Male Allies and Gender Equity: Exploring the Explanatory Mechanisms

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ABSTRACT

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This research examines three potential theories that might explain why men respond more favorably to men (than women) who advocate for women’s equal rights: Attributional Analysis of Persuasion (Petty, Fleming, Priester, & Feinstein, 2001; Priester & Petty, 1995), Status Characteristics (Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986; Wagner & Berger, 1997), and Social Norm theories (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991). Using an experimental approach, 267 male participants read an article calling for gender equity written by either a male or female author and then indicated their a) attitudes towards women, b) attitudes towards the article, and c) behavioral intentions to act in gender equitable ways. To test potential mediating mechanisms, participants also indicated the extent to which they perceived the author had self-interest, the author had high status, the extant social norms, and their surprise at the author’s position. Consistent with our own past findings, the results showed that men (compared to women) were more influential when talking to other men about gender equity. More specifically, male participants indicated more gender equitable attitudes and more favorable attitudes about male (versus female) allies. No support, however, was shown for men expressing intentions to act in more gender equitable ways after interacting with a male versus female ally. The different article strategies did not show statistically significant differences; however, a pattern of results provide direction for future research. Surprise and lack of perceived self-interest both approached statistical significance as mediating
mechanisms explaining the impact of the author of the gender on men’s attitudes toward gender equity and ratings of author favorability. That is, when men wrote articles about gender equity, other men viewed the author as less self-interested and more surprised by the author’s position, leading them to be more persuaded by the article to support gender equity. This explanation is most in line with the Attributional Analysis of Persuasion explanation or that of the unexpected communicator. Results are discussed in terms of needed future directions and implications for the display of ally behaviors.
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INTRODUCTION

While there has been an improvement, women in the U.S. workplace still face discrimination and unrelenting obstacles to their achievements relative to men (Lyness & Heilman, 2006). For example, U.S. women continue to experience inequities in promotions (Baumgartner & Schneider, 2010; Booth, Francesconi, & Frank, 2003; Wilson, Marks, Noone, & Hamilton-Mackenzie, 2009), negative stereotypes that restrict their advancement (Heilman, 2012), inequities in pay ($0.80 to men’s dollar; U.S. Department of Labor, 2016), lower pay-grades when promoted (Booth et al., 2003), and a glass ceiling that prevents their ascent in the workplace (Baumgartner & Schneider, 2010). Of course, this list is not comprehensive and focuses on just overt types of discrimination. Women also continue to face a wealth of more subtle forms of discrimination. Specifically, women (compared with men) are targeted with more benevolently sexist behaviors (Hebl, King, Glick, Singletary, & Kazama, 2007), have developmental experiences that are qualitatively more negative (King et al., 2012), get chosen less to give work-related talks (Nittouer et al., 2017), experience more pervasive incivilities (Cortina, 2008), and receive less favorable recommendation letters (Madera, Hebl, & Martin, 2009).

Remediating Gender Inequity and the Role of Men

Research attention is beginning to focus heavily on ways to remediate such biases, particularly given the current socio-political climate (e.g., Trump’s acknowledgment of grabbing women, the #MeToo movement). There are many ways to attempt to remediate the gender inequities found in the workplace and among them is the forming of coalition working groups, associations, advisory boards, or ad hoc groups.
Such campus, organizational, and broader societal groups are often led, championed, and furthered by groups of almost exclusively female (and not male) participants (Prime & Moss-Racusin, 2009). For instance, the Global Fund for Women has three female board officers and 14 additional female officers but not a single male member. Similarly, 28 out of 29 members comprise the executive staff of Catalyst, a leading nonprofit organization with the goal of increasing opportunities for women (Catalyst, 2013).

It may not be surprising that women comprise the majority of members on these boards—the issues are ones that women face, and it would be egregious to have a male only or majority-male board deciding issues about women (e.g., reflect on the March 2017 photo of Trump gathered with an all-male cast to sign a bill restricting abortion rights). However, the presence of men—high-status members of our society—might legitimize women’s concerns, highlight the severity of gender disparities, provide normative social data on the problematic nature of gender disparities, and enhance gender egalitarian buy-in among other men. The current research examines the impact that men may have on supporting gender-related initiatives and examines optimal strategies men can use to persuade other men to engage in gender equity initiatives.

**Reasons Men May Not Advocate for Gender Equity**

There exist many reasons why men may not support gender equity: three of which I will discuss: 1) threatened masculinity and/or perceptions of being gay, 2) a rejection of and disdain for anything related to feminism, and 3) an inability to perceive or inattention to gender disparities. First, men may not support gender equity if their masculinity is threatened. In a recent study (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2016), men who were given
false feedback that their testosterone levels were low (versus high) were more likely to endorse traditional and stereotypical views of women (versus gender-equitable perspectives); however, men who had their masculinity affirmed by receiving false feedback that their testosterone levels were high (versus low) showed the opposite pattern. Additionally, Rudman and colleagues (2013) found that men who expressed gender egalitarian views also were perceived to be less masculine, more feminine, and more likely to be gay than men who expressed benevolently sexist attitudes. This study suggested stigma by association was at play, (such that a man’s support of a stigmatized group (i.e., women) conferred his own stigmatization (Kulik, Bainbridge, & Cregan, 2008).

Second, the pejorative stereotypes associated with being “feminist” (e.g., “man-hating lesbians”; Edley & Wetherell, 2001) may result in men choosing to dissociate from women’s issues (Anastosopoulos & Desmarais, 2014; Robnett, Anderson, & Hunter, 2012). On one hand, some research shows that when the mission of feminism—a movement “driven to grant social, political, and economic equality to both women and men” (Jackson, Fleury, & Lewandowski, 1996)—is instead termed “women’s movement,” men (and women) react more positively. On the other hand, other research suggests that the label “women’s movement” may make men even less likely to get involved as they might not see a place for themselves in a women’s movement, even if they do endorse gender-equitable ideals (Rudman et al., 2013). A study by Dover, Major, and Kaiser (2016) examined the impact of diversity statements on majority group members (White men) and minority group members and found that having a diversity statement (versus not having one) made minority group members more likely to think
that they would fit in at that organization. However, it made White men think that they were likely to be discriminated against (Dover et al., 2016). This is important because, for the messages of increasing equity to be effective, such a message must not make the majority group (or high-status) individuals feel threatened or else they may not endorse the initiative.

Third, men may be less likely to support gender issues because men, on average, may be less likely than women to recognize sexism. For instance, in a study examining the difference between ratings of prejudice on statements that were derogatory towards women, men were less likely than women to rate the statement as sexist (Rodin, Price, Bryson, & Sanchez, 1990). Not surprisingly, additional research showed that men were not only less likely than women to label overt sexism as sexist, but they were also less likely to see benevolent or more subtle forms as being sexist (Becker & Swim, 2011). Furthermore, in a study utilizing daily diaries of all incidents when men and women were treated differently due to gender, men report significantly fewer incidents of this occurring, suggesting that they either do not encounter such events, or they do not perceive them as gender inequities (Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson, 2001).

**Reasons Men Advocate for Gender Equity**

Just as there are reasons for men *not* to support gender equity; there are also reasons why men do *support* such equity. I discuss briefly three reasons: 1) a practical need, based on demographics, to be inclusive of and support gender equity to women, 2) a business case for gender equity, and 3) a moral case for supporting gender equity.

First, half of the college population is women, and more graduate and professional students than ever are women (Bailey & Dynarski, 2011; National Center for Education
Statistics, 2016). The considerable absence in some fields, such as STEM (see Moss-Racusin, Sanzari, Caluori, & Rabasco, 2018), merely need to be filled, and one section of missing talent is clearly women.

Second, men may support gender equity because there is a business case. There is no doubt that many women drop out of fields and careers because of the pressures they experience in balancing work and family (Deery, 2008). Women also report dropping out of their careers and professions because of the discrimination that they face, the experience of being a social token, the chilly climates they experience, the lack of support that they receive, and the more general gender inequities that they face (Oyeleye, Hanson, O’Connor, & Dunn, 2013; Rosin & Korabik, 1991; Xu, 2008). All these outcomes are nonoptimal and can cost organizations millions of dollars. A considerable amount of research shows that gender equity in organizations leads to better organizational outcomes. For instance, a recent meta-analysis shows that the presence of a female CEO is positively related to financial outcomes (Hoobler, Masterson, Nkomo, & Michel, 2016) and better attendance and monitoring behaviors for gender-diverse boards (Adams & Ferreira, 2009). Indeed, the financially savvy man might recognize that supporting gender equity can be big business.

