

Where Women Stand in Tribal vs. Non-Tribal Gaming Leadership

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Introduction

In the last decade, women have made impressive strides in the American corporate workplace. In 2018, women held more than half (51.5%) of all management, professional, and related occupations (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). In 2019, 44% of companies had three or more women in their c-suite, as compared to 29% of companies in 2015 (Thomas et al., 2019). Companies are hiring more women at the director level or above and on average, senior-level women are promoted at higher rates than men — both trends resulting in more women in senior leadership (Thomas et al., 2019).

Companies are more committed to gender diversity, the equal representation of women on boards and senior management positions, than ever (Francoeur, Labelle, & Sinclair-Desgagné, 2008; Thomas et al., 2019). Now, 87% of companies state they are highly committed to gender diversity, compared to 56% in 2012 (Thomas et al., 2019). When evaluating senior leaders, 73% are highly committed to gender diversity and nearly half are putting mechanisms in place to improve gender diversity within their organizations (Thomas et al., 2019). In 2019, 59% of managers said gender diversity was a high priority for them, compared to only 42% in 2015 (Thomas et al., 2019). Further, more than half (51%) of male managers state gender diversity is a high priority for them, compared to 33% in 2015, and 61% of women say it is a high priority for them compared to 44% in 2015 (Thomas et al., 2019).

Despite this progress, women remain underrepresented in leadership positions. In business overall, women represent 34% of senior manager/director positions, 30% of vice president positions, 26% of senior vice president positions, and 21% of the c-suite (Thomas et al., 2019). Broken down by race, white women hold the majority of positions (Thomas et al., 2019). Women of color represent only 9% of senior manager/director positions, 7% of vice president positions, 5% of senior vice president positions, and 4% of the c-suite (Thomas et al., 2019). A similar trend in the hospitality sector occurs. Women in hospitality hold 48% of director roles, 30% of vice president roles, 24% of executive vice president/senior vice president roles, and 16% of chief roles (Castell Project, 2019). Women dominate in departments like human resources (76%) and sales and marketing (58%), and lag behind in operations (23%) (Castell Project, 2019).

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Few academic studies have examined this phenomenon within the gaming subset of hospitality. The U.S. Census Bureau (2017) reports women make up more of the gaming service workforce (48.1%) than the national average (43.1%) and hold more manager-level titles (44.9%) than the national average (43.1%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). This is the first study to empirically examine representation of women in gaming management, differentiating non-tribal from tribal gaming. This study will evaluate: one, representation of women in tribal gaming management both vertically (by position level) and horizontally (across department) and two, differences in representation of women between non-tribal and tribal casino management (vertically). This study begins by exploring the current literature on women in gaming management, the literature on women in tribal gaming, and introduces a discussion on why women's leadership in both tribal and non-tribal gaming is imperative. It provides an indispensable metric to gauge the gaming industry's gender leadership gap, helping to pinpoint where industry leaders have succeeded in their talent recruitment and retention, and where they need to further emphasize their efforts going forward.

Literature Review

Women's Representation in Gaming Management

Industry nonprofit organizations, like Global Gaming Women and Women in Gaming & Hospitality Australasia, are dedicated to the development of women in the industry. Several gaming companies, like Caesars Entertainment, have stepped up their commitment to the advancement of women. Caesars' "50-50 by 2025" initiative is committed to 50/50 representation of women in leadership roles by 2025 (Caesars Entertainment Corporation, 2019). Additionally, women have been earning more degrees than ever before. In 2017, women accounted for 57.3% of bachelor's degrees, 59.4% of master's degrees, and 53.3% of doctorate degrees (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Women have been earning more bachelor's degrees than men since 1987 and more master's degrees than men since 1989 (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). This pattern can be seen across racial/ethnic groups (de Brey et al., 2019). These statistics prove there is a pipeline of educated women that can take on leadership roles, where in the past there may not have been. A degree alone is not always a catalyst for career success, industry work experience is also critical. However, an advanced degree, like a master's of business administration, can be beneficial for advancement into upper management and higher-paying positions (Simpson, Sturges, Woods, and Altman, 2005). Given the increased industry focus on the advancement of women, and more women in the educational pipeline than ever before, it would be expected that the women's leadership gap in gaming would be narrowing. Few academic studies have examined this phenomenon in the United States.

