

The Curious Silence of Gender Inequity

by

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Abstract

Gender inequity, or the unequal treatment of individuals based on their gender is deeply engrained in our society and I believe limits our ability to create and sustain positive social change. Gender inequity is pervasive in the food system as well; keeping women in disadvantaged positions within food labor outside of the home and within the home. The purpose of this study is to identify existing patterns and perspectives in representations of gender inequity within academic literature. My research survey yielded a small set of articles that I analyzed for patterns in pertaining to the rhetoric used to describe women; if the focus of study pertained to the home, the self, or the work domains. I also focused on solutions to gender inequity proposed to address increased gender equity. This research supports the conclusion that gender equity is pervasive within the alternative agrifood system, is acknowledged by the academic community, and continues to oppress women in all levels of society. Additionally, the connection between increased gender equity and positive social change is promising and should be explored further with continued research. Finally, I propose that increased gender equity has the power to improve the food system for every participant, and pave the way for increased equity within the system as a whole.

Keywords

Gender roles, gender equity, gender inequity, alternative agrifood movement, feminism, social justice, and social change.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Feminism is old news, right? Women burned their bras, protested, and we are all better for it. Isn't that how the proverbial story of American feminism goes? Haven't we, as a society, evolved through the limitations faced by previous generations of women, and emerged a more equitable and welcoming society, which embraces men and women equally in their endeavors? The short answer is no, there is much work to be done in continuing the goals of feminism and improving equity between genders. Of particular interest is the differential treatment of men and women within the food system, and how this is an indication of greater gender inequity, or inequality within our culture as a whole. While there are many inequalities facing within the alternative agrifood movement, this research is a review of academic literature that addresses gender equity; pertaining to the issues discussed, observations and solutions raised within the framework of social justice and social change.

There are many problems concerning the forward progression of the social justice movement within the discourse surrounding social change within the food system, so why focus on gender? One reason is that everyone can relate to gender through personal experience. Thus, gender is a crucial point of the study of individuals and social groups within the food system, and that we cannot study participants, or aim to change the system in a positive way without addressing gender. Another is that throughout the food system women they are often in a position of inequality as compared with their male counterparts. Women make up a majority of the population, yet are systematically oppressed through lower compensation, devaluation of labor both in the home and in the workforce, and less access to resources and power. These are conditions of social injustice and violations of basic human rights within the food system. My

research investigates gender inequity in order to understand how it is framed and addressed in academic literature so that issues of gender equity can be better incorporated into social change efforts in the agrifood system.

This thesis aims to further the discourse around the importance of gender equity within the social justice framework using two frameworks and a feminist critique while highlighting present inequities. Specifically I will be utilizing: a feminist critique (Fraser, 2009) which stated that feminist movements, while culturally significant have not led to lasting institutional change, the three food domains within which gender inequity is experienced, as outlined by Allen and Sachs (2007) and finally a framework of dichotomy present by Van Esterik (1998) in which women are described as being victims of or empowered by their inequity. To view the topic of gender equity within the food system, and the discourse surrounding it in an objective, and exploratory way, I have completed a study of academic literature using these frameworks to narrow my search to the study of inequity, and the solutions posed. Using three search engines I compiled set of articles with which to answer my research questions outlined below. As I want this to be a current review and study of discourse within academia, I chose Allen and Sachs (2007) article on the study of women within the food system as a whole as a starting point, and narrowed my search to articles published during or after the article's publication. In order to delve deeper into the social problem of gender inequity within the academic discourse I have developed the following questions: How are contemporary scholars addressing gender inequity within the AAM and food system? How are issues of equity being framed within the discourse? What strategies or solutions are presented to address gender inequity within the food system?

After an assessment using the frameworks and criteria stated above I conclude that the furthering of gender equity will help move the food system as a whole create a more equitable system for all participants. Interestingly, many attempts to move towards a more sustainable food system, highlight and perpetuate the many inequalities present in our food system, rather than challenging them. Based on this research on gender within academic texts, I propose further exploration into grass roots organizations, looking specifically for those working towards social change within communities as a sign of discourse surrounding gender equity that will make its way into academic writing. Additionally, further research into gender equity focused organizations which add works from outside academia could potentially offer additional solutions that could then be brought into the food system discourse. This would focus on less formal written formats such as company websites, blogs, non-academic journals and printed materials being used to draw attention and support causes of increased equity and social justice.

Finally, I suggest researching the connection between gender equity and civil rights law as a way to turn gender inequity into litigation cases to be fought in court as breaches in standards of civil rights. This approach expands upon the idea that gender equity is a right that should be respected, and where injustices can be debated and fought for in a tangible way. This approach aims to increase the connection between equity within the food movement, and equity of the individual, thus furthering the discourse around increasing gender equity as part of positive social change.

Chapter 2 Background and Significance

My research aims to depict gender inequity within the food movement and unpack the curious silence I have observed surrounding the connection between increasing social justice through an increase in gender equity. In order to delve into gender inequity more thoroughly, it is important to establish where it originates. One key aspect in the system of gender inequity within the food system are traditional gender roles. Typically, these roles have relegated women to the kitchen and supported men as consumers and beneficiaries: “gender inequity is manifested as oppression or disadvantages of women” (Kinkinginhoun-Me^dagbe et al. 2008, p.57). Gaffe and Gertler (2005) take this definition of inequity, and expand it to include aspects of the corporeal, socio-cultural and material, utilizing all three prongs of the food domains.

In my preliminary research for this project, I came across Barbara Kingsolver’s book *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* (2007) which chronicles her journey to know her food for a year by growing it herself with her family on an idyllic small farm. While this is a beautiful depiction, I was drawn to think about how women in the alternative food movement who don’t have access to a fully functional farm of their own, or have the means to not work for a year could have a similar experience. Kingsolver depicted a beautiful representation of what the AAM sometimes projects as a social goal; growing your own food, living off the land, and storing and processing for the seasons you cannot be kneeling in your garden. This leads me to the question, is this a new role for women within the food movement? Or a re-inscription of an idealized past generations of feminists fought to change?