Third, many men support gender equity because they just believe it is the right thing to do. Indeed, men who endorse fairness ideals also tend to endorse gender equity (Prime & Moss-Racusin, 2009). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 guaranteed that men and women should have equal rights. The U.S. Constitution stated that “we hold such truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal,” and many believe that women should have been included in this. This equality, many further believe, should be evident in
salary, opportunities, and representation in leadership and all positions. This was perhaps no better exemplified in 2015 by Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada when he was asked by a reporter why it was important for him to have a gender-equal cabinet. The feminist Trudeau shrugged: "Because it is 2015."

**Men Persuade Other Men to Support Gender Equity.**

One strategy to engage more men in supporting gender equity is to utilize the men who already support gender equity. Research suggests that men may play a vital role in changing the attitudes of other men. Additionally, when men (versus women) speak up against or confront sexism, they may be met with less scrutiny and fewer costs. A study conducted by Eliezer and Major (2012) found that while both men and women who sympathized with a woman who did not get funding due to sexism were perceived to be complainers (versus did not express sympathy), men were perceived as less of a complainer than women who said the exact same thing. Other research shows that when allies point out prejudice and bias, they receive fewer adverse reactions than when the targets call out prejudice and bias (Rasinski & Czopp, 2010). Additionally, allies who confront overtly prejudiced comments are often liked and respected while the perpetrator of the comments is seen more negatively (Dickter, Kittel, & Gyurovski, 2012).

In her 2014 high profile speech on gender equity that she delivered to the U.N., Emma Watson (widely known for her beloved role as the feminist Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter series) *invited* men to play a more active role in working toward gender equity. She noted that there are far too many men not involved and considered the possibility that maybe men were not directly asked or lead to feeling welcome to participate. She asked, "[h]ow can we affect change in the world when only half of it is
invited or feel welcome to participate in the conversation?” In line with such sentiment, the current research examines the potential power that male supporters might play in promoting gender equity by influencing other men. Male supporters can also be referred to as ‘allies,’ or “dominant group members who work to end prejudice in their personal and professional lives, and relinquish social privileges conferred by their group status through their support of nondominant groups” (Brown & Ostrove, 2013, p. 2211). Allies “work alongside a disadvantaged group in the search for justice” (Drury & Kaiser, 2014, p. 637) and there are several reasons that men may be particularly effective at inspiring other men to work toward gender equity.

Using a context in which participants respond to ostensible letters written to an editor calling for gender equity, I test how male participants respond when male or female authors write such articles. I assess participants’ support for gender equity, their attitudes towards the author of the article, their behavioral intentions to also engage in gender equitable behaviors, and their actual engagement in such behaviors. Consistent with past research, I predict that men will respond more favorably to a male than a female author:

Hypothesis 1: There will be a main effect of author gender, such that male (versus female) authors will be more persuasive (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H1a), author ratings (H1b), and behavioral intentions (H1c)) to male targets.

Mechanisms of Men’s Influence

Men may be more influential at convincing other men to support gender equity, a supposition supported by three different theories: Attributional Analysis of Persuasion
(Petty, Fleming, Priester, & Feinstein, 2001; Priester & Petty, 1995), Status Characteristics (Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986; Wagner & Berger, 1997), and Social Norm theories (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991). The primary purpose of this research is to assess if each of these theories can explain men’s powerful influence on encouraging allyship. Based on each explanatory mechanisms’ effectiveness, potential interventions and strategies can be better developed to make men and women both more influential when it comes to influencing men to support gender equity.

**Attributional Analysis of Persuasion**

Attributional Analysis of Persuasion (Petty et al., 2001; Priester & Petty, 1995) relies on understanding source-position expectancies or the notion that someone does or does not espouse a position that would be expected based on that source. For example, consider a mayor who advocates for a bill that lengthens a mayor’s term. The mayor might adopt this position because he/she has something to gain from it (i.e., longer time in power). This explanation may lead people to doubt the objectivity of the mayor and therefore doubt the bill itself. However, imagine that the mayor instead advocates for a shorter-term limits. This works against his/her best interest; hence, others might view the lack of self-interest with respect/surprise and therefore express more support for the bill. Thus, when the source-position expectations are disconfirmed – as in the second example – the message may be more persuasive because people view the source to be more trustworthy and respondents might feel less of a need to scrutinize the message.

In fact, Attribution Analysis of Persuasion research shows that when a source expectation is disconfirmed on the basis of self-interest; that is, when the message is not
in line with what would be in their best interest of the source (as in the example of the mayor arguing for shorter term limits), people are less likely to process their message carefully, instead taking it for granted that the message is valid (Eagly, Wood, & Chaiken, 1978; Petty et al., 2001; Priester & Petty, 1995; Walster, Aronson, & Abrahams, 1966). In contrast, when the source-position expectation is confirmed, that is, when the message is in line with what would be in their best interest of the source (as in the example of the mayor arguing for longer term limits), the message receiver engages in more central processing, judging the message on the characteristics of the message—rather than taking it for granted it is trustworthy and dependable.

However, other research related to persuasion and incongruent expectations has revealed that when messages are counter to expectations, participants show greater processing of the message. For example, when participants expected negatively-framed but received positively-framed messages (or vice versa), they showed more message processing (Smith & Petty, 1996). In another study, participants showed greater message processing when they thought the message was going to be low quality but were instead of high quality (or vice versa (Maheswaran & Chaiken, 1991). Potentially, this increased processing comes from participants being surprised by the expectation incongruence (Petty et al., 2001). While the underlying framework for why source message expectancies being disconfirmed is less clear (be it increased view of trustworthiness or increased surprise), the overarching result is the same, the message that is counter to perceived self-interest is more persuasive.

This effect has implications in the role that allies play. In general, people tend to act in ways that benefit the group with whom they belong (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and
behaviors that are perceived to be self-interested are less persuasive than ones who are not (Eagly et al., 1978). When allies (who tend to be people who have majority status and privilege) advocate for historically marginalized groups, allies may be particularly influential because their messages lack an obvious self-interest. In fact, allies’ messages may be viewed as being not only counter to their own personal self-interest but also as counter to their own groups’ best interests.

Reductions in sexism and increases in gender equity are issues that are seen to benefit women predominately; thus when women confront sexism, others typically categorize it as self-interest (Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006; Eliezer & Major, 2012). The confrontation literature mostly shows that non-targets (or allies) who confront prejudiced behavior or statements are less likely to be labeled as complainers and be more effective than targets who confront (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Kaiser & Miller, 2001; Mark, Monteith, & Czopp, 2005). The confrontation of sexism by male allies may be seen as more legitimate, as men are not seen to directly benefit from the confrontation (Drury & Kaiser, 2014). For this reason, women confronters are perceived more negatively and are more likely to be dismissed (Roy, Weibust, & Miller, 2009). In contrast, when male allies advocate for gender equity, they are unlikely to be seen as self-interested; thus, making them more effective than women.

In another study focused on how messaging impacts donations to support LGBTQ+ advocacy groups, (Michelson & Harrison, 2012) found that when the callers explicitly acknowledged their own LGBTQ+ identities (“As a gay man, … I’m concerned about the effect of rolling back equality in Iowa will have on me and our community”), participants were less likely to donate to the cause than when they did not explicitly
acknowledge such identities. The authors proposed that participants viewed the organization as less credible and the organizational members as more self-interested when the callers disclosed (versus did not disclose) their own LGBTQ+ identities.

Given the attributional explanation of why male (versus female) allies might be more persuasive for men, I predict that when an author explicitly notes that their support for gender equity is not due to self-interest, the gap between men and women will weaken:

_Hypothesis 2: Men who read articles that advocate for gender equity while refuting their self-interest will be more favorable (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H2a), author ratings (H2b), and behavioral intentions (H2c)) than in the control condition._

Additionally, if this phenomenon is the result of perceived self-interest, I predict mediated moderation, such that the moderating effect of refuting self-interest will be mediated by perceived self-interest.