In the past 20 years, three academic studies (Costen, Hardigree, & Testagrossa, 2003; Schaap, 2008; Repetti & Hoffman, 2018) and one industry study (Adrian and Duarte, 2017), concerning women's representation in gaming leadership have been published. Costen et al. (2003) evaluated 496 management positions within the United States' top 24 performing casinos (based on gross gaming revenue) in 2001 and found that women held 24.8% of these positions. No position level analysis was conducted however, so it is unclear if there were significant differences at various management levels, such as manager versus director versus vice president. Further, Costen et al. (2003) did not include any tribal casinos in their sample, like Foxwoods Resort Casino and Mohegan Sun Resort, which were two of the largest U.S. casinos at the time (Beauregard, 2019). The authors did however, evaluate differences by region, and found that Atlantic City had the highest percentage of women's representation in management overall at 26.1%, while Las Vegas had the lowest at 23.4%. All other regions were similar to the overall average of 24.8%. When considering just gaming management positions, Las Vegas had the highest percentage, 35.7%, while Atlantic City had the lowest, 23.9%. While these differences were not tested for statistical significance, these regional differences indicate that something else might be at play.

The next known study, Schaap (2008), was concerned with promotion opportunities for women in gaming, but is discussed here as the study results included percentages of women's representation in management. Schaap (2008) contacted 3,722 supervisors and above in Nevada casinos and had 120 completed responses. While non-response bias was not discussed, it was assumed to be unproblematic. The 120 responses were evaluated as a true representation of the population. Of the 120 supervisors and above, women represented 22.5%, but only 19.5% of the 106 senior management positions. This indicates that not only do men hold more supervisor and above positions, but they also hold a higher percentage of senior management positions. As the position increases in prestige, the percentage of women holding these roles decreases.

Adrian and Duarte (2017) surveyed twenty-one gaming corporations in their *Gaming Gender Equality Index*, sixteen of which are based in Las Vegas. Only five of the companies responded to the voluntary survey, while the rest of the data is collected from "each corporation's website" (Adrian and Duarte, 2017). Adrian and Duarte (2017) evaluated only board and vice president-level representation. Of the corporations sampled, they concluded women occupy an average of 16.4% of board seats and 22.7% of vice president roles.

A more recent, larger study conducted by Repetti and Hoffman (2018), evaluated 972 non-tribal and tribal U.S. casinos with 10,950 reported management positions. They found that 33.5% of these management positions were held by women, a higher percentage than the two previous studies. Similar to Schaap (2008), Repetti and Hoffman (2018) also found that the more senior the position, the fewer women there are. At the manager level, 46.7% of positions were held by women. This decreases as the position rises, with women only representing 19.4% of all chief, president, or owner job titles. The higher percentage of women in management positions in Repetti and Hoffman (2018) may be attributable to factors such as larger sample size, more property variation, or the year studied, since this study was conducted 15 years after Costen et al. (2003). The year studied alludes to other factors, including demographic or societal change, like overall percentage of women in the workforce or education levels of women. Additionally, two of the three past studies (Costen et al., 2003; Schaap, 2008) were conducted before the massive expansion of U.S. gaming, post the U.S. Great Recession. Since 2008, U.S. gaming revenue has increased every year, with record revenue yearly since 2012 (RubinBrown, 2019). This is important to note, since there were less opportunities for management positions for both men and women at the time of the previous studies. Now with the expansion, there are many more leadership opportunities for all genders in new markets and properties.

Women Employed in Tribal Gaming

Few studies (Fox, Luna-Firebaugh, & Williams, 2015; Brzuzy, Stromwall, Sharp, Wilson, & Segal, 2000; Hoeft, 2014) on women's employment in tribal gaming exist. Other studies in the field focus on issues like American Indian women's gambling behavior (Momper & Jackson, 2007).

Fox et al. (2015) looked at the employment of American Indian women at tribal casinos by evaluating 89 tribes (self-reported) and found that American Indian women represented 37% of casino leadership. They did not have any further evaluation within the casinos, such as department or position. Brzuzy et al. (2000) discussed how tribal gaming offers "economic opportunities" for American Indian women, particularly providing working American Indian mothers with necessities like full benefit packages and living wages. While Momper and Dennis (2010) predominantly focused on the community impacts of tribal gaming, their interviews with twenty Midwest American Indian women found that the respondents felt that the tribal casino had supported employment needs for both men and women on the reservation. Hoeft (2014) described how two Oneida women leaders brought bingo gaming into their nation while successfully boosting employment opportunities.