These roles, and their subsequent socially engrained practices and behaviors are a huge hurdle that the gender equity and social justice movements must overcome in order to present a new and improved vision. Notably, these roles have been shown to favor men through generations, re-enforcing gender equity as a socially acceptable practice. As Allen (2008) explains: “women are poorer, own less property, do more work, hold less power, are less educated, and suffer more hunger than men” (p.323). Globally, women suffer disproportionately from the negative effects of our food system, as Patel (2012) depicts: “Of those undernourished, 60% are women or girls. It is hard to conceive a discussion about hunger without connecting the epidemiology of hunger to women’s disempowerment” (p.2). The inequity of gender roles is highlighted by the difference in ideal roles for men. Men appear seemingly connected, but in reality are vastly different in the challenges they present. Men and husbands were the breadwinners of the house, in charge of providing the means with which the wife would keep the family nutritionally and emotionally sound (Parkin, 2006). According to Szabo (2013): “Men cook when they feel like it, such as on special occasions, on weekends, or over a barbecue (Murcott 1983, Roos et al. 2001). Their cooking is a hobby, a display of culinary artistry, or a strategy for seduction (Parasecoli 2005, Cairns et al. 2010)” (p.18). This illustrates the inequity of women and men’s roles within the home, what Allen and Sachs (2007) refer to as the material domain and is one of the focal points of this research

2.1 Is Gender Equity a Social Justice Issue?

Graduate school opened my eyes to the immense potential for social change through the work of the alternative agrifood movement or, AAM. Harris (2010) explains the emergence of alternative's to large scale food production: "In recent years those seeking alternatives to industrialized and globalized food systems have looked beyond organic production to develop a range of alternative food networks (AFNs). Alongside these developments in sustainable food and agriculture activism, a body of literature has emerged in rural sociology, agri-food studies and human geography exploring the development of alternative food networks" (p.355). In my understanding of the movement, a significant goal is to present alternatives to systems implemented brought about by the currently dominant food system, solutions to combat any negative effects that have arisen, and pave the way for a more equitable, socially conscious food system within the United States.

One such system of injustice is the continuation of unrealistic gender roles which perpetuates unbalanced systems of oppression aimed at women within the food system. Women as sole nutritional providers, and men as consummate consumers epitomize these traditional gendered interactions within the food system. Parkin (2006) notes "American society and advertising in particular have envisioned the preparation and consumption of food in distinctly gendered terms. While everyone eats food, women have had sole responsibility for its purchase and preparation...women should shop and cook for others in order to express their love" (p.1). Understanding these gender roles, and their effects on our food system allows for increased attention on how foods are grown, the labor it takes to produce and process them, and the cultural effects these systems are perpetuating. The system of gender roles, and its connection to gender inequity is a perfect example of a social structure which, I believe, the AAM can, and should provide alternatives to.

For the purposes of this study I focused on two key areas to assess the inequities imposed on genders within the food system discourse. Before I get into these, it is important to describe gender inequity as it pertains to the food system. Anderson (2008) lists gender equity as being part of a framework for essential human rights that can be partially achieved through the food system: “Food security, health, decent livelihoods, gender equity, safe working conditions, cultural identity and participation in cultural life are basic human rights that can be achieved at least in part through the food system” (p.593). Using this idea of gender equity as a basic human right, leads to the idea that, increasing gender equity leads to a greater impetus for improving change. Patel (2012) adds that this increased attention on gender will affect greater social discussions and discourse, as currently women are repeatedly being left out of greater discussions aimed at increased equity (Patel, 2012, p.2).

2.2 Why is gender equity as a problem important?

Why the focus on gender? For my research I wanted to explore gender as a social structure that everyone has interacted with, and delve into why few define it as a key contributor to increasing social change, and an impetus for greater equity within our food system as a whole. Fairbairn, (2011) describes many inequities being left out of the discourse of social change, gender equity being one of them within the academic community. I chose to address gender because it is something everyone has, and it effects how an individual connects with the food system, something we can all relate to. To address the connection between action and gender I used Allen and Sachs (2007) idea of highlighting gender as an attribute shaping interaction within the food system: “Women's involvement with food constructs who they are in the

world—as individuals, family members, and workers—in deep, complex, and often contradictory ways” (p.1). With this emphasis on gender as a defining social factor within the intersectionality an individual’s experience of gender, rather than the great equalizer, becomes the great unequalizer, placing men in more positions of power and influence. With these concepts in mind, it seems appropriate to re-iterate my research questions as a path forward within this research: Question one; how are Contemporary Scholars Addressing Gender Inequity Concerns within the AAM and Food System? Question two; how are Issues of Equity Being Framed within the Discourse? And finally, question three; what Strategies or solutions are presented to address gender inequity within the food system?

Gender could be considered the great equalizer within our social structure, as everyone has one and can relate through shared experience, or shared lack of experience. However, gender does not operate independently, but as a part of combined social factors. This experience varies not only by location of the individual, or their income, but through myriad factors which makes each experience unique. Meem et.al (2014) describe a term for this combination of factors as intersectionality: “our complex awareness that we inhabit—and are inhabited by—multiple categories of identity and that our experience of several identities taken together may be emotionally, culturally, and materially different than the experience of any one particular identity category by itself” (p.177). While Meem et al. are using this term to unpack sexuality, it is also applicable to the food system, and an individual’s participation within it. Without using the term intersectionality, many food system scholars have discussed the innumerable contributing social and economic factors that affect an individual’s experiences with our food system. This observation has led me to believe that gendered inequity within our food system, has a great potential to affect every participant within the food system.

This inequity facing women is particularly egregious. As Van Esterick (1998) states the ethical grounds upon which women are oppressed is unfounded and un-justified:

Women are *most likely* to be responsible for feeding their families on a daily basis, and *least likely* to be involved in shaping the policies that determine the food system they must access... There is no natural or necessary reason why women are most often associated with household food practices and men with national and international practices (p.231).

As Allen and Sachs (2007) highlight, gendered divisions of labor are not a new construct of the food system: “Women remain disadvantaged in the material, socio-cultural, and corporeal domains of the agrifood system. Yet, while women engage in significant and far-reaching efforts to change the system, few of these efforts focus specifically on improving gender relations” (p.2). As Allen (2008) explains, the systems which continue this perpetuation can be difficult, even by movements trying to create social change, which, can in effect be more conducive to the status quo:

The alternative agrifood movement challenges the conventional system, but not to such a degree that it poses a serious threat... the problems and solutions that tend to be articulated are those which can be addressed within the framework of traditional epistemologies and practices—including those which have contributed to agrifood problems in the first place (p. 115).