_Hypothesis 3: Consistent with Attributional Analysis of Persuasion, the perceived self-interest of the author will mediate the relation between author gender and favorability (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H3a), author ratings (H3b), and behavioral intentions (H3c))._

**Status Characteristics Theory**

Status is defined as being respected and admired by others (Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Ridgeway & Walker, 1995). Status Characteristics Theory posits that individuals ascribe social attributes to individuals based on both specific and diffuse status characteristics (Berger et al., 1972; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986; Wagner & Berger, 1997).
Specific status characteristics are skills and abilities that are directly related to the task at hand (e.g., athletic ability in a sports task). In contrast, diffuse status characteristics are often observable group differences (e.g., race, gender, age) that are associated with status and competence in our society. For example, in general, men are ascribed more status than women, more educated people are ascribed more status than less educated people, and attractive people ascribed more status than unattractive people (Carli & Eagly, 1999; Miles & Clenney, 2010; Ridgeway & Diekema, 1992). These status characteristics, whether diffuse or specific are then used to affect expectations regarding how the other person will behave and perform (Berger, Wagner, & Zelditch, 1985). Even if these characteristics are objectively unrelated to the task at hand, they still provide cues for expectations. For example, while gender (a diffuse status characteristic) should objectively be unrelated to the task of persuasion, a man may still be ascribed greater authority than a woman.

More specifically, there is evidence across society that women tend to have significantly lower status than do men (Carli, 1999; Ridgeway, 2011), a finding that may have to do with the differentiated and traditional roles that women versus men have in our society (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001) as well as stereotypes about women in positions of power (Heilman, 2001). Because of this, men also tend to be more persuasive than women and have persuasiveness that is less constrained by circumstances (Carli, 2001). Specifically, women’s persuasion tactics must be seen as in line with female gender stereotypes (communal, warm, not assertive) and situations that highlight gender as a status characteristic make women’s persuasion that much less effective. In fact, women (compared to men) are more likely to be ignored when
attempting to influence others, and their contributions (compared to those of men) often have less of an impact on actual decision-making outcomes (Altemeyer & Jones, 1974; Jacklin & Maccoby, 1978; Propp, 1995).

Additionally, research that looks at perceptions of female leaders also can be extended to the effects of women in positions of authority or persuasion (for a review see Eagly & Karau, 2002). When women (versus men) are seen as successful leaders and managers, women also tend to be seen as being more hostile and emotional than successful male leaders and managers (Heilman, Block, & Martell, 1995). Research confirms the greater difficulty women (versus men) encounter when they try to enact agentic behaviors such as trying to gain legitimacy, persuade someone to support a cause, or have a role of authority (see for a review Carli & Eagly, 1999). A double standard for gender exists: women typically must do more to prove their competence than men in order to be persuasive (Foschi, 1996, 2000). Relatedly, the agentic behavior that women (versus men) display is more likely to be ignored, denigrated, or otherwise invoke negativity (Altemeyer & Jones, 1974; Ridgeway, 1978, 1981, 1982).

Importantly, research shows that individuals who belong to high status groups (e.g., men and White people) do not experience the same negative repercussions for enacting diversity valuing behaviors (e.g., respecting cultural differences, comfort working with people different from themselves, as rated by their peers) that individuals who belong to low status groups experience (Hekman, Johnson, Maw-Der Foo, & Wei Yang, 2017). In this study, Hekman et al. (2017) found that ethnic minority and female leaders who are perceived to engage in more diversity valuing behaviors—as measured by the Miville-Guzman cultural and diversity competencies (Miville et al., 1999) which
includes items such as “understands and respects cultural, religious, and racial differences” and “values working with a diverse group of people”—were rated as less competent and received lower performance ratings than ethnic minority and female leaders who engaged in fewer diversity valuing behaviors. In contrast, White and male leaders who engaged in more (versus less) diversity valuing behaviors actually were rated as more competent and received higher performance ratings.

In a study examining the effects of sanctioning racist language on the basis of the sanctioner’s race (Black versus White) and status (high versus low), researchers found that individuals sanctioned by White high-status men were more likely to change their behavior. Researchers used automated twitter profiles programmed to reply to tweets—these are also called “Twitter bots”—that contain specific language to sanction racist slur usage on Twitter. These twitter bots had profile avatars that either depicted them as a White or Black man. To manipulate status, researchers manipulated how many followers the twitter bot had. Researchers found that White individuals who were sanctioned by a presumably White man, and particularly those with presumably greater status, were less likely to use racist slurs in the following two months than those who were sanctioned by a presumably Black man (Munger, 2017). This research shows the power that allies can have reducing prejudiced and discriminatory behavior.

Based on Status Characteristics Theory, I posit that male allies influence men more because they tend to have higher status and positional authority than women. However, there is also research that shows when women assert their status and competence, there is a significant negative backlash (Heilman, 1983; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). This would suggest
not a main effect of highlighting status, but instead, an interaction such that women who highlight status would receive backlash, thus widening the gap between male and female authors. When women (versus men) are seen as successful leaders and managers, they are also seen as more hostile and less rational (Heilman et al., 1995). Additionally, research has looked at when women and men enact agentic behaviors (for a review see Carli & Eagly, 1999) and a consistent double standard emerges: women have to do more and work harder to prove their competence than men in order to be persuasive (Foschi, 1996, 2000), noticed, or perceived positively (Altemeyer & Jones, 1974; Ridgeway, 1978, 1981, 1982).

Given the status characteristics theory explanation, when authors highlight their positions of power and authority, the gap between men and women will be widened:

*Hypothesis 4: There will be an interaction such that men who read articles highlighting that the author’s status will respond more favorably (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H4a), author ratings (H4b), and behavioral intentions (H4c)) than men in the control condition, but only when the author is male.*

Additionally, given the status characteristics theory explanation, I predict mediated moderation, such that the moderating effect of highlighting status will be mediated by perceived status.

*Hypothesis 5: Consistent with perceived status theory, the perceived status will mediate the relation between author gender and favorability (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H5a), author ratings (H5b), and behavioral intentions (H5c)).*
Social Norms Theory

Highlighting the behavior of role models and/or using their behavior as social norms is another potential strategy for engaging men in gender equity. A wealth of research has shown that people learn about appropriate behavior through social learning and particularly through observation of role models (Bandura, 1986) and social norms (Berkowitz, 2003). Social norms (Cialdini et al., 1991) refer to two types of norms. Descriptive norms are informative because they provide evidence about what people typically do and what is useful. Injunctive norms are based on what behavior is socially sanctioned or is going to be socially rewarded by the group. Both sets of norms can be gathered by witnessing normative behaviors (for a review see Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), being told about the norms, or gaining information about what behaviors are incentivized.

A large number of studies have found that role modeling or using social norms can be very useful in persuading others. For instance, manipulating perceived social norms has been used as an intervention to change people’s behaviors. For example, Goldstein et al. (2008; 2007) manipulated whether social norms around linen-reuse and they found that social norms of linen-reuse can lead to more linen reuse. Additionally, research has found that teens believe that bullying is drastically more prevalent than it actually is. When teens were given more accurate social norms about bullying happening less often, the teens were less likely to bully (Perkins, Craig, & Perkins, 2011). Also, research has found the use of highlighting the social norms of men supporting women to reduce men’s violence towards women (for a review see Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015).
Research shows that the attitudes of one individual can be shifted dramatically by the expressed attitudes of another. For example, in a study by Zitek and Hebl (2007), if an ostensible interactant (actually a research confederate) first publicly expressed opinions that condoned or condemned discrimination, a second interactant (an authentic research participant) followed suit and expressed statements that closely paralleled the confederate. That is, when the participant was interacting with someone who condoned discrimination, the participant also tended to condone discrimination; whereas, if the interactant condemned discrimination, the participant also tended to condemn discrimination. These findings suggest that men who express positive views toward a female-related issue may lead other men to express positive views similarly.

Other research on framing diversity initiatives found that when messages about bias were framed in ways that made it seem like most people hold biased views (i.e., ‘research shows that a vast majority of people have stereotypical perceptions and are biased’), people were actually more likely to behave in biased ways. In contrast, in situations when people were made to believe that not many people hold biased views (i.e., ‘research shows that very few people have stereotypical perceptions and are biased’; Duguid & Thomas-Hunt, 2015). This points to the importance of the norms set in these messages. If individuals believe that everyone else holds biased or stereotypical beliefs, then they may believe that it is okay for them as well, and thus be more likely to respond in biased and stereotyped ways. When they believe that men are in favor of gender equity, however, they may also be more likely to support gender equity.