The studies found on women's employment in tribal gaming specifically focus on American Indian women's employment in gaming as opposed to women in general. This distinction is important to note because not all women leaders in tribal casinos, or women employees of tribal casinos, are members of a tribal nation. Tribal casinos employ non-Native workers, including in leadership positions, thus, the women who hold these positions aren't necessarily American Indian. For example, *Indian Country Today* (2017) touted four women executives named to lead tribal casinos and enterprises that year, of which only two were members of tribal nations.

The Business Case for Women's Leadership

When women are underrepresented in leadership positions in any industry, the industry underutilizes the full talent of their workforce, misses key insights into half of their customer base, and neglects the creative power of diversity. Companies with more diverse and inclusive leadership are more innovative, productive, and profitable (Epler, 2018). Further, women's leadership styles are likely to improve a companies' organizational performance (Desvaux et al., 2017) since women bring new perspectives to the table and ask different questions (Joecks et al., 2012).

More women on a firm's board of directors and in senior management leads to better overall financial performance in both accounting-based performance and stock price-based ratios (Dawson et al., 2014; Dezsó & Ross, 2012; Hoobler et al., 2018; Krishnan & Park, 2005; Shrader et al., 1997). Previous studies (Dawson, Kersley, & Natella, 2014; Dezsó & Ross, 2012; Hoobler, Masterson, Nkomo, & Michel, 2018; Krishnan & Park, 2005; Shrader, Blackburn, & Iles, 1997) show that increased women's representation in management leads to increases in return on equity, return on assets, return on sales, payout ratios, and return on invested capital, which are accounting-based indicators of past performance, and on Tobin's Q and valuation ratios, which are financial indicators for anticipated future performance.

There are a few studies that found no significant relationship or a negative relationship between financial performance and gender (Adams & Ferreira, 2009; Rose, 2007; Wellalage & Locke, 2013; Yeh & Trejos, 2015). These studies had one of the following situations in their research: a linear relationship between the variables was assumed or only one woman was in the sample. Recent research indicates that the relationship between financial performance and gender may not be linear, instead there may be a critical mass level, either in number or percentage of women (Joecks, Pull, and Vetter, 2013; Torchia, Calabrò, & Huse, 2011). The second potential reason why studies may have found no significant relationship or a negative relationship is because there was only one woman in the sample, an indication of tokenism.

Tokenism, or the act of hiring a woman, person of color, or other person belonging to an underrepresented group for a leadership position to make the organization appear more diverse, can counter the positive effects generally found with diversification (Kanter, 1977; Lee, Marshall, Rallis, & Moscardi, 2015; Liu, Wei, & Xie, 2014; Torchia et al., 2011; Yoder, 1991). A woman in this position can feel increased performance pressure, feel socially isolated, feel like the lone representative of her gender, and is particularly susceptible to bias, stereotypes, microaggressions, and sexual harassment (Kanter, 1977; Thomas et al., 2019; Yoder, 1991).

Finally, the American Indian tribes that operate casinos do so for the economic development and self-sufficiency of their communities (Indian Gaming, 2019). If gender diversity has been proven to bring better performance, promoting gender diversity in tribal casino management will assist tribes in their economic viability goals.

Methodology

A snapshot of Casino City's *Gaming Directory* from December 22, 2016 was used to conduct this study. The *Gaming Directory* includes information on casinos and gam-

ing executives from over 5,000 properties worldwide, of which information was available for 1,524 U.S. properties and 13,139 U.S. executives. This study differs from Repetti and Hoffman (2018) in that it evaluates this database in two samples, non-tribal versus tribal casinos, instead of all reported U.S. casinos. It further expands on the regional differences that Costen et al. (2003) found. Since this study is concerned with the similarities and differences between non-tribal and American Indian casinos, the dataset was limited to the U.S. where the majority of American Indian casinos are located. This sample only included casinos and racinos, employees with a manager or above title, and companies with more than one employee listed. The dataset provided indicated which properties were tribal casinos and which ones were not. Following Repetti and Hoffman (2018), employees were assigned to department and positions based on their title in the dataset. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine if there were significant differences in representation of women in tribal casinos based on the position they held across our levels of leadership. Analyses were also conducted using independent sample t-tests to test if there was a statistically significant difference in representation of women in tribal casinos to those of non-tribal casinos for both positions and within departments.