Building on this idea of alternatives re-enforcing the status quo, Alston and Whittenbury (2012) add that: “Gender relations in agricultural societies have traditionally been characterized by well-defined and often inflexible role definitions incorporating and reinforcing a disempowered position for women” (p.115). This statement of disadvantage was also punctuated by connections of disempowerment and the effect on the family unit in the food related world within, as described by Van Esterik (1998): “...women are at risk [of malnutrition], and often in need of

nutrition education to alter their knowledge of or relation to food. If children are at risk, women are blamed and instructed on how to improve their diets (cf. Charles and Kerr, 1998:22)” (p.228). Van Esterik goes on to state a key idea surrounding gender inequity: mainly, that women are often only valued in terms of their ability to take care of others or for their reproductive abilities, instead of individuals in their own right. (p.228) Castellano (2014) writes that his research: “confirms, albeit in a small way, that gender inequality in food provisioning persists in AFNs, which can in part be explained by the powerful mechanisms which reproduce gender inequality in the division of labor in the US. As noted above, how individuals do gender can be constrained by social structure, and can reinforce patriarchal privilege (Ferree 2010; Lorber 2010)” (p. 10). While this is far from conclusive, Castellano (2014) does raise the point that gendered interaction within the food system perpetuates systems of oppression that favor men. But this does not have to be the case, as described by Anderson (2008) who noted, the food system has the potential to implement basic human rights, including gender equity, into what is known as a rights based food system (p.595). Additionally, the Alternative Food Networks (AFNs), in the case of gender equity, do not always fight to break the gender role model, but can have potential to break chip away at the systems that perpetuate it.

Compounding the issue of the lack of understanding about oppression and the prevention of increasing gender equity, there has been relatively little literature connecting gender issues with social justice. Particularly, Allen and Sachs (2007) note a distinct lack of literature on material conditions of gender equity, instead focusing on consumption patterns and food work: “We find a rich literature on body politics and gendered eating patterns, but substantial gaps in the area of structural issues and social change” (p. 23). Including women and gender equity in the changes sought within the alternative agrifood movement, and the food system as a whole, is

crucial to systematic and effective change, as it seems impossible to move forward toward substantial change without a base of gender equality.

2.3 Conceptual framework: Introduction of Frameworks Used

To accomplish my goals of addressing social justice through the lens of increasing gender equity, I put together the following frameworks and concepts which enabled me to look more closely at how women were being written about in their inequity. Specifically, I used these frameworks to investigate how issues of gender inequity have been framed within contemporary academic literature so as to present a better understanding of the discourse around gender equity in the food system. It is important to study how issues of known gender inequity are being assessed, in order to further our knowledge of potential gaps and opportunities within the study, or possible inclusion of areas that are being overlooked. Specifically, I am looking for solutions to the improvement of social justice within the realm of gender equity as a way of increasing gender equity within the food system as a whole, and the frameworks outlined below guided my investigation of the academic literature analyzed with this research.

Many frameworks presented within feminism speak to a lack of social justice and social change surrounding issues of women's rights, and thus fit appropriately within the lack of momentum for social justice surrounding the issue of gender inequity within the food system I explored within this research. I combined three frameworks in order to present a clear picture of gender equity studies within the literature, the first of which is a feminist critique outlined by

Fraser (2009). Fraser explains this critique as a lack of lasting social change after progress in changing the culture surrounding gender equity. As Fraser (2009) highlights, feminist movements and successive study of social critique, has more effect on culture influence rather than changes to social structure:

It is often said that the [feminist] movement's relative success in transforming culture stands in sharp contrast with its relative failure to transform institutions. This assessment is double-edged: on the one hand, feminist ideals of gender equality, so contentious in the preceding decades, now sit squarely in the social mainstream; on the other hand, they have yet to be realized in practice (p. 98).

According to Fraser then, to change the institution is to change the overarching social systems, which will yield a more substantial and lasting change rather than the adjustment of cultural ideals. This critique led me to search for solutions that address institutions of inequity that continue to promote and perpetuate gender inequity. Within this research I use this critique which promoted institutional change as a building block to lasting change, to assess if solutions to gender equity are aimed at adjusting cultural or institutional factors.

Now that I had a system in place for looking more deeply at the change needed within the institutional setting, I wanted to increase my investigation of the situations of gender inequity that were being studied to gain a clear picture of the current inequities being assessed from a gendered perspective within the food system. The second framework I utilized in my research allowed me to examine where gender inequity was being observed and analyzed. Allen and Sachs (2007) introduce a framework which separates food system involvement into three compartments that span an individual's interaction with the food system, leading to a more comprehensive and multi faced approach to gender inequity. These are described as: "food domains--material, socio-cultural and corporeal" (p.23). These domains are defined, more

specifically, as being a roadmap, or arenas for individual gendered interaction within the food system:

“Avakian and Haber (2006) have called for a new field of feminist food studies. For this field of study to emerge, the connections between women's food work in the labor market (material), their responsibility for food-related work in the home (socio-cultural), and their relationship with eating (corporeal) must be studied and adequately theorized” (Allen and Sachs, 2007, p.1).

These domains give a more all-encompassing view of gender inequity, with the intention of examining all levels of gendered interaction within the food system. Using these domains in my study of academic literature, I was able to assess if one domain was focused on more prevalently within the discourse than others, leading to potential gaps in the literature. This framework also allowed me to focus on the idea that to increase gender equity requires solutions that address more than one domain. Combined with the framework from above I now had an idea of the cultural and institutional factors in play when assessing institutional vs. cultural change and a clear picture of where gender inequity affects an individual. The only component missing in my study of presenting a clear picture of gender inequity and solutions proposed was a study of how those affected by gender inequity within the food system were being classified as individuals.

The third framework I utilized in my research examined how current authors within the food systems discourse categorized women within their work. Specifically, I focused on the rhetoric used to define the women within the food movement as being the victims of their situation or empowered by them. Van Esterik (1998) describes this dichotomy as present within the food system, but not exclusive; “From the perspective of food, women are both vulnerable and powerful, victimized and empowered through food” (p.230). This idea re-enforces the concept that gender can affect how an individual interacts with their food system, putting women

at a disadvantage, and re-enforcing gender inequity. This framework, allowed me to look at the rhetoric used to describe the gender inequity, to review how women are being portrayed as within their social circumstances, and interactions within the food system. Using this framework, I examined the literature for signs of compliancy or a lack of solutions, leading me to believe that women were victims of inequity. Conversely, I looked for examples within the works showing solutions, or mention of the work needed to reverse these inequities as a sign that women should be empowered to change the system of inequity. This allowed me to learn more about how women themselves were being discussed, the word choices, and rhetoric used to describe their inequity within the frame of the literature.

