilled in all of us from a young age.

## **Family Background: Traditional vs. Non-Traditional**

All of the subjects both men and women came from various backgrounds. Some came from traditional families, where others did not. Whether or not a female subject was from a traditional or non-traditional upbringing, it was their memory of negative experiences throughout their life, which motivated them to overcome what they said society had socialized them to be. When I say traditional family, I mean a family in which a patriarchal structure is in place. This is where the men are at work, and the women are in the home. Socialization is a complicated yet simple notion, where women and men are taught to act a certain way indicative to their gender. Females are meant to be passive, quiet, and keep to themselves where men are meant to be active, loud and leaders.

Female legislator one was one of the subjects who grew up in a non-traditional family. Her mother was a strong feminist, and she insisted that she be the same way. Her mother never let her give up, no matter what she was doing in her life. Even with this background, she experienced a lot of challenges with being a female leader. "I have been called vicious and pushy, and you become very sensitive to that." Even with a strong female figure in her life, the legislator attributed to the way she feels in politics to how women have operated in society for years. "We have to be a lot more diplomatic to get our point across." She talked about how she had to learn to not be overly aggressive. "If you are overly aggressive you turn everybody off. Men can do it and get away with it, but a woman can't. This is because of the way we are socialized." Like female legislator one, female legislator five also grew up in a non-traditional family and attributed being socialized in to being a leader by her mother. Her parents were divorced resulting in her mother primarily raising her. "My mother would read to me every night, and bring me to the library every Saturday." Because her father was wealthy and her

mother was not, she understood wealth and power at a very young age. She claimed that it was this realization of the reality of politics during her childhood that motivated her to be involved later on in her life. She also said that while being raised by her mother she was never told she was not good enough. “I never really lost. I never have come in second.” She claimed that this was because of the way she was socialized. “I was socialized to be the best and the smartest.” Some would argue this would be a counter argument to my original claim. Worthy of note, before the interview was over, the subject interjected with the following, “My mom taught me don’t be too smart in front of the boys because you will make them feel inefficient. Not that you shouldn’t try to do things, but don’t make a big deal out of it. Don’t show off.” Even though female legislator five always had the highest score in everything, her mother who was pushing for her to be the best still told her to lean back in front of the boys.

In comparison, female legislator two described her experience growing up in a very traditional and patriarchal family. She had four brothers who worked construction with her father, while she stayed at home and cleaned the house. “It made me stronger, but at the same time I never saw myself as a natural leader, it did not naturally come to me.” Growing up in a traditional family taught her to carve out the reasonable path, and she attributes these skills to being helpful in being a legislator today. Before becoming a legislator, she was a teacher and a social worker. “Traditional female careers built on consensus building were helpful because that is what I do as a legislator.” I would argue that the way she was raised both helped and hindered her later in her life. While growing up in a patriarchal household motivated her to be stronger it also socialized her to think she belonged in the home, while her brothers were taught from a young age to be in the work force like their father. This could be the reason why she was called

her self “neurotic” when deciding to run for office. She made sure she was 110% prepared to run before she declared.

Another example of a varied upbringing was female legislator three's educational background. She attended an all girls' catholic high school and it was there where she first became aware of the power of women. Instead of being known as a girl, during high school you had to be known for something else because everyone was a girl. This motivated her to compete intellectually with her peers, not because of her gender but because of her intellect. After high school, she was part of the first class of women at a previously all men's university. “This experience solidified my belief in my power as a woman.” She said the boys did everything they could to drive the girls off campus. She was repeatedly accused of only being at college to receive a “Mrs.” Degree, or in other words accused of looking for a husband and not for an education. As a result, she was motivated to prove them wrong. “I was determined to do better than all the boys, and I did ” (female legislator three). This example introduces the issue of men being socialized to look down upon women, in turn socializing women to accept being looked down upon. The way this legislator's male college peers were socialized to think that it was only boys who deserved an education that motivated this legislator to prove them wrong. “The fact that I was able to compete on an intellectual level with my male counterparts, and be better than them was empowering.”