Results

The dataset consisted of 972 U.S. casinos and racinos, of which 567 were non-tribal casinos and 405 were tribal. This equates to 58.3% of the dataset as non-tribal and 41.7% as tribal. The National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC, 2016) reported that in 2016 there were 474 U.S. gaming operations, of all classes, run by 238 different American Indian tribes. This dataset studied, therefore, represents reported management from 85% of all tribal casinos.

Tribal casinos are classified into three different categories depending on the type of gaming that is allowed. Class II gaming includes games such as bingo, pull-tabs and non-banked card games and Class III gaming allows house-banked card games, such as blackjack, and slot machines, operating on random number generators (Indian Gaming, 2019). The dataset does not distinguish between the different classes of gaming facilities, just tribal or not, so no further analyses were conducted to see what percentage were Class III casinos. Class III casinos are most closely related to non-tribal casinos.

According to the American Gaming Association (AGA, 2017), tribal casinos represent 37% of all U.S. casinos, including land-based, riverboats, racetrack casinos, and card rooms. While only 37% of U.S. casinos are tribal, this study has a slightly higher percentage at 41.7%. The difference is most likely attributable to smaller card rooms which only reported one employee and are include in the Gaming Directory. The card rooms were excluded from this study but are included in the AGA's computation. These percentages indicate the sample is a close representation to the gaming properties in the U.S.

The 405 tribal casinos included reported 4,906 employees at a manager position or above, while the 567 non-tribal casinos reported 6,044 employees at similar levels. Tribal properties reported an average of 12.1 executives per property, while the non-tribal casinos reported an average of 10.7 executives. So, although the number of reported properties and employees were smaller for tribal casinos, they reported more managers per property on average. Not all casinos in the sample reported property specifics but for those that did, tribal casinos have more casino square footage, yet approximately the same number of slot machines. They have about 25% less table games and approximately 35% less total employees than non-tribal casinos.

In the tribal sample, 37.8% of all managers reported were women, while 33.6% were women in the non-tribal casino sample. An independent t-test was performed and the results showed there is a significant difference in the percentage of women in management positions with a higher percentage in tribal casinos (mean = .38, sd = 0.485) than in non-tribal casinos (mean = 0.34, sd = 0.472). Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the dataset by type of casino operations, tribal or non-tribal.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
<u>Tribal Casinos</u>					
Management Gender*	4,906	0	1	0.62	0.49
Casino Square Footage	368	550	519,000	63,084.89	76,864.65
# of Slot Machines	398	4	7,471	902.19	922.00
# of Table Games	256	1	300	25.47	35.77
# of Employees	372	4	8,400	613.80	897.14
<u>Non-tribal Casinos</u>					
Management Gender*	6,044	0	1	0.66	0.47
Casino Square Footage	440	140	350,000	49,650.49	47,772.73
# of Slot Machines	471	3	5,300	915.51	822.44
# of Table Games	392	1	232	34.00	35.52
# of Employees	413	5	9,300	961.56	1290.27

Note: *Management Gender: 0 = Women, 1 = Men.

The number and percentage of reported women within tribal casinos at each of the four position groupings are shown in Table 2. As stated earlier, women represented 37.8% of management positions within the sample, but that is not consistent throughout all four position levels. Women accounted for 47.6% of manager positions in tribal casinos which was the highest representation of all position levels. The percentage of women holding a director title, at 34.1%, was slightly lower than the overall average, but the vice president (VP) and above positions were much lower. While the top-ranking positions of owner, president, chief positions, etc. had the lowest percentage of women at 23.5%, it was not that different than the VP level which was at 25.7%. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the percentage of women at each position level for tribal casinos and the results showed there was a significant effect in explaining the variance, $F(3,4902) = 53.390$, $p < .0005$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that all comparisons, besides Owner/President/Chief to VP/General Manager, were significantly different from one another at $p < .0005$. Owner/President/Chief compared to VP/General Manager were not significantly different from each other.

Table 2
Percentage of Women in Tribal Casinos by Position

	Total employees	% Women	Std. Dev.
Owner/President/Chief	272	23.5	.425
Vice President/General Manager	631	25.7	.437
Director	2,043	34.1	.474
Manager	1,969	47.6	.500
Total	4,906	37.8	.485

Of the 405 tribal casinos in the sample, 181 reported at least one employee in the top leadership group of Owner/President/Chief. Sixty of the 181 casinos, 33.2%, that reported on their top leadership group had at least one woman. The 181 casinos consisted of 121 tribal casinos with all men in top leadership, 28 casinos with mixed representation, and 32 casinos with only women reported at this level. It is important to note that many, 112 out of 181, only reported one person at this level. Out of the 497 non-tribal casinos in

the sample, 303 reported employees in the top leadership group. Seventy-four of the 303 casinos, 24.4%, had at least one woman reported. The 497 casinos consisted of 229 with all male representation, 53 with mixed gender representation reported, and only 21 had all female representation. Of the 497 casinos that reported executives in this position, 184 only reported one person at this level.