My research investigated gender inequity within the food system in academic literature for solutions posed for social change, efforts to examine individual interactions within the food system, and assess rhetoric used by authors to frame gendered inequity. The goals of this research was to examine issues of gender inequity within academic literature pertaining to the food system to identify gaps in the literature and solutions proposed to articulate recommendations for further research. Using the frameworks above I assessed lasting and impactful change as needing to come from institutional and social direction as an agent for social change within gendered interaction, the examination of the three domains as a look into the key areas gender inequity affects an individual, and the study of individuals as victims of, or being empowered through their experience of gender inequity. In the implementation of the frameworks listed above I have developed the following questions to shape my study of gender equity within the food system: How are contemporary scholars addressing gender inequity within the food system? Where are issues of equity being explored within our social framework: within

the home, within the work force, or within the actions of the individual? And finally, what strategies or solutions are presented to address gender inequity within the food system?

Chapter 3 Methodology and Methods

I have expanded upon the frameworks I chose to address gender inequity within the food system discourse within academia. I have also outlined the set of questions I developed based upon the outlined frameworks that shaped my research approach and analysis. I will now discuss why these questions were chosen, approaches that were rejected, how I have addressed these questions within my study of academic literature, and what, if any, were the limitations which inhibited my ability to answer them. I will also be building on previous discussions of frameworks and critiques as a way of interpreting the literature in this study. I will now focus on the study of the individual, and how it shaped my questions as they pertain to individual interaction and within the food system, and the resulting inequity.

3.1 Methodology: My research approach, and how my questions address relate to it

I have discussed why I focused on gender as a determining factor within this research. Now, I will address, through personal observations and experiences, why I have chosen to focus on the individual. It is my belief that our individual actions make up a greater social norm, and influence our interaction with our food system. The first aspect of this I will examine is my personal experience with food production. As a woman who spent the last few growing seasons actively pursuing my visions of what might constitute a legitimate garden and provisioning kitchen, the connection between an individual and the food they consume has been an active part

of my life. This has shaped my desire to study gender, gender roles, and gender equity as it pertains to our interaction with the foods we consume, how we work, and how we are expected to behave. It is important to realize that while I may think that I am acting independently when I obsess over different tomato ketchup recipes, I am also acting based on a reflection of the food system I have experienced, and been raised within; i.e. women are expected to cook well. This could also be seen as a reflection of the gender inequity women face; often adding work for themselves within the home to an often already busy schedule as a goal for women to work towards. Recently, I have observed the similarities between my actions and those of the older generations; each row of peas I plant, brings my food reality that much closer to that of my grandmothers who spent half the year gardening, and the other half processing and donating the fruits and vegetables of their labor. Although both my grandmother and I enjoy gardening, these actions could be seen as perpetuating traditional gender roles. As Parkin (2006) notes: “throughout the twentieth century, the ideology that identified women as homemakers and men as breadwinners held strong, even as a different reality strained the ideal” (p.1). These roles can also include aspects of cultural significance, social context, and other contributing factors: “Gender roles and responsibilities are known to be culturally specific ... sometimes being rapidly influenced by socio-economic and technological changes (Anonymous 2006)” (Manda and Mvumi, 2008, p.94). While I am sure my grandfather was less likely to help with the gardening and canning than my always willing and enthusiastic husband, leading me to believe that gendered interaction with our foods have evolved over the years, my actions, specifically adding many hours of work provisioning to an already full work and cleaning schedule show that traditional gender experiences are still very much alive and well. These observations shaped my

desire to study the inequities faced by women as a greater indication of social injustice within our food system through the lens of academic literature.

Another personal form of reference that shaped my desire to study the institutions that perpetuate gender inequity is my experience in the food service industry where I have experienced gender inequity. Like so many before me, I started my career in food as a busser in a restaurant. By the time I entered college I was a restaurant manager, navigating the often gendered lines along which workers operate. I observed two types of women leaders within a restaurant; the powerful, aggressive one, or the one that is everyone's mother figure, and is often respected less by men. As neither of these options suited me, I felt a bit like an outsider, who was then in the position of managing men who were older than myself and who did not take kindly to such an arrangement. These power struggles were real, and to me, highlighted the absurdity of distilling all that a woman manager could be into two stereotypes, reinforcing my belief that gender inequity continues to affect women, and needs a solution. These personal experiences led me to create my research of gender equity as a personal and institutional study of discourse within the food movement. I originally intended to use food advertisements as a representation of greater food system ideals as they are assigned to men and women, but found this approach to be lacking in solid connections to the food system, the alternative agri-food movement, the actions of the individual, or the institutions that perpetuate gender inequity. Thus I have developed the following approach, influenced by the above mentioned personal experiences and outlined frameworks to answer the research questions stated above through a systematic review of academic literature within the food system as it pertains to gender inequity.

3.2 Methodology: What is my research approach and how does it address the problem of gender inequity?

The purpose of my research is to explore how gender inequity is addressed in academic literature on gender and food in order to lead to greater understanding of the discourse surrounding gender inequity, and to identify potential steps towards increasing gender equity. The frameworks I selected have allowed me look for solutions presented in academic literature that focus on the institutions of gender inequity, the three domains of gender inequity within the food system, and the discourse used to describe the individuals. I chose to use academic literature as the basis for my research, which as Allen (2008) explains, can push the expansion of limitations of what is possible within our food system as these can stem from scholarly work, and teaching within academia (p. 157). By exploring current academic works in the literature review and critically analyzing how the authors study and present gender inequity, this thesis aims to be a link in the social change that will become a movement for greater focus on equity within our food system.