In conjunction with social norms, men’s endorsement may have more impact on other men may be due to the in-group bias or “similar to me” effect. The “similar to me”
effect posits that individuals will have an affinity to people whom they perceive to be like themselves. This effect also leads to assigning people who are similar greater credibility. For example, in the previously discussed research on using social norms to encourage towel reuse in hotels (Goldstein et al., 2008), the researchers found that the appeal was most effective when the norm was most similar to themselves (i.e., ‘a majority of guests in this room reuse their towels’ was more effective than ‘a majority of guests reuse their towels’). This indicates that even in a somewhat contrived situation, norms that were more (versus less) self-relevant and showed some connection to themselves were more effective. This also carries over to norms of social groups to which people categorize themselves as belonging.

Most notably, this research has long been established in Bandura’s social learning tradition as the increased modeling effectiveness of matching sex adults on the behavior of children (Bandura, 1986). In addition, work on interpersonal relations indicates that similarities between people (both minor and inconsequential as well as more ingrained) can lead to a stronger feeling of association (Heider, 1958; Tajfel, 1978). This greater sense of association can lead to a more significant change in attitudes or behaviors (Insko, 1981). This will lead men to be more influential to other men when they see them as similar to themselves.

Given the social norms theory explanation, when the author highlights male role models and that there is a social norm for men to support gender equity, the gap between men and women will be weakened:

*Hypothesis 6: Men who read articles that advocate for gender equity while highlighting that many men support gender equity will be more favorable (as
shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H6a), author ratings (H6b), and behavioral intentions (H6c) than in the control).

Additionally, given social norms theory, I predict mediated moderation, such that the moderating effect of highlighting role models will be mediated by perceived social norms of many men supporting gender equity.

Hypothesis 7: Consistent with social norms theory, perceived social norms will mediate the relation between author gender and favorability (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H7a), author ratings (H7b), and behavioral intentions (H7c)).

METHODS

This study utilized a 2 (gender of the author: male, female) x 4 (article approach: highlight lack of self-interest (attributional analysis of persuasion), highlighting status (status characteristics), highlighting that many men support gender equity (social norms), control) between factors design.

Power analysis indicated that a minimum sample size of 157 was needed to have .80 power to detect moderate relations between predictors, mediators, and outcomes in a mediational analysis (Schoemann, Boulton, & Short, 2017). Additionally, Gpower was used to assure that there was .80 power to detect main effects and interactions in the MANOVA and it was determined that at least 179 participants were needed (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007).

Participants

Participants were recruited using Qualtrics research panels and were paid $5.00 for their participation, the only requirements for their participation were that they be over
the age of 18, identify as male, and living in the United States. Participants consisted of 267 men over the age of 18. Their mean age was 48.14 years of age, \((SD = 16.84)\) although participants ranged in age from 18 to 82. Their racial/ethnic breakdown was 81.6% White, 9.7% Black or African American, 5.6% Asian, and 3% indicated “other.”

In terms of their education highest educational achievement attained, 4.1% had a doctorate, 13.1% had a professional degree (other than a doctorate), 37.1% of participants indicated that they had graduated with a 4-year degree, 10.1% had a 2-year degree, 18% had taken some amount of college, 16.5% were high school graduates, and 1.1% had less than a high school degree. The employment breakdown revealed 45.3% of participants were employed full time, 27.7% were retired, 8.6% were employed part-time, 4.9% were current students, and 12.5% were unemployed. Finally, 50.9% of the men were married, and 90.6% were straight.

**Procedure**

Participants were told that they were participating in research examining perceptions of themselves and others after reading news articles. They were given instructions to pay attention to article details including content, title, and author, as they would be asked questions following their reading of the article to ensure their careful attention. Participants were assigned randomly to read one of eight articles (see description of variations below) written by the (fictional) CEO/President of Steele Corp. The article was an ostensibly authentic letter to the editor style article written by an author calling for greater gender equity. The author was either depicted as a man (“Michael Steele”) or woman (“Michelle Steele”). After seeing the title and ostensible author, participants read the article and were asked to respond to a series of questions
about their attitudes and beliefs toward the articles as well as more generally toward gender equity.

Additionally, participants responded to questions that measured the extent to which they perceived author self-interest, author status, social norms about men supporting gender equity, and their surprise about the article content. Finally, participants also answered demographic questions about themselves.

**Article Manipulations.** The article focused on gender equity in the United States. It highlighted the United States’ low ranking in the Global Gender Gap report. Additionally, it cites sources such as a Pew Research Survey, the National Women’s Law Center, and Fortune Magazine to highlight gender inequity in pay, poverty, respect, and representation. It ends with a call to action for the reader to join the quest for gender equity. All versions of the articles were the same with two exceptions. First, the author name was manipulated to be either male or female. Second, a portion of the second paragraph and a quote box both highlighted one of the three potential explanatory mechanisms: attributional analysis of persuasion, states characteristics, or social norms. I will describe each of these mechanisms and the way in which I manipulated them in detail. In the control condition, there was no manipulated second paragraph or quote box. Additionally, the full text of the articles can be found in Appendix A.

Each of the manipulated paragraphs was designed to be a very short statement that highlighted each of the three mechanisms considered in this paper: perceived self-interest, perceived author status, and perceived social norms of men supporting gender equity. Specifically, the idea behind these manipulations is that if the given mechanism is
indeed the driving factor behind previously found gender differences, then using the strategy might close the gap between when men and women call for gender equity.

**Self Interest.** For this condition, the participant reads: “This is not coming from a place of self-interest. I am not getting anything out of this personally.” This condition highlights for both the male and the female author that they are not benefitting personally from this call for gender equity.

**Status.** For this condition, the participant read: I am out here today to use my high status to tell you “As president and CEO of Steele Corp., I am out here today to use my position to tell you to support gender equity.” This condition highlights for both the male and the female author that they are using their position (in this case the president and CEO of a company) to call for gender equity.

**Social Norms.** For this condition, the participant read: “Men and women across the country are joining together to gain gender equity. Over 80% of men support gender equity. Truly a norm.” This condition highlights for both the male and the female author that there are other men who support gender equity and that it is, in fact, more typical for men to support gender equity than to not.

**Control.** For the control article, I did not show them the three other manipulations and only showed participants the remainder of the article. No particular mechanism was accentuated.

**Measures**

All measures appeared on 7-point Likert-type. All scale items can be found in Appendix B.
Attitudes towards women and gender equity. Participants answered 17 items about their attitudes towards women and gender equity, as well as their response to the article itself. These items were used in previous research examining the effect of male allies for gender equity (Trump-Steele, Corrington, Nittouer, & Hebl, 2019). Participants were presented with the following stem ‘Considering the article you just read, please respond with how much you agree with each of these statements.”

Based on a factor analysis, these items loaded on one of two subscales: Attitudes towards Gender Equity and Favorability towards the Author. The results from the factor analysis can be found in Table 1. Results are presented using these subscales.

Attitudes towards gender equity. This subscale consisted of 11 items. Participants made ratings on a seven-point Likert-type scale anchored at 1 = ‘Do Not Agree,’ 4 = ‘Somewhat Agree,’ and 7 = ‘Strongly Agree.’ This included items such as: “I am motivated to work on women's behalf” and “The article reflects my personal values and beliefs,” all items can be found in Table 1. These items loaded onto one factor (eigenvalue = 8.18, accounting for 48.12% of the variance). This subscale had excellent reliability (α = .978).