Regardless of the type of family a female legislator was brought up in, the world socialized them to be in gendered roles. Whether this was to stay at home and clean or to not show off in front of the boys, all five female subjects suggested at least one hindrance growing up that pointed them towards the socialized travelled path for women, rather than the political path hardly travelled at all by women. However, these experiences were all recognized later on

in their lives, as motivators to be the opposite of what they had been socialized to be.

Additionally, the female subjects who had a positive influence in their lives, such as a feminist mother pushing them to be the opposite of gendered norms, still recognized how this was out of the ordinary of how women were supposed to be in the world.

In contrast, the male subjects all recognized the privilege they have as a male. Male legislator one stated, “I am an automatic recipient of privilege because of who I am.” This subject is a heterosexual, white, male, and because of these traits he has recognized the privilege he had when being socialized growing up in society. Male legislator three even attributed his speaking skills to being a male. “I am looked at differently when public speaking because of my gender.” This question was interesting, because compared to the women all five male subjects had very little to say in response to being socialized to match their gender.

Effectiveness explained by the interview responses suggests that gender is a lot more salient to women legislators than men. As the research has suggested, men in general do not think that there are gender differences to legislating, but in this section we see men acknowledging gender differences in upbringing. If men recognize a difference in gender when it comes to socialization, it would only make sense for them to also recognize gender in legislating. This is an interesting disconnect that the male subjects presented.

### **Socialized Personality Not Socialized Gender**

Two of the male subjects believed it is their personalities that make them a strong leader and not their gender. Male legislator two compared personality traits versus gender, and that the personality traits that women are socialized to have he believes he has too. He said that his personality reflects the same characteristics that are seen in women leaders, such as wanting to know everything about a topic before speaking up or wanting to know everything about a

position before applying for it. When asked what difference in the way he was socialized varies from women he responded, “I don’t think (socialization) is specific to women alone, but specific to a type of personality.” Male legislator five also attributed the way he was socialized to producing qualities that are often seen in women. “There is a side of me that comes from how I was socialized, that are qualities that women have” (male legislator five). He lists these qualities as the ability to listen more, sensitivity and being empathetic. This does not add up. If these men exhibit feminine qualities in legislating as they say they do, why weren’t they as effective in passing laws and holding leadership roles as the women? I argue that these male legislators made these statements because they feel they do not live up to the traditional stereotypes of being competitive and aggressive men. However true this may be, they still were not as effective at legislating than the women.

This section provides us with a strong competing argument with perception. The female subjects did not seem to be socialized to be quiet and passive, but rather they were socialized to be leaders. Despite negative norms of women, the female subjects were able to overcome these norms and in turn, it influenced them to some extent to run for office. Encouraging households and personality traits seem to be the telling tale of how an individual’s socialization influences their decision to be involved in politics. Men are perceived as automatically having more confidence than women. Thus, the female subjects had to work harder to overcome these perceptions, to have the same amount of confidence as their male counterparts. I argue that this belief sits a lot more heavily with female subjects than it does for males and this is why we see the males having less to say about gender. Additionally, perceived confidence of men and women is part and parcel of why men are socialized to be masculine and women are socialized to

be feminine. So again, socialization like recruitment stands as a cause of the confidence dilemma and not just a competing explanation of legislator effectiveness.

### **VI.3 Qualities in Legislating**

Consensus building is arguably a quality in legislating that is central to women. In this section, I will discuss the responses given in regards to the qualities that make a legislator most effective and the differences that emerged between the male and female subjects.

#### **Women Are Better Consensus Builders**

All ten subjects said they were consensus builders. Many of the subjects attributed being a strong coalition builder to being a good listener, and having an open mind. Therefore, showing characteristics of compromise was essential in building coalitions in the state legislature. It was also revealed that women not only saw themselves as better consensus builders than men but that they engaged in consensus building more as well. Female legislator one's response to how she builds coalitions was proof of this, "I start off with a goal of bringing people to agreement and finding common ground, and I think women do this a lot better than men." When talking about being successful in passing bills she credited not only building consensus around the idea of the bill but also building consensus with the people she needed to pass the bill. She does this by going from person to person, and knowing all aspects of the bill in detail. Another female subject attributed her ability to build consensus to knowing which stakeholders to pull together, and her aptitude to examine all the evidence involved in a bill. Furthermore, one female legislator said that she responds to every single one of her constituents within 24 hours, so she has a detailed knowledge of her districts preferences. All of the female subjects credited their ability to build consensus and do it better than men to a combination of skills that make up effective coalition

building. Additionally, for all the women, building consensus was the most important quality in legislating.

