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Bringing the Invisible Talent to the Table: The Underrepresentation of Women in Executive Leadership

This questionnaire measures senior leaderships' perception of the barriers that limited women opportunities to gain senior leadership positions using a 5-point Likert Scale. The qualifiers for this scale are listed per question below.

1. How often are you in a position to select women for leadership positions?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often)
2. How often are you in a position to select women for leadership development and/or training?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often)
- 3a. Is there a mentoring program for women in your office?
 - a. (1 – Yes; 2- No)
- 3b. If yes, how often have you or someone in your office mentored women?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often)
4. Have you worked for a woman senior leader that was not successful as a leader?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often)
5. How often do you encourage women to apply for leadership positions, training, and/or opportunities?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often)

6. Do you know women senior leaders that are or have been successful?

a. (1 – Yes; 2- No)

How much do you agree with the following statements:

7. The Department of the Air Force development is effective at advancing women into leadership positions.

(1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Neither Agree or Disagree; 4 – Agree; 5 – Stronger Agree)

8. There are benefits to having women in leadership positions.

a. (1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Neither Agree or Disagree; 4 – Agree; 5 – Strongly Agree)

9. I have complete faith in women in senior leadership positions in the Department of the Air Force.

a. (1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Neither Agree or Disagree; 4 – Agree; 5 – Strongly Agree)

10. Women face more barriers to becoming senior leaders than men.

a. (1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Neither Agree or Disagree; 4 – Agree; 5 – Strongly Agree)

11. Women display different leadership characteristics than men.

a. (1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Neither Agree or Disagree; 4 – Agree; 5 – Strongly Agree)

12. Women in senior leadership positions are held to a higher standard than men.

a. (1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Neither Agree or Disagree; 4 – Agree; 5 – Strongly Agree)

13. Do you push for systematic changes to develop more women for leadership opportunities?

a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often)

Interview Questions

The purpose of this proposed research study is to explore the challenges, reasons or factors for the lack of women in executive leadership within the Department of the Air Force.

The U.S. Department of Defense is providing support for the research.

The U.S. Department of Defense personnel responsible for the protection of human subjects will have access to research records.

Demographic Questions

- What is your current position/title?
 - How many years have you served in an Executive Leadership position?
 - Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?
 - No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
 - Yes, Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
 - What is your race? Mark one or more races to indicate what you consider yourself to be.
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian (for example, Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, or Vietnamese)
 - Black or African American
 - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (for example Samoan, Guamanian, or Chamorro)
 - White
 - What is your highest level of education? HS Diploma/GED; AA/AS, BS, MS/MBA, PhD/DBA
 - What is your career field?
 - What is your gender? Male; Female; Prefer not to answer
 - What is your age group? 18-30 years; 31-40 years; 41-50 years; 51-60 years; above 60 years
- 1) Why is there a lack of women in executive leadership positions within the Department of Air Force senior executive service?
 - 2) What actions or behaviors contribute to the lack of women in leadership positions?
 - 3) What actions or behaviors contribute to helping more women gain leadership positions?

- 4) In what ways are women leaders developed differently than men leaders within the Department of the Air Force?
- 5) How do these differences impact the ability of women to gain executive leadership roles?
- 6) What barriers are present in the Department of the Air Force that women face in moving into executive leadership?
- 7) What elements are present in the Department of the Air Force to remove barriers women face in moving into executive leadership?
- 8) What can you do to help address the lack of women in leadership positions?