Favorability towards the author. This subscale consisted of six items. Participants made ratings on a seven-point Likert-type scale anchored at 1 = ‘Do Not Agree,’ 4 = ‘Somewhat Agree,’ and 7 = ‘Strongly Agree.’ This included items such as: “The author seems intelligent” and “The author was credible,” all items can be found in Table 1. These items loaded onto one factor (eigenvalue = 5.64, accounting for 33.19% of the variance). This subscale had excellent reliability (α = .959).
Table 1. Attitudes toward Gender Equity Rotated Factor Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rotated Factor Matrix</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Attitudes toward Gender Equity</th>
<th>Favorability toward the Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel compelled to take direct action on the issue of gender inequity. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td>.854</td>
<td>.360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More attention should be placed on the issue of gender inequity. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>.844</td>
<td>.430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am motivated to work on women's behalf. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 3</td>
<td>.830</td>
<td>.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More government related action and support is needed to help women with this issue. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 4</td>
<td>.796</td>
<td>.385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be likely to do something now about gender inequity. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 5</td>
<td>.795</td>
<td>.376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The article reflects my personal values and beliefs. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 6</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving gender equity is very important for our country to address. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 7</td>
<td>.779</td>
<td>.423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree with the author's conclusion. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 8</td>
<td>.741</td>
<td>.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe in the purpose of this article. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 9</td>
<td>.738</td>
<td>.565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equity is important to me. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 10</td>
<td>.725</td>
<td>.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This article really made me think about the issue. (a)</td>
<td>Factor 11</td>
<td>.722</td>
<td>.474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author seems intelligent. (b)</td>
<td>Factor 12</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This article is well written. (b)</td>
<td>Factor 13</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author's argument was well-reasoned. (b)</td>
<td>Factor 14</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author was credible. (b)</td>
<td>Factor 15</td>
<td>.477</td>
<td>.755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed reading the article. (b)</td>
<td>Factor 16</td>
<td>.604</td>
<td>.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like the author. (b)</td>
<td>Factor 17</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>.660</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. \(a\) Item is part of the Attitudes toward Gender Equity subscale. \(b\) Item is a part of the Author Favorability subscale.

Behavioral Intentions. Participants responded to 14 behavioral intention questions in an attempt to see how likely they would be to enact certain behaviors. Like the attitudes towards women and gender equity items, these items were used in previous research examining the effect of male allies for gender equity (Trump-Steele et al., 2019). Participants were presented with the following stem “After reading the article, how likely
are you to do the following behaviors?” and made ratings on a seven-point Likert-type scale anchored at 1 = ‘Extremely unlikely,’ 4 = ‘Neither likely nor unlikely,’ and 7 = ‘Extremely likely’ with items like “Make statements that indicate that you are feminist,” and “Share an article with your friends highlighting the gender pay gap.” This scale had excellent reliability (α = .965).

**Measures of Potential Mediators.** Participants made ratings on 12 items designed to measure perceived author self-interest, perceived author status, perceived social norms of men supporting gender equity, and surprise at the author’s stance. Participants were presented with the following stem “After reading the article, please respond with how much you agree with the following statements… “ and made ratings on a seven-point Likert-type scale anchored at 1 = ‘Do not agree,’ 4 = ‘Somewhat agree,’ and 7 = ‘Strongly agree.’ These items were all created specifically for this study.

Based on a factor analysis, these items loaded onto the four expected subscales: Perceived Status, Perceived Self-Interest, Surprise, and Perceived Social Norms. The results from the factor analysis can be found in Table 2. Mediation results are presented using these subscales.
Table 2. Potential Mediators Rotated Factor Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Self-Interest</th>
<th>Surprise</th>
<th>Social Norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The author is powerful&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.921</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author is high status&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.892</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author is prestigious&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.885</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author has authority&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.868</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The arguments made by the author are motivated by self-interest&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.954</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author has selfish motivations&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.674</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater gender equity would directly benefit the author&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.563</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author’s message was surprising&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The author’s message was unexpected&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most men support gender equity&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many men support gender equity&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily think of examples of male feminists&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.453</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Factor loadings of less than .30 are not shown. a) Item is part of the Perceived Author Status subscale. b) Item is a part of the Perceived Author Self-Interest subscale. c) Item is part of the Surprise subscale. d) Item is a part of the Perceived Social Norms subscale.

**Perceived status.** Participants responded to four items indicating the perceived status of the author. Participants responded to the following items: “The author is high status,” “The author has authority,” “The author is powerful,” and “The author is prestigious.” These items loaded onto one factor (eigenvalue = 3.43, accounting for 28.60% of the variance). This scale had excellent reliability ($\alpha = .960$).
**Perceived self-interest.** Participants responded to three items indicating how self-interested they perceived the author was in the topic. Participants responded to the following items: “The author has selfish motivations,” “Greater gender equity would help this author,” and “The arguments made by the author are motivated by self-interest.” These items loaded onto one factor (eigenvalue = 1.87, accounting for 15.61% of the variance). This scale had acceptable reliability (α = .782).

**Perceived surprise.** Participants responded to two items indicating how surprised they were that the author of the article was writing about gender equity. Participants responded to the following items: “The author’s message was surprising,” and “The author’s message was unexpected.” These items loaded onto one factor (eigenvalue = 1.71, accounting for 14.25% of the variance). This scale had excellent reliability (α = .927).

**Perceived social norm.** Participants responded to three items indicating perceived social norms of men supporting gender equity. Participants responded to the following items: “Most men support gender equity,” and “Many men support gender equity,” and “I can easily think of examples of male feminists.” These items loaded onto one factor (eigenvalue = 1.68, accounting for 14.02% of the variance). This scale had acceptable reliability (α = .730).

**RESULTS**

A correlation table of the independent, dependent, and mediator variables can be found in Table 3. A table showing mean mediator scores by article strategy can be found in Table 4.
Table 3. Correlations between DVs and Mediators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M(SD)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gender of the Author</td>
<td>0.60(0.49)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gender Equity Important</td>
<td>4.63(1.82)</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Author Favorability</td>
<td>4.86(1.62)</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>.85***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Behavioral Intentions</td>
<td>4.11(1.35)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>.87***</td>
<td>.74***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Status</td>
<td>4.12(1.61)</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>.57***</td>
<td>.60***</td>
<td>.56***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Self-Interest</td>
<td>3.41(1.65)</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td></td>
<td>- .13*</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.20***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Surprise</td>
<td>2.83(1.71)</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.30***</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>.34***</td>
<td>.45***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Social Norms</td>
<td>4.47(1.34)</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>.51***</td>
<td>.44***</td>
<td>.50***</td>
<td>.43***</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.21***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001.

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviations for Mediators by Article Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article Strategy</th>
<th>Perceived Author Self-Interest</th>
<th>Perceived Author Status</th>
<th>Perceived Social Norms</th>
<th>Surprise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Perceived Author Self-Interest</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Norm</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Interest</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>4.76</td>
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<td>Status</td>
<td>3.31</td>
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<td>4.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.32</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.08</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
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<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<td>Control</td>
<td>Perceived Author Status</td>
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<td>Control</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Norm</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>3.58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Interest</td>
<td>4.09</td>
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<td>4.53</td>
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<td>Control</td>
<td>Perceived Social Norms</td>
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<td>Social Norm</td>
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<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.53</td>
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<td>267</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td>Control</td>
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<td>Social Norm</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A 2x4 between person MANOVA was conducted and showed a main effect of author gender, \( F(3, 257) = 3.30, p = .015, \eta^2 = .040 \); the main effect of article strategy approached significance, \( F(9, 777) = 1.58, p = .119, \eta^2 = .018 \); and the interaction was not significant, \( F(9, 777) = 1.31, p = .340, \eta^2 = .013 \). The means for each of the three DVs a) attitudes toward gender equity, b) author favorability, and c) behavioral intentions can be seen in Figures 1-3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Interest</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Mean Gender Equity Importance Ratings by Article Strategy and Author Gender.
To test hypothesis 1, that there will be a main effect of author gender, such that male (versus female) authors will be more persuasive (as shown by ratings of support for
gender equity (H1a), author ratings (H1b), and behavioral intentions (H1c)) to male
targets, a 2-way between subjects MANOVA was conducted. The overall MANOVA was
significant, $F(3, 263) = 2.52, p = .012, \eta^2 = .041$. To conduct exploratory follow up
analyses on each of the individual DVs, three ANOVAs were conducted and show a
significant result for rated importance of gender equity, $F(1, 265) = 3.83, p = .050, \eta^2 =
.014$, such that men who read articles by a male author were more likely to endorse that
gender equity is important ($M = 4.81, SD = 1.76$) than when they read articles by female
authors ($M = 4.37, SD = 1.87$). Men were marginally more likely to rate male authors as
being a better author ($M = 4.99, SD = 1.55$) than female authors ($M = 4.65, SD = 1.72$),
$F(1, 265) = 2.84, p = .093, \eta^2 = .011$. There was not a significant effect when it came to
behavioral intentions $F(1, 265) = 0.13, p = .724, \eta^2 < .001$. All mean differences are in
the expected direction, see Table 5 for means and standard deviations. Taken together,
hypothesis 1 is partially supported.