Since there was a significant difference in the overall percentage of women in tribal casinos compared to non-tribal casinos, additional independent t-tests were run by position to see where the differences were occurring. Table 3 shows the results of the independent t-tests for each position. The only significant difference occurred in the top position, Owner/President/Chief. These results indicate that tribal and non-tribal casinos in the U.S. have a similar percentage of women in manager, director, and VP roles but in the highest position, tribal casinos have a significantly higher percentage of women, 23.5% compared to 17.1%.

Table 3
Independent Sample t-Test for Percentage of Women by Casino Type

Position	Casino Type	N	Mean	St. Dev.	t	df	Sig.
Owner/President/Chief	Tribal	272	.24	.425	2.085	503.571	.038*
	Non-Tribal	497	.17	.377			
Vice President/General Manager ^a	Tribal	631	.25	.437	.459	1.707	.646
	Non-Tribal	1,078	.25	.431			
Director	Tribal	2,034	.34	.474	.952	4355.603	.341
	Non-Tribal	2,799	.33	.469			
Manager	Tribal	1,969	.48	.500	1.144	3543.519	.253
	Non-Tribal	1,670	.46	.498			

* $p < .05$

Note: Equal variances assumed for all positions with superscript a. All others equal variances not assumed.

Table 4 shows the number of employees in tribal casinos that were reported in each department and also the percentage of these employees that are women. When compared to non-tribal casinos, only three departments indicate a significant difference between tribal casinos and non-tribal casinos, with all showing higher representation of women in tribal casinos. The three departments were security and surveillance, 16.8% vs. 10.1%, $p = .001$, casino, 26.9% vs. 19.3%, $p < .0005$, and food and beverage, 33.3% vs. 21.1%, $p < .0005$.

Discussion

The tipping point where minority group (women, people of color, or other members of underrepresented groups, here women) voices begin to be heard in the workplace is considered 30% (Stovall, 2018). Joecks et al. (2012) consider this the critical mass point. On average, women in this study are above the critical mass threshold for both tribal (37.8%) and non-tribal (33.6%) gaming management. However, this is the overall management average and does not consider the level of executive power. Although 30% is excellent progress, and women lead more in tribal than non-tribal gaming at senior levels, a gender leadership gap still persists. Gender-balance is considered 40-60% representation of women at each level of the pipeline (Joecks et al., 2012). In this study, representation of women significantly decreases as the position increases. Women only represent 23.5%

Table 4
Percentage of Women by Department

	Tribal Casinos			Non-Tribal Casinos		
	Total employees	% Women	Std. Dev.	Total employees	% Women	Std. Dev.
Maintenance	170	5.9	.236	167	3.0	.171
Information Technology	282	11.7	.322	304	10.5	.307
Security & Surveillance	561	16.8	.374	593	10.1	.302
Owner/Chief Executive Officer	142	19.0	.394	422	14.9	.357
General Manager	419	23.2	.422	521	18.4	.388
Casino	791	26.9	.444	914	19.3	.395
Food & Beverage	369	33.3	.472	475	21.1	.408
Risk Management	39	33.3	.478	45	48.9	.506
Entertainment	79	38.0	.488	112	39.9	.491
Finance	428	47.9	.500	570	47.2	.500
Purchasing	88	48.9	.503	102	41.2	.495
Legal & Government	51	49.0	.505	42	45.2	.504
Hotel	194	51.0	.501	293	42.3	.495
Marketing	541	54.2	.499	657	53.4	.499
Retail/Spa/Golf	97	61.9	.488	56	66.1	.478
Public Relations	39	66.7	.478	83	80.7	.397
Sales & Events	91	68.1	.469	137	79.6	.405
Cage	160	70.0	.460	137	68.6	.466
Human Resources	349	79.4	.405	402	77.1	.421
Wardrobe	16	87.5	.342	12	91.7	.289
Total	4,906	37.8	.485	6,044	33.6	.472

of tribal gaming senior leadership (owner/ president/chief roles) and only 17.1% of non-tribal senior leadership. These results illustrate vertical gender segregation, or a potential glass ceiling, and horizontal gender segregation, or the unequal distribution of men and women into different departments, in both the tribal and non-tribal gaming workplaces. The overwhelming majority of women are still in low to mid-level management positions in lower-paying, less-valued, less prestigious traditionally women-dominated departments like human resources or marketing—departments that are perceived to not directly contribute to the bottom line or require as much skill (Baldwin & Ackerson, 2017). The three departments in which tribal casinos have a significantly higher representation of women than compared to non-tribal casinos were casino, food and beverage, and security, which are mainly customer-facing departments. This may be an indication that while tribal casinos hire or promote more women, it mainly occurs in service-related areas.