Like the women, the men also said consensus building is an important quality in being an effective legislator, but that it is not essential in getting bills passed. This is the first noticeable divergence between the men and women legislators. All the subjects' thought consensus building was an imperative quality. The female subjects said it was the most vital quality in being effective, and the men said it was important but not central in being an effective legislator. Male legislator one concluded, "consensus building is the goal, but I won't sacrifice my ethics to do it." Male legislator two added, "I am probably not as good of a consensus builder as I should be. It is a necessity, but being in the majority helps." Again, we see the notion of institutional barriers come up for the men, but not at all for the women. I argue that the women hold such a large perception of how they should legislate, that this automatically transfers to their every day actions in the legislature. In their case, this ends up being a positive characteristic, seeing that the women were 3% more effective in getting their bills passed in the House and 8% more effective in getting their bills passed in the Senate during the 2014 session (see Table V.1 & V.2).

### **Legislating, Just Like Recruitment for Women**

For women there is a parallel between the decision of running for office and the decision to propose a bill when in office. Female legislator five makes this argument when she said, "Doing that kind of nitty, gritty, every day work to make sure the bill is right, is from women's socialization. They are socialized in more of that direction, to be perfect." In general, the female subjects were 110% prepared to run for office before they did. Just like recruitment, the women know 110% of the facts and knowledge of a bill to get it passed before they even propose it. Female legislator three said, "Qualities should be the same between men and women but they

aren't. Men are born to believe they can lead, and women need to be convinced." It is easy to conclude that women need to convince themselves they can pass a bill before they even propose it. Where as men often have an easier time proposing something without having to know all of the details. Traditionally argued as a gender difference, the interview responses tie in with relevant literature that women are over-prepared to combat lower confidence levels where men are under prepared because they are over-confident (Reingold, 1992; Sandberg, 2013). Male legislator three argued, "People who are focused on the minute details have a difficulty in explaining what it is and why it is important. Saying why it matters is when people are most effective." Even though he was not specifically talking about women when he said, "people who are focused on minute details," his statement falls in line with the trend that the women attributed their success to looking at all the facts, examining all of the evidence and focusing on the small details. Even though he was saying this was a negative quality to have, in this sample it seemed to be a positive quality for most of the women. Where the women passed more bills than the males as the data has shown, being over-prepared contributed to the female's effectiveness in getting bills passed. In this case, women prepare and men just do. I argue that this is also caused by perceived confidence. While it was clear that the female subjects over-prepared to combat the perception of low confidence levels, they in turn made themselves more effective legislators than men, resulting in more bills passed in the Colorado 2014 legislative session.

Recruitment, socialization and qualities in legislating can stand on their own as competing narratives that explain why men and women vary in legislative effectiveness. However, when looking at the bigger picture of men versus women, perceived confidence levels is what causes the decision to run for office, an individuals upbringing and what someone does when elected into public office. Thus, as this research suggests, perceived confidence exists as

the prominent factor in legislative effectiveness. I believe this abstract, yet important discovery trumps all other explanations when it comes to my original research question of how men and women vary in legislative effectiveness. It is not that the story of confidence is wrong; it is just a different story than I had originally believed. Perceived confidence not only has the ability to explain why men and women varied in this study, but it opens up the dialogue to possibly clarify various competing factors such as socialization, recruitment and qualities in legislating that could be mistaken as chief explanations for legislative effectiveness.

## **VII. Conclusion**

Various scholars point to increased levels of self-doubt, fear, and low self-confidence as major hindrances on women in politics (Kay & Shipman, 2014; Sandberg, 2013; Carroll et al., 2009). Many political scientists argue that these hindrances make women inherently less confident than men, resulting in women being less effective legislators. Contrary to previous research, what I found was that women were more effective than men in the 2014 Colorado state legislature. Additionally, after I conducted interviews with state legislators I diverged from my original hypothesis that confidence was the explanation of legislative effectiveness. The study found that women perceive other women differently than the way they perceive themselves. In fact, women are equally, if not more effective, than their male counterparts. However, in women's perceived realities, they see themselves through a gender sensitive lens, resulting in gender affecting the way women legislate at much greater levels than men. Thus, my conclusions differ from prior work by starting a discourse of perceived confidence rather than confidence in reality.