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations by Author Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender of the Author</th>
<th>Gender Equity Important</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Author</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Author</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>267</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author Favorability</td>
<td>Female Author</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Author</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>267</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Intentions</td>
<td>Female Author</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Author</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>267</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To test hypothesis 2, that men who read articles that advocate for gender equity
while refuting their self-interest will be more favorable (as shown by ratings of support
for gender equity (H2a), author ratings (H2b), and behavioral intentions (H2c)), a 2-way MANOVA comparing the self-interest article to the control article was conducted. The overall MANOVA was not significant, $F(3, 125) = 0.98, p = .403, \eta^2 = .023$. To conduct exploratory follow up analyses on each of the individual DVs, three ANOVAs were conducted and show nonsignificant results for the three outcomes: support for gender equity $F(1, 127) = 0.831, p = .364, \eta^2 = .006$; author favorability $F(1, 127) = 0.004, p = .951, \eta^2 < .001$; and behavioral intentions $F(1, 127) = 0.633, p = .428, \eta^2 = .005$. See Table 6 for means and standard deviations. Taken together, hypothesis 2 is not supported.
Table 6. Means and Standard Deviations by Article Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article Strategy</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equity Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Norm</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Interest</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author Favorability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Norm</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Interest</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Intentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Norm</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Interest</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To test, hypothesis 3, the perceived self-interest of the author will mediate the relation between author gender and favorability (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H3a), author ratings (H3b), and behavioral intentions (H3c)), a mediation analysis was conducted using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). Because only the effect of author gender on ratings of support for gender equity and author favorability was found, only H3a and H3b are tested here. Because there is no evidence of an effect of strategy, no moderation is tested. The relation between author gender and support for gender equity was not mediated by perceived author self-interest. As Figure 4 illustrates, the regression coefficient between author gender and perceived self-interest was marginally statistically significant ($b = -.31, SE = 0.21, p = .13$). The regression coefficient between perceived self-interest and support for gender equity was marginally significant ($b = -.13, SE = 0.07, p = .055$). We tested the significance of this indirect effect using bootstrapping
procedures. Unstandardized indirect effects were computed for each of 10,000 bootstrapped samples, and the 95% confidence interval was computed by determining the indirect effects at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was .04, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.01, 0.14. Thus, the indirect effect was not statistically significant but approached significance.

![Diagram of mediation model](image)

**Figure 4. Mediation Model of Self-Interest Mediating Attitudes toward Gender Equity**

*Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity as mediated by perceived self-interest. The standardized regression coefficient between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity, controlling for perceived self-efficacy, is in parentheses.*

The relation between author gender and support for gender equity was not mediated by perceived author self-interest. As Figure 5 illustrates, the regression coefficient between author gender and perceived self-interest was marginally statistically significant ($b = .31, SE = 0.21, p = .132$). The regression coefficient between perceived self-interest and author favorability was significant ($b = -.19, SE = 0.06, p = .002$). We tested the significance of this indirect effect using bootstrapping procedures. Unstandardized indirect effects were computed for each of 10,000 bootstrapped samples,
and the 95% confidence interval was computed by determining the indirect effects at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was .06, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.01, 0.18. Thus, the indirect effect was not statistically significant but approached significance.

Figure 5. Mediation Model of Self-Interest Mediating Author Favorability

Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between author gender and author favorability as mediated by perceived self-interest. The standardized regression coefficient between author gender and author favorability, controlling for perceived self-interest, is in parentheses.

To test hypothesis 4, that there will be an interaction such that men who read articles highlighting that the author’s status will respond more favorably (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H4a), author ratings (H4b), behavioral intentions (H4c), and actual behaviors (H4d)) than men in the control condition, but only when the author is male. A 2x2 MANOVA comparing the status article to the control article was conducted and the gender of the author. The overall interaction MANOVA was not significant, $F(3, 131) = 0.440, p = .725, \eta^2 = .010$. Additionally there was no main effect
of strategy, $F(3, 131) = 0.769$, $p = .513$, $\eta^2 = .017$. There is a main effect of author
gender, $F(3, 131) = 5.53$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .110$. To conduct exploratory follow up analyses
on each of the individual DVs, three 2x2 ANOVAs were conducted and show
nonsignificant interactions for each of the three outcomes: support for gender equity $F(1, 133) = 0.100$, $p = .753$, $\eta^2 = .001$; author ratings $F(1, 133) = 0.003$, $p = .954$, $\eta^2 < .001$; and behavioral intentions $F(1, 133) = 0.527$, $p = .469$, $\eta^2 = .004$. See Table 7 for means
and standard deviations. Taken together, hypothesis 4 is not supported.
To test hypothesis 5, the perceived status of the author will mediate the relation between author gender and favorability (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H5a), author ratings (H5b), and behavioral intentions (H5c)), a mediation analysis was conducted using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). Because only the effect of author gender on
ratings of support for gender equity and author favorability was found, only H5a and H5b are tested here. Because there is no evidence of an effect of strategy, no moderation is tested. The relation between author gender and support for gender equity was not mediated by perceived author status. As Figure 6 illustrates, the regression coefficient between author gender and perceived author status was not statistically significant ($b = -.19, SE = 0.20, p = .34$). The regression coefficient between perceived author status and support for gender equity was significant ($b = 0.65, SE = 0.06, p < .001$). We tested the significance of this indirect effect using bootstrapping procedures. Unstandardized indirect effects were computed for each of 10,000 bootstrapped samples, and the 95% confidence interval was computed by determining the indirect effects at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was -.12, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.37, 0.13. Thus, the indirect effect was not statistically significant.

![Figure 6. Mediation Model of Status Mediating Attitudes toward Gender Equity](image)

Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity as mediated by perceived status. The standardized...
regression coefficient between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity, controlling for perceived status, is in parentheses.

The relation between author gender and author favorability was not mediated by perceived author status. As Figure 7 illustrates, the regression coefficient between author gender and perceived author status was not statistically significant ($b = -0.19, SE = 0.20, p = .34$). The regression coefficient between perceived author status and author favorability was significant ($b = 0.61, SE = 0.05, p < .001$). We tested the significance of this indirect effect using bootstrapping procedures. Unstandardized indirect effects were computed for each of 10,000 bootstrapped samples, and the 95% confidence interval was computed by determining the indirect effects at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was $-0.12$, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from $-0.376$ to $0.13$. Thus, the indirect effect was not statistically significant.

![Figure 7. Mediation Model of Status Mediating Author Favorability](image)

Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between author gender and author favorability as mediated by perceived status. The standardized regression coefficient between author gender and author favorability, controlling for perceived status, is in parentheses.
To test hypothesis 6, that men who read articles that advocate for gender equity while highlighting that many men support gender equity will be more favorable (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H6a), author ratings (H6b), and behavioral intentions (H6c)), a 2-way MANOVA comparing the social norms article to the control article was conducted. The overall MANOVA was not significant, $F(3, 131) = 0.935$, $p = .426$, $\eta^2 = .021$. To conduct exploratory follow up analyses on each of the individual DVs, three ANOVAs were conducted and show marginally significant results for the three outcomes: support for gender equity $F(1, 133) = 2.67$, $p = .105$, $\eta^2 = .020$; author favorability $F(1, 133) = 2.37$, $p = .126$, $\eta^2 = .017$; and behavioral intentions $F(1, 133) = 2.37$, $p = .126$, $\eta^2 = .018$. All means are in the expected direction. See Table 6 for means and standard deviations. Taken together, hypothesis 6 is not supported, however the results trend in the expected direction.

To test hypothesis 7, perceived social norms will mediate the relation between author gender and favorability (as shown by ratings of support for gender equity (H7a), author ratings (H7b), and behavioral intentions (H7c), a mediation analysis was conducted using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). Because only the effect of author gender on ratings of support for gender equity and author favorability was found, only H7a and H7b are tested here. Because there is no evidence of an effect of strategy, no moderation is tested. The relation between author gender and support for gender equity was not mediated by perceived social norms. As Figure 8 illustrates, the regression coefficient between author gender and perceived social norms was not statistically significant ($b = 0.19$, $SE = 0.17$, $p = .26$). The regression coefficient between perceived social norms and support for gender equity was significant ($b = 0.68$, $SE = 0.07$, $p < .001$). We tested the
significance of this indirect effect using bootstrapping procedures. Unstandardized indirect effects were computed for each of 10,000 bootstrapped samples, and the 95% confidence interval was computed by determining the indirect effects at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was 0.13, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.09, 0.36. Thus, the indirect effect was not statistically significant.