In this study, women hold more management positions in tribal casinos than in non-tribal casinos at all levels, but only significantly at the very top of the organization. Also, as compared to non-tribal casinos, tribal casinos have a higher percentage of reported casinos with at least one woman reported at a management level. The higher representation of women in tribal gaming management may be due to a myriad of factors as the study of women in American Indian cultures, communities, businesses, and gaming enterprises is complex. Nevertheless, it is evident from this study that a gender leadership gap remains in tribal gaming, even though the leadership gap is smaller than that seen in non-tribal casinos. While women have come a long way in tribal gaming and beyond, much work remains to be done. That begins with insightful research on important intersectional topics like women, class, race/ethnicity, and American Indian women in tribal gaming management. Although

this study cannot confirm the why, it does provide evidence that there are more women in tribal casino management positions than in non-tribal casinos. This helps lead to the study and discussion of why that is and how the issue can be addressed to better diversify tribal casino leadership and allow tribal properties to reap the social and financial benefits of gender diversity.

Limitations and Future Research

Given the rich complexity of tribal gaming, and the few studies that exist on women in tribal gaming employment, this study is exploratory in nature. The dataset is limited as it only includes breakdown by gender, but not by race/ethnicity, including tribal affiliation. Thus, no analysis could be conducted on which tribes are hiring, promoting, or recruiting more women and if the women are American Indian or other race/ethnicities. To further investigate why women have a higher representation in tribal casinos versus non-tribal casinos, especially in Owner/President/Chief positions, a study could be conducted by contacting the tribes affiliated with the casino property where women hold these positions. This would help understand the roots of their specific tribe, their historical societal structure, their lineage, their hiring, recruitment, and promotion strategies, their culture, and its impact on representation of women in leadership roles in the casino affiliated to that community today. A qualitative in-depth analysis of why there is a gender leadership gap, and how to address it, would also be beneficial. For example, an interview or ethnographic study of the employee and managers' perceptions of their organizational culture and/or hiring/promotion strategies.

The database evaluated only reported an average of 12.1 people in management positions per tribal casino, but these casinos had 614 total employees. This indicates that while tribal casinos report an average of over 600 employees, they are only reporting 12 managers, which is not inclusive of all management positions. The 12 reported managers may not be representative of the entire management team. This study could be replicated by tribal property if full employee lists could be obtained. That would give a better representation of the entire management team, and tribe specifics, to see not only how they compare, but also where they need to center their efforts for greater gender diversity.

An additional limitation is the dataset itself. The information is self-reported and some information may not be reported. For example, out of the 972 non-tribal and tribal casinos reported in the sample, only 869 reported the number of slot machines at their casino. Without this information, the dataset could not be further dissected or analyzed based on size. Additionally, some casinos reported were extremely small. For instance, there was a non-tribal casino in Deadwood, South Dakota reported in the dataset that only had 3 slot machines, no tables games, 140 square feet of casino space, and 7 employees. There were similar tribal casinos. Due to the casinos that were missing data, it was not appropriate to exclude these small ones and leave in the ones that did not report in case they had similar property attributes. Future research could analyze details of all 972 casinos and exclude ones that may be too small to be considered a casino. Those that are more along the lines of bars, convenience stores, gas stations, etc.

Another limitation of this study is that this study is cross-sectional — only a snapshot of the status of women in tribal gaming leadership at one time. While this study does show there is a gender leadership gap in 2016, a more in-depth, longitudinal study is necessary to address changes over time, particularly to see responses by organizations in the #metoo era, as Thomas et al. (2019) show that companies are more committed to gender equity than ever.

This research represents an important first step in understanding the gender dynamics of tribal gaming workplaces. This study establishes a foundation for future work in the field by understanding where women lead and where they do not in tribal gaming, and if it differs from non-tribal casinos.

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