In order to assemble the academic works I would study for this research I utilized three sources to identify academic journal articles. These sources were: Google Scholar, EBSCO Host, and a database of articles published in "Agriculture and Human Values". Google Scholar and EBSCO host both index articles from multiple disciplinary fields. Google Scholar was selected because it is large, well maintained, and contains works across academia. EBSCO Host was utilized as it is a widely known database for academic literature within social science. I chose to search the journal "Agriculture and Human Values" (AHV) as its mission is to represent issues

concerning human values in our food system. The journal is published by the Agriculture, Food and Human Values Society, and according to their website, the journal's goals include a platform to: "...promote an ethical, social, and ecological understanding of agricultural and food systems. The journal publishes papers that critically question the values that underlie and the relationships that characterize both conventional and alternative approaches to the agrifood system"

(<https://afhvs.wildapricot.org/Publications>). I chose to search just within the journal, even though it is searchable from within both Google Scholar and EBSO Host as a barometer test for relevant articles. I was sure the percentage of usable articles from within the journal would be much higher than the other databases because of the journal's stated goals of promotion of social understanding. Combining these three sources provided a wide-ranging sample of academic literature, and I am confident no relevant major articles were missed. To narrow down the articles to be analyzed, I selected articles based on keywords searches, as described in the next paragraph.

The search terms I utilized within this research were designed to address the three frameworks I have outlined, and focused on institutions, where gender inequity is studied, the actions and interaction of the individual, and the solutions presented to combat gender inequity. The search terms I selected for these purposes were: gender, feminism, gender inequality, alternative agrifood, social change, and social justice. I used these key words in different combinations, but in the same order for each search within the databases, as described in table 1 in order to locate articles that framed gender and increasing equality/equity as a social justice issue. I used in the same sequence of search terms, as described in table 1 for each database of three databases I chose to survey. The process of using the same search terms in the same sequences for all three databases, allowed me to track each search. I then arranged the data in a

way that highlights the effects of the search when I used different word combinations, adding social justice, or feminism to a search. Additionally, I used the approach taken by Terstappen et al. (2013) in their study of fair trade, i.e., the mapping of key concepts in existing research. I used this approach to map key concepts in the study of gender and gender equity within table 2 as the articles were returned from each search.

Table 1: Search Terms in Sequence

Search Order	Key Words
1	Gender
2	"Feminism"
3	"Gender Inequality"
4	"Alternative AgriFood"
5	"Gender" + "Alternative Agrifood"
6	"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood"
7	"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Change"
8	"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice"
9	"Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice" + "Feminism"
10	"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice" + Feminism

3.3 Methods how my research questions are answered through data analysis and the limitations I faced

In order to delve deeper into my research problem of increasing the discourse surrounding gender inequity, I developed the research questions mentioned above. Additionally, I paired each question with a sub question to help me evaluate the data my search returned. The questions I used are as follows. Question number one; How are contemporary scholars addressing gender inequity within the AAM and food system? Additionally, what topics are currently discussed concerning gender equity and inequity within the academic food system discourse? In order to analyze the data for this question I used comparative analysis, presenting models of inequity found in the literature, comparing similar approaches and examined the rhetoric of the articles to see how issues of equity and inequity are being discussed, or not discussed. Question two; how are issues of equity being framed within the discourse? In order to analyze the framing or where the issues of gender inequity were being discussed, I used comparative literature analysis, and the framework outlined by Allen and Sachs (2007), mapping the three food domains onto a chart if the authors wrote about gender inequity in the material domain, the workforce, socio-cultural domain, within the home, and corporeal domain or within their physical selves. Finally, the third question I developed was what strategies or solutions are presented to address gender inequity within the food system? Again I used comparative literature analysis to track the solutions proposed within the literature to see if there were any correlations, connections, or gaps.

Chapter 4 Results, Analysis and Contribution

After conducting the implementation of the method outlined above focusing on the representations of gender inequity within the food system, I mapped the results of the searches within the three databases and compiled the information into various tables and figures to illustrate the small number of articles that were returned from my searches. It is important to note that while I did include many different terms hoping to reveal many articles pertaining to the study of gender inequity, there may have been applicable terms I missed. Additionally, as there are limitations to how thoroughly these database searches can analyze the content of an article, there may be additional articles that are discussing gender inequity, increasing social justice, and improving gender equity that were not counted as such and thus were not returned as a match in this search, or that were simply using other terms to describe the inequity within the food system.

A few key descriptors in the search results are as follows: the number of articles returned by the search engines dropped dramatically when search terms like “feminism”, “social justice”, and “gender equity” were added across the spectrum of databases. This pattern included the articles listed in Table Two in italics are the focus of this literature review as they contain references to the highest number of key words within the search. A full list of the applicable, or usable articles as I refer to them is listed in alphabetical order in Table Three, designed to give a deeper look into who was publishing which articles and when. In order to compare the results from the three search engines side by side I compiled the pie chart, figure 1, illustrating the percentages of articles, by search term combination that were found using various combinations of the assigned keywords.

Table 2: Key Word Articles Returned; Organized by Search Engine

Search Engine	Key Words	Articles Found	
Google Scholar	All Published Articles 2007-2014	974,000	
	Gender	1,250,000	
	Feminism	77,600	
	"Gender Inequality"	21,300	
	"Alternative AgriFood"	608	
	"Gender" + "Alternative Agrifood"	237	
	<i>"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood"</i>	8	
	<i>"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Change"</i>	4	
	<i>"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice"</i>	6	
	<i>"Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice" + "Feminism"</i>	22	
	<i>"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice" + Feminism</i>	3	
	<i>"Social Justice" + Feminism</i>	43	
	Ag & Human Values	All Published Articles 2007-2014	484
		Gender	150
"Feminism"		13	
"Gender Inequality"		8	
"Alternative AgriFood"		52	
"Gender" + "Alternative Agrifood"		18	
<i>"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood"</i>		2	
<i>"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Change"</i>		2	
<i>"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice"</i>		1	
<i>"Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice" + "Feminism"</i>		2	
<i>"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice" + Feminism</i>		1	
<i>"Social Justice" + Feminism</i>		8	
EBSCO Host		All Published Articles 2007-2014	51,980,441

Gender	547,641
"Feminism"	38,002
"Gender Inequality"	7,887
"Alternative AgriFood"	45
"Gender" + "Alternative Agrifood"	41
"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood"	3
"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Change"	1
"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice"	3
"Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice" + "Feminism"	6
"Gender Inequality" + "Alternative AgriFood" + "Social Justice" + Feminism	0
	13
total for all three searches	64