Figure 8. Mediation Model of Social Norms Mediating Attitudes toward Gender Equity

Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity as mediated by perceived social norms. The standardized regression coefficient between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity, controlling for perceived social norms, is in parentheses.

The relation between author gender and author favorability was not mediated by perceived social norms. As Figure 9 illustrates, the regression coefficient between author gender and perceived social norms was not statistically significant ($b = 0.19, SE = 0.17, p = .258$). The regression coefficient between perceived social norms and author favorability was significant ($b = 0.53, SE = 0.07, p < .001$). We tested the significance of this indirect effect using bootstrapping procedures. Unstandardized indirect effects were
computed for each of 10,000 bootstrapped samples, and the 95% confidence interval was computed by determining the indirect effects at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was 0.10, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.07, 0.30. Thus, the indirect effect was not statistically significant.

Figure 9. Mediation Model of Social Norms Mediating Author Favorability

Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between author gender and author favorability as mediated by perceived social norms. The standardized regression coefficient between author gender and author favorability, controlling for perceived social norms, is in parentheses.

Additionally, I tested the mediating effect of surprise, between author gender and support for gender equity and author favorability using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). The relation between author gender and support for gender equity was mediated by surprise. As Figure 10 illustrates, author gender is a significant predictor of surprise ($b = 0.62, SE = 0.21, p = .003$) and surprise is a significant predictor of attitudes toward gender equity ($b = 0.31, SE = 0.06, p < .001$). We tested the significance of this indirect effect using bootstrapping procedures. Unstandardized indirect effects were computed for each of 10,000 bootstrapped samples, and the 95% confidence interval was computed by
determining the indirect effects at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was 0.19, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.08, 0.36. Thus, the indirect effect was statistically significant.

Figure 10. Mediation Model of Surprise Mediating Attitudes toward Gender Equity

Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity as mediated by surprise. The standardized regression coefficient between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity, controlling for surprise, is in parentheses.

The relation between author gender and author favorability was also mediated by surprise. As Figure 11 illustrates, author gender is a significant predictor of surprise \((b = 0.62, SE = 0.021, p = 0.004)\) and surprise is a significant predictor of attitudes toward gender equity \((b = 0.24, SE = 0.06, p < .001)\). We tested the significance of this indirect effect using bootstrapping procedures. Unstandardized indirect effects were computed for each of 10,000 bootstrapped samples, and the 95% confidence interval was computed by determining the indirect effects at the 2.5th and 97.5th percentiles. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was 0.15, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.06, 0.29. Thus, the indirect effect was statistically significant.
Figure 11. Mediation Model of Surprise Mediating Author Favorability

Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between author gender and author favorability as mediated by surprise. The standardized regression coefficient between author gender and author favorability, controlling for surprise, is in parentheses.

DISCUSSION

This study provides valuable information about effective framing. Understanding the mechanisms may make it possible for men and women to more effectively frame their message to better create greater buy-in for gender equity from men. In addition to more effectively framing messages about gender equity, this research aimed to understand the mechanisms that underlie this phenomenon. This study focused on three explanatory mechanisms, each that have previously been proposed as potential explanations for why male allies may be more effective at persuading and confronting, though past studies have not tested these explanations.

The first step of this research was to replicate past findings of male allies’ effectiveness at persuading other men that gender equity matters and to take action for gender equity. As a whole, this research replicated past findings showing that men are
more persuaded by other men when it comes to gender equity than they are by women. This, in particular, was found in relation to their attitudes toward gender equity as well as their attitudes to the persuader, in this case, the author. However, unlike some past literature (Trump-Steele et al., in prep), this finding did not extend to men’s intentions to behave in specific gender equitable ways. Even though the same measure was used in previous research, this measure captures a collection of rather specific actions that someone could take to show their support for gender equity. A more general show of behaviors might better capture behavioral intentions that might show this difference. Alternatively, these articles may not have been persuasive enough to make a difference in their behavioral intentions.

The primary goal of this research was to determine the mechanisms that explain this phenomenon: that is, why do men respond more favorably and are more persuaded by a man than by a woman. We specifically tested three different potential theoretical explanations: Attributional Analysis of Persuasion (Petty, Fleming, Priester, & Feinstein, 2001; Priester & Petty, 1995), Status Characteristics (Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986; Wagner & Berger, 1997), and Social Norm theories (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991). From an experimental standpoint, using these three different approaches as a strategy did not reach statistical significance, and thus only provides weak evidence about their comparative effectiveness as strategies. Specifically, when it came to strategy effectiveness, highlighting other men who support gender equity was the most effective, followed by highlighting one’s lack of self-interest, followed by the control, and finally with highlighting one’s status as the least effective strategy. However,
taken with the following information about the explanatory mechanisms at play, future work can build strategies that have the best likelihood of success.

After reading the articles, in addition to making ratings regarding their attitudes toward gender equity, favorability toward the author, and behavioral intentions; participants also rated how much they perceived the author to be self-interested in the topic of gender equity, the perceived status of the author, the perceived extant norms of men supporting gender equity, as well as their surprise at the message of the author. These ratings allowed us to test the potential mediating mechanism that explains why men are more persuaded by men than by women when it comes to gender equity. Of the four explanations tested in these analyses, there was evidence that perceived self-interest and surprise both mediate that relation. These are both in line with work in persuasion, showing that when the messenger is not seen to benefit directly from their message, they are more persuasive. This is all in line with the Attributional Analysis of Persuasion (Eagly et al., 1978; Wood & Eagly, 1981; Petty et al., 2001; Priester & Petty, 1995).

While all four measured potential mediators were predictors of attitudes toward gender equity and author favorability, only self-interest and surprise were predicted by gender of the author. This suggests that to the extent that men perceived the author to have status, not be self-interested, that other men support gender equity, and their surprise at the content of the message all are at play in their likelihood of being persuaded to think gender equity is important. However, for perceived status and perceived social norms, somethings seems to be at play beyond author gender.

In addition to the evidence that self-interest and surprise are the explanatory mechanisms, the fact that the attributional analysis of persuasion theory explains this
phenomenon it potentially indicates that women (and other targets) can use a strategy that highlights that they are advocating for gender equity (and other forms of equity) for the greater good but not because it directly benefits themselves. Additionally, it could be that, like found in initial studies of attributional analysis of persuasion (Eagly et al., 1978; Priester & Petty, 1995; Wood & Eagly, 1981) that when the message is counter to expectations, there is less central processing. While this might be beneficial in some cases, such as leading to more generic acceptance, it may also not lead to as long lasting of an effect (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). However, there is evidence that increased surprise leads to an increase in effortful processing of the message (Petty et al., 2001). This was found in a study that manipulated whether the message confirmed or disconfirmed expectations, as well as whether the expectations confirmed or disconfirmed were at the individual versus group level. This increased effortful processing may, in turn, lead to persuasion that has a longer lasting impact than persuasion that follows a more peripheral route (Petty & Cacioppo, 2012).

Although, perceived social norms did not mediate the relation between author gender and attitudes toward gender equity, perceived social norms was indeed still a predictor of attitudes toward gender equity. To the extent that the reader believed that other men support gender equity, they too were more likely to support gender equity. However, perceived social norms of men supporting gender equity was not predicted by author gender. In addition to perceived social norms predicting attitudes toward gender equity and similar to past research, this research finds that the strategy of highlighting other men who support gender equity, thus setting the social norms is the most effective strategy. This might suggest that instead of treating men as part of the problem, working
to highlight men who are working as allies to support women. This idea has received pushback from some feminist scholars, as transformative and radical gender equity requires “fundamentally altering power relations in organizations” (Meyerson & Kolb, 2000, p. 554), and a ‘reliance’ on men and their power just furthers the gendered power relations in organizations. However, this is important because consistent with work on using norms (e.g., “very few men are against gender equity”) to reduce bias (Duguid & Thomas-Hunt, 2015) or attitude change based on attitudes expressed by those around you (e.g., “I, as a man, am against sexism”) and their condoning or condemning of discrimination (Zitek & Hebl, 2007). It also highlights the importance of movements and organizations such as HeForShe and Men Advocating Real Change (MARC). By focusing on the behavior of the group (in this case men) it can be easier to create systemic change; as Lewin (1947, p. 34) noted: “it is usually easier to change individuals formed into a group than to change any one of them separately.”