The feelings of perceived confidence matter a great deal when discussing implications of this work. There are many societal barriers women face when deciding to run for office but the greatest barrier of all is having an unequal representation of women in politics. Encouraging women to run for office helps get them into office, and as this research suggests, women are just as effective or more effective than men when they are elected, even if they don't feel that way. Therefore, there needs to be a larger push to get women into office. With more women in politics, the perception that women are not as confident as men could begin to disappear. Even though women perceive gender biases and define their job differently than men do, these perceptions are clearly making a positive impact on many women, as the Colorado state legislature has shown. For instance, both negative and positive socialization motivated the female subjects in this study to be the way they are today, resulting in them being generally more effective legislators than their male counterparts.

Furthermore, I argue that discussing negative stereotypes of women adds to the vicious cycle that is holding women back from office in the first place. By complying with societies embedded patriarchal ideals, individuals are being part of the problem even if they don't realize it. Through buying into the perceptions that women are not confident enough to be effective legislators, we are all perpetuating this belief. From this research, it is clear that it is not just women that are plagued with this perception issue but it is the men as well. Men are socialized just like women to believe that genders do and act a certain way. Fundamental norms tell society that women are not as effective than men, but this study showed that women are not living up to these perceptions. This research distinctly reveals that it is not that women are less confident or less effective than men, but it is societies perception of women that are showing this.

Talking about how women are lesser than men creates a dialogue of normativity causing individuals to believe something is true even if it is not. Women in turn get trapped in a self-fulfilling prophecy. They believe it is not normal for women to run for office, causing fewer women to lean in at the political table. While the women in this study did not conform to these embedded patriarchal norms, they act as outliers rather than an expected model, like male politicians are. Thus, it is crucial to change the conversation around women in politics, so more women decide to run for office. Society's perception of women will not change over night, but I think it is important to tell the stories of successful women in politics, like the story of this research. The data illustrating the effectiveness of the female caucus in the Colorado state legislature is truly outstanding. If more women knew how effective female Colorado state legislators were, maybe it would start breaking down the substantial barriers that many women seem to face when deciding if they want to pull up a chair at the political table. A change in dialogue can eventually lead to a change in perception. If more people knew how successful women are in comparison to men, the notion that women are bitches and men are leaders may begin to dissipate. This research suggests that a female bitch may very well be more effective than a male leader.

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## Appendix: Interview Questions

### I. Self Confidence/External Efficacy

- Were you a self-starter or a pure recruit when you initially decided to run for the state legislature?
- What was your path to the legislature?
- What qualifies an individual to be in the state legislature? Explain.
- What experiences and/or people in your life have encouraged you to pursue politics?
- Did anyone or experience ever discourage you? Explain.
- In what ways were you or weren't you socialized to match your gender? Do you think this has affected the way you legislate?
- How do you think confidence matters in being a legislator?
- What qualities matter most when being a legislator?
- Would you consider yourself a consensus builder (collaborative governing) when you legislate, why or why not?
- What is the key to being successful in getting bills passed?
- What motivates you to propose a bill?
- How do you feel your gender connects with your job in the state legislature?
- Do you feel recognized for the work you have done in the legislature? If not, why do you think you have not been recognized?
- What difference do you feel you make in the legislature?
- What barriers do you feel you encounter?
- What difficulties do you encounter that your male (if female) or female (if male) colleagues do not?
  
- On a scale of 1-10 how confident in yourself would you say you are?
- On a scale of 1-10 how confident in your work would you say you are?
- On a scale of 1-10 how effective do you think you are at legislating?
- On a scale of 1-10 how much does your gender affect the way you legislate?
- On a scale of 1-10 how much do your constituents support you?

### II. Women in Politics

- What difference does it make when women are elected to the state legislature?
- What support do you feel your party should provide women to advance within the party?

### III. Conclusion

- Any other comments or questions