Table Three

Author	Title	Year published	Database *
Allen and Sachs	"Women and food chains: The gendered politics of food"	2013	G, E
Castellano	"Alternative food networks and food provisioning as a gendered act"	2014	G, AHV
DuPuis et al.	"Cultivating food justice race, class and sustainability"	2011	G
Fairbarin	"Framing transformation: the counter-hegemonic potential of food sovereignty in the US context"	2012	G, AHV, E
Galt et al.	"Transformative food systems education in a land-grant college of agriculture: the importance of learner-centered inquiries"	2012	G, E
Harris	"Eat Local? Constructions of Place in Alternative Food Politics"	2010	G
Hayes-Conroy et al.	"Doing Nutrition Differently"	2014	G

Lambek et al.	"Respecting and Protecting the Right to Food: When States Must Get Out of the Kitchen"	2014	G
Slocum et al.	"Properly, with love, from scratch"	2011	G, E
Starr	"Local Food: A Social Movement?"	2010	G
Trauger et al.	"Our market is our community"	2010	G, AHV, E
Travaline and Hunold	"Urban agriculture and ecological citizenship in Philadelphia"	2010	G, E

* G = Google Scholar, E = EBSCO Host, AHV = Agriculture and human values

Figure 1 Mapped Key Words

Article Search Returns by Key Words

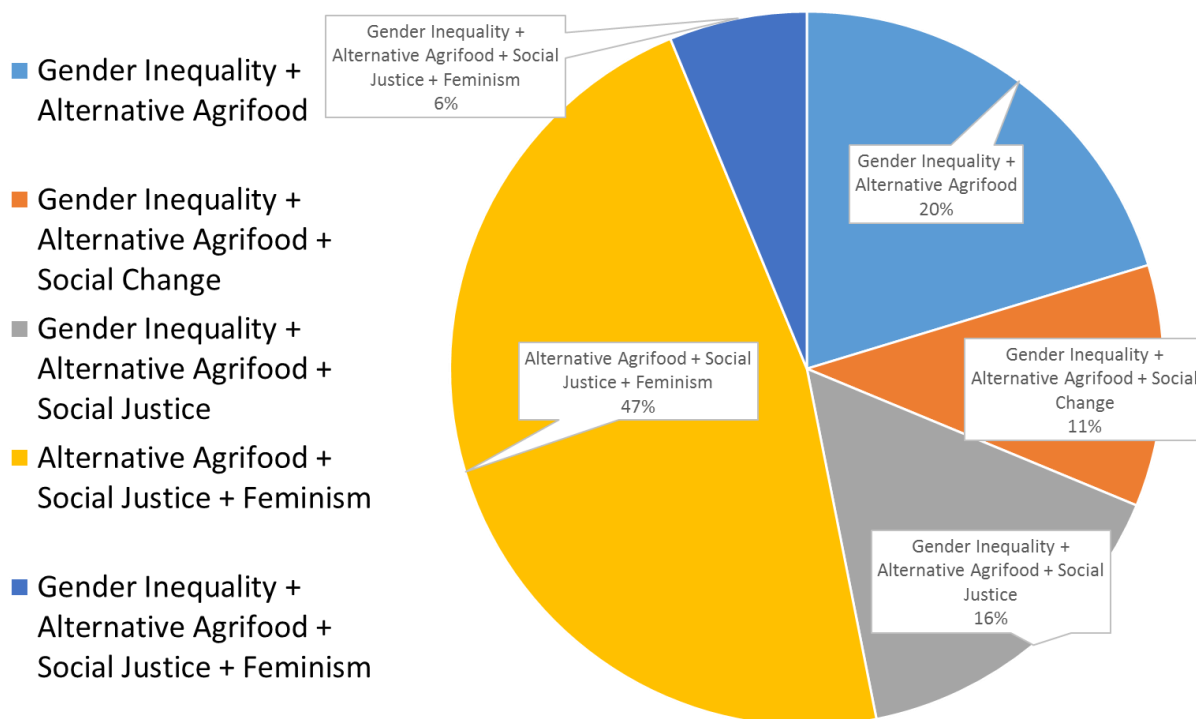


Figure one displays the results of each search, and quantifies the usable articles as percentages of the entire set of data used for this research. Each slice of the pie represents a percentage of the useable articles arranged by how many were returned from the various searches I conducted within the databases. For example, 47% of the articles I used in my research were from the search which utilized alternative agrifood, social justice and feminism, while only 6% came back from the same search when social justice was added as a key search term. Figure one allowed me to see that within the results of my literature review, articles that incorporated issues of social justice were less prevalent, and that while this is a small subset of texts, it is compelling that when combined, my seemingly broad key words become very limiting within the vast expanses of literature available from these three databases.

Building on the work that these tables depict, I needed to conduct my literature analysis. In order to assess the usable articles from table three, I examined each article to track the following: the way women were classified, as victims or empowered, those that offered solutions, and those that referred to the three food domains outlined above as material, corporeal and socio-cultural. I reviewed each article, and created a table showing the frameworks I selected; women as victims or empowered by their inequity, the three food domains, and if there were solutions present, if they were aimed at changing the institutions that support gender inequity. Of the twelve articles in the survey six classified women as victims, 2 classified women as empowered, three offered solutions, four referred to more than one food domain and three did not mention any of my search terms. Now that I had my set of academic literature, and had utilized my chosen frameworks to assess the content, I could begin to attempt answering my research questions.

4.2 Research Question One: How are Contemporary Scholars Addressing Gender Inequity Concerns within the AAM and Food System?

In order to analyze the data for this question I used comparative analysis meaning I compared author's approaches in presenting models of inequity found in the literature. I wanted to learn more about what was included in the discussion of gender equity and inequity. In addition, I examined the rhetoric of the articles to see what words were being used to describe the issues of equity and inequity discussed, or not discussed. Castellano (2014) stated the importance of the idea that gender equity is especially important within the food system due to the roles women are expected to play: "...the persistence of gender inequality in food provisioning is problematic given the potential negative physical, psychological and social outcomes of women's continued responsibility for such labor" (p.11). Thus Castellano was discussing gender equity as an important concept to study as its can affect expectations placed on women. Similarly, Fairbairn (2001) added; "Gender inequality and women's rights also continue to be highlighted in the framing of food sovereignty by US based organizations, though less so than by its international framers. This contrasts with the general silence on gender issues found in the more mainstream agrifood frames" (p.227). While this sounds encouraging, Fairbairn goes on to state that there is a disconnect between this acknowledgement of inequity, and the applicability within the United States: "...some groups seem to apply the food sovereignty frame primarily in discussions of the Global South or of international linkages, reverting to a more mainstream frame such as sustainable agriculture or localism when referring to the North" (p.227). While the concept of gender equity is being discussed, there are still limitations to the subject's applicability to the global north.