**Limitations**

As with any study, this research has limitations. For one, all mediation analyses were collected on data collected at the same time point. While this concern limits the strength of the causal claims that can be drawn by using cross-sectional data, it still provides important initial evidence of the mechanisms through which the relation of author gender and attitudes toward gender equity are operating for men.

Another limitation is in regards to the manipulation of persuasion strategy. These manipulations only used one exemplar for each of the potential explanations. These manipulations may not have been strong enough and may not have truly tapped into the given explanation. This seems to be the case, as the manipulations did not necessarily
align with their measured effects. As can be seen in Table 4, the articles that aimed to manipulate both self-interest and status impacted perceived self-interest, such that the author was seen to be less self-interested. This lack of impact of the article manipulations limits the conclusions that can be drawn regarding article strategies. However, this does not mean that negate the explanatory mechanisms.

Given the current climate in which this research took place, in late 2018 and early 2019, the United States has been experiencing an uptick in the amount of conversation around gender equity. It is highly unlikely that this was the only message the participants have encountered on the topic of gender equity recently. Given this, participants may be oversaturated when it comes to this type of messaging and in turn less influenced by any one particular argument and author. This may act to attenuate the effects of author gender seen in previous research.

**Future Research**

However, there is an important potential caveat, certain men who enact behaviors that are in line with supporting women may experience their own stigmatization, such as being perceived as less masculine, gay, or weak. Related, if the male ally is perceived to belong to another stigmatized or lower-status group, the male ally may not be taken as seriously as he may be seen to have a self-interest in reducing discrimination and prejudice in general; thus, his comments may not have the same perception of objectivity and surprise. However, the results of this research do not seem to indicate this pushback. Future research should better understand the impact on men who act as allies for gender equity and the potential boundary conditions that surround their success.
One area for future research is what the combined effects of allies and women are in changing the attitudes of men. This may be particularly important in the context of training when male allies may bring the needed authority and importance of the topic, but women may bring important legitimacy. This research informs this future research by further showing the ways that women are particularly denigrated by men when they discuss issues of gender equity, and how this hurts the resulting persuasion to support gender equity.

Related, as this is a very specific component of effective ally behavior, future research should focus on other effective ally behavior. This is particularly important because this study suggests that allies are very important and effective; however, this is not necessarily always the case. In addition to focusing on more behaviors of male allies, this line of research can be expanded to allies for different groups, such as White allies, allies without disabilities, straight allies, cisgender allies, and other dominant group allies.

Conclusion

Taken together, this research provides further evidence that men play an important role in persuading other men that gender equity matters. Importantly, this research aimed to elucidate the mechanisms that explain why men may be more persuasive to other men than women are. The two mechanisms that explained this phenomenon were surprise and a lack of perceived self-interest. These two explanations are most in line with the Attributional Analysis of Persuasion theory (Eagly et al., 1978; Wood & Eagly, 1981; Petty et al., 2001; Priester & Petty, 1995). That is, men, as a group, are not seen to have a vested self-interest in supporting and calling others to support
gender equity—and thus men are more surprised at their message as well as less likely to perceive them making the plea for self-interested reasons, leading to greater beliefs in the importance of gender equity.

While none of the strategies used in the articles reached statistical significance as being more or less effective than control. highlighting the social norms of men supporting gender equity and highlighting one’s lack of self interest both showed promise as strategies that warrant future research to make both men and women more persuasive to men in relation to attitudes toward gender equity. Highlighting social norms of men supporting gender equity is in line with past research that showed highlighting male role models who support gender equity was the most effective strategy (Trump-Steele, et al., in prep) and adds another potential strategy that warrants future research, highlighting one’s lack of self-interest.
Appendices
Appendix A: Stimuli

A Call for Gender Equity: It’s Not About Self-Interest

Michelle Steele
CEO & President of Steele Corp.

Gender inequity has real-world implications. The problem of inequity among gender is not simply a problem found in under-developed countries, but here in the United States as well. According to the Global Gender Gap report from 2017, the United states is ranked 49 in terms of gender equity. This ranking is unacceptable.

This is not coming from a place of self-interest. I am not getting anything out of this personally.

According to a Pew Research Survey, women earned 82% of what men earned in 2017. Based on this data, it would take an extra 47 days of work for women to earn what men did during that same year. While it is clear that women are not inferior to men, this data shows otherwise. Women are often given fewer opportunities, less respect, and less pay than their male co-workers. In the United States, the fight to end gender inequity is far from over. Despite making up roughly half of the general population, women are more likely to live in poverty compared to men. According to the National Women’s Law Center, more than one in eight women, a total of 16.9 million people, live in insufficient conditions. Furthermore, only 32 Fortune 500 CEOs are women. This number was released as part of Fortune Magazine’s 2017 Fortune 500 list and is the highest it has ever been. Not only are these numbers startling, but it undermines the progress we’ve made as a nation. In terms of gender equity, maybe we aren’t moving fast enough.

There is no easy way to fix the gap in gender equity. It will not fix itself. If we want to see change, we must try to fix these problems together. Women receive fewer opportunities, are less respected, and do not receive equal compensation for the work they do. This is a call to action for you to join the quest for gender equity.
A Call for Gender Equity: Men Championing Women

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Men and women across the country are joining together to gain gender equity. Over 80% of men support gender equity. Truly a norm.

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As president and CEO of Steele Corp., I am out here today to use my position to tell you to support gender equity.

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Appendix B Measures

Attitudes towards women and gender equity.

Considering the article you just read, please respond with how much you agree with each of these statements.  
(1 - Do not agree at all, 4 - Somewhat agree, 7 - Strongly agree)
Gender equity is important to me.
This article really made me think about the issue.
The article reflects my personal values and beliefs.
I believe in the purpose of this article.
Achieving gender equity is very important for our country to address.
More attention should be placed on the issue of gender inequity.
More government related action and support is needed to help women with this issue.
I am motivated to work on women's behalf.
I feel compelled to take direct action on the issue of gender inequity.
I will be likely to do something now about gender inequity.
I like the author.
The author's argument was well-reasoned.
This article is well written.
The author seems intelligent.
I enjoyed reading the article.
The author was credible.
I agree with the author's conclusion.

Behavioral Intentions.

After reading the article, how likely are you to do the following behaviors? 
(1 = Extremely unlikely, 4 - Neither likely nor unlikely, 7 - Extremely likely)
Sign a petition for gender pay equity.
Sign up for #HeForShe.
Post a status to your facebook or twitter telling people about the gender pay gap.
Share an article with your friends highlighting the gender pay gap.
Confront sexism in your workplace.
Advocate for women in your workplace.
Donate your time, money, and/or talent to a group that supports women.
Stand up for a woman in your workplace.
Argue AGAINST programs that only help women.
Argue AGAINST feminism.
Argue FOR feminism.
Make statements that indicate that you are feminist.
Make fun of a feminist.
Write a tweet, post a facebook message, and/or share an article supporting gender equity.
Promote the need for gender equity.
Educate yourself more on the issues women face in the workplace.
Make fun of men who support women.
Specifically try to recruit men to speak up on behalf of women.

**Potential Mediators**

Greater gender equity would directly benefit the author
The arguments made by the author are motivated by self-interest
The author has selfish motivations (The author has authority
The author is powerful
The author is high status
The author is prestigious
Many men support gender equity
Most men support gender equity
I can easily think of examples of male feminists
The author’s message was surprising
The author’s message was unexpected

**Demographics**

Gender: Male, Female, Other
Age: open ended numeric
Race/Ethnicity: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Other
Education: Less than high school, High school graduate, Some college, 2 year degree, 4 year degree, Professional degree, Doctorate
Employment: Employed Full Time, Employed Part Time, Unemployed Looking for Work, Unemployed not Looking for Work, Retired, Student, Disabled
Marital Status: Married, Widowed, Divorced, Separated, Never Married
Sexual Orientation: Straight, Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual, Other
Zip Code: open ended numeric
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