The mapping of this simple concept, women as victims or empowered or empowered by their inequity allowed me to see that while inequity is being highlighted as a in the overwhelming majority of instances problem (Allen, 2013, Fairbairn, 2012, Slocum et al. 2011, Travaline, 2010 to cite a few), women are not being treated as agents of their own change, but rather as victims of their circumstances, without the potential to be both, thus removing their power to provide lasting and meaningful social change. Gender roles, as dictated through society shape an individual's world, this can be especially true for the food system. As gender is a lens all food system participants see and experience, logically, a study of the food system should include gender. In order to better understand the ways in which gender inequity is being framed, I analyzed the gendered arguments, dialogs and discussions as representative of the greater whole.

Some authors took the concept of women as being victims of their gender inequity and applied it to areas of potential gender equity growth. One such example is from Trauger (2008) who quoted a previous publication in the description of the inequities women face, even when in new workforce situations: "Trauger (2004) found that women farm operators are more likely to engage in sustainable agriculture because they were supported and affirmed in their identities as farmers in the sustainable agriculture community... These changes are not total or transformative, however, as women still shoulder the burden of domestic work in addition to taking on more of the productive work of the farm" (p.44). This example highlights that while new and interesting opportunities may be available to women, the systems of inequity that have been present for generations is carried through despite the efforts to present new possibilities for gender equity.

One limitation I discovered when looking for discourse surrounding gender inequity with the United States, was the inclusion of the frame of the United States food system. Interestingly, the first declaration that some may be intentionally preserving and proliferating the gender inequity results in the degradation of women that I came across within the periodical came from an article in 2012 which focused on an Australian food crisis and the balance women were striking between working on the farm and additionally working off the farm to keep the farm land itself. Alston and Whittenbury stated: “Our research suggests that men are more likely to endorse a highly gendered family farming ideology and to support a dominant masculine view, making the renegotiation of gender relations more difficult (see for example Alston and Kent 2008 and Alston 2012)” (p.125).

Another limitation that I encountered was the frame of gender inequity as presented as a woman’s issue. Interestingly in the review of academic literature for this research there were no articles featuring gender inequity aimed at men, all cited only women as being victims of unfair treatment as a result of being a women within the studied interaction. In fact almost every article I encountered that touched on gender relations had some form of women’s oppression which manifested as gender inequity. Using the aforementioned frame of women as either being empowered or victimized by their gender equity, I found overwhelmingly that women were viewed as being victims of their inequity. Only two articles mentioned women as being empowered through their situation.

After assessing the literature presented in my research study I conclude that gender inequity is actively being studied by many of the authors I encountered, and that gender equity is being tied to greater ideas of social change. The limiting factor of study within the United States and the lack of articles that included men were surprises to me as I assumed there would be may

studying the effects of gender inequity within our own system, across the gender spectrum. As stated before, it is possible that this is another limitation imposed by my search terms and process. In order to delve deeper into these discussions of gender equity I will move on to assess the literature returned from my search as it pertains to my second research question using the food domains outlined by Allen and Sachs (2007).

4.3 Research Question Two: How are Issues of Equity Being Framed within the Discourse?

To more deeply assess the discussions the authors within my data are using to frame their observances of gender inequity I will utilize the above mentioned framework introduced by Allen and Sachs (2007, 2013) which divides gendered experiences into three food domains. Basically this framework allows for the examination of interactions within the home, the socio-cultural domain, within the workforce, the material domain, and within themselves or the corporeal domain. This framework is important especially when considering this research question as my intended purpose of this study does not focus on one domain, but representing gender inequity as whole within a current survey of academic literature.

Where do the authors within this research situate their discussions and studies of gender equity? Castellano wrote of the oppression of women as a physical act which leads to social reproduction of inequity: (2014) “When women perform acts of food provisioning, they are engaging in traditionally feminine tasks, reinforcing ideological assumptions about who should be doing such work, reproducing gender inequality in their own households, as well as in larger

society (Julier 2005)” (p.3). This places the work in the socio-cultural domain. In addition to this domain, Castellano, in her assessment of AFN’s and improving the gender equity within them wrote of the connection between this socio-cultural gender inequity as it pertains to the AFN’s; “The negative consequences of food provisioning can impact all women, but could be particularly problematic for AFN participants” Castellano, 2014, p.3. This addition of the increased potential for inequity within the AAM is compelling, and calls into question examples like the one posed earlier with Barbara Kingsolver. If women are being drawn into this idyllic food system promising change, and a return to a more righteous food system, only to be given additional responsibilities and unachievable goals, the alternative system should adapt and present real solutions and change.

Many scholars’ research focuses on what Allen and Sachs (2007) refer to as the physical and socio-cultural food domains in their studies of gender and inequity issues which seems to indicate that they have logical connections between the two domains. Castellano (2014) wrote of individual consumption that it is being left out of the AFN discourse; “alternative food networks have left consumption out of their gendered studies” (p.1). This concept speaks to the relationship of women to the food system within their home, their relationship to their families, and the greater social pressures and constructs that dictate their involvement. This puts women squarely in the private space, where she literally becomes the heart and the brain, and the stomach of herself and of the home and is inexplicably tied to the successes and challenges it faces. These examples of the material and socio-cultural domains illustrate that women are being studied in their interactions with the foods they consume, as well as within the food work they perform within the household setting.

In the reviewed articles, it seems that the material domain, as described by Allen and Sachs (2007), has received the least attention in terms of addressing gender inequity. The material domain was an area that was represented within the literature I surveyed, just not to the extent I thought it would be, and focused mostly on agricultural work. Trauger et al. 2008 wrote of the inequity women farmers face as women in a predominantly male business world; "For most respondents, the discussion of gender begins with articulating a feeling of not being taken seriously as farmers in their community" (p. 51). This inequity is not surprising based on the concepts highlighted earlier depicting the perpetuation of gender inequity within work conducted within traditional gender roles. Agricultural labor then, is a frontier that could benefit from increased gender equity.

One limitation of this study was that only one article, written by Allen and Sachs (2007, 2013) included mention or discussion of all three domains; material, socio-cultural and corporeal, as they pertain to gender inequity. What was really surprising, however was the discovery that some of the works did not include any of these domains (Galt et al. 2012, Harris, 2010, Hayes Conroy et al. 2014). It seems that this could be due to the fact that the domains might not fit all instances of inequity, or that the inequity being described was conducted using different terms and labels. However, it does seem that studying inequity of genders within the food system without mentioning work within the home, work force, or the physical self would leave out many aspects of gendered food interaction that each participant encounters.

Allen and Sachs, (2007) concluded their work on the three food domains with the following statement; "As women work to reshape the food system in the interest of better health, social justice, and environmental soundness, they are also creating possibilities for women to gain control of their bodies and their lives" (p.15). It is with this statement of hope that I move

on from this research question, knowing that there is work being done towards increasing gender equity through the work of the women “reshaping the food system”.

4.4 Research Question Three: What Strategies or solutions are presented to address gender inequity within the food system?

To address the final question within this research I focused solely on solutions to increasing gender equity as they were approached by the authors within the literature from my review. I assessed the works, and listed strategies or programs proposed by each author to map similarities between the solutions proposed. Few strategies for increasing gender equity were presented within the literature I survey. Some authors discussed solutions as being necessary, but only two works referred to solutions, or the idea that solutions to gender equity were actively being approached, and this was in the form of calls for further research rather than strategies themselves.

Some solutions proposed, like the ones in Fairbairn (2011) may help to increase gender equity, while that is not explicitly linked within the document. As described, farm to school programs can be associated with increasing access to healthy foods, and aiding community development, but can also have unintended consequences: “Allen and Guthman (2006), for instance, suggest that farm-to-school programs may inadvertently reinforce “neoliberal governmentalities (sic)” through their discursive emphasis on personal responsibility, voluntary action, competition, and efficiency” (p.220). The literature points to successes with strategies that include both genders, and many different age groups as being much more successful than

those that rely on focusing solely on women, or young women alone.

Additionally, authors presented solutions to increasing gender equity in the form of continued research. This was particularly compelling in the article by Allen and Sachs (2013) in which they call for further research to be solely focused on women working within the food system for increasing social equity: “Sometimes a source of power, more often one of subordination, the fact remains that we need to understand much more about gender relations in the food system. We need to know much more about who women food activists are, their motivations, and their visions for the food system” (p.16). This approach, centering on delving more deeply into who the agents of change are within the food system would yield an interesting and compelling picture of change, and may potentially lead to programs or policies that would create lasting change within the fight for increased equity.

As predicted by Allen and Sachs (2007, 2013), we see that while problems of gender equity are identified within the literature, and there is a need for greater focus on solutions to gender inequity in the food system. For example, Leaders of the AAM could call attention to increased gender equity within the home, addressing the “micro level” of gender inequity reproduction: “As Deutsch (2011) notes, “the division of responsibilities among household members is at best an afterthought—not the problem that must be solved” (p. 169). AAM leaders could potentially help create change in the unequal gender division of labor in AAM by acknowledging and drawing attention to who is provisioning food for families, highlighting gender inequality in food provisioning as a problem that must be solved” (Castellano, 2014, p.11. This observation highlights that increasing gender equity may be possible from within the home, and may be an unintended consequence of solutions to greater equity.

Limitations of my approach may once again have affected the results that were returned as applicable for this research. While there were calls for research within the academic works I studied, I was surprised to find few other solutions presented within the context of the United States. When my search was expanded to include other countries, additional articles became applicable. Such was the case with Makita (2008) who discusses increased cooperation between genders on culturally enriching programs to increase gender equity and mutual benefits in her research with income generation in agricultural areas of Bangladesh. Additionally, Kinkingninhoun-Me[^]dagbe et al. (2010) wrote about their work with rice farmers from central Benin. One solution presented was the system of government created small farming collectives; “The development of irrigated rice schemes managed collectively by groups of smallholder farmers is one strategy that governments have used to both increase smallholder farmers’ access to production resources and reduce gender inequality” (p. 58). They went on to outline this type of program as fitting in with others designed as “Gender and Development Approaches” or (GAP) programs which; “Besides seeking to change existing gender roles and relations, the strategic goal of the GAP is to harmonize social relations and reduce inequalities for an equitable and sustainable development (Lambrou 2005; Juteau 2000; ICRA 1999; Quisumbing 1996; Boserup 1983)” (Kinkingninhoun-Me[^]dagbe et al. 2010, p.58). These GAP approaches which are outlined are small, targeted projects with a gender equity focus that when properly executed, so as not to re-inscribe traditional inequities, are making positive effects within the countries they are operating within.

Solutions presented within this literature review called for increasing equity through further research, and increasing general equity within the food system. Thus the answering of this question through my literature review, largely left me with additional questions. For

example, why does it appear that there are more solutions and programs addressing gender equity concerns within the global south, or less developed countries? Could this mean gender equity is a social problem we associate with developed countries, that more developed countries have somehow already dealt with? Compellingly, how do you attempt to fix a system of inequity with which you are a part? It seems that my research limitations may have been too narrow to properly assess this question, therefore I recommend further study into solutions posed to gender equity not just within the United States, but across the world, and across all nations to gain a clear picture of the types of programs or organizations working towards increasing gender equity. Additionally, it might be helpful to look outside of the limitation of the food systems discourse, and draw upon improvements to gender equity in general. This may present solutions which could then be applied to the food system. I will delve more deeply into this concept in the following section.

4.5 Contribution; why is it necessary and where would it be best utilized?

As stated above, I propose that increased gender equity has the power to improve the food system for every participant, and pave the way for increased equity within the system as a whole. There is much potential for further research within this field, and I propose additional research into solutions, stemming from an interdisciplinary approach to glean as much information about those organizations and individuals working for social change as possible. These findings could then be applied to the food movement discourse and the AAM as examples of solutions which may lead to an increase in gender equity.

Further research is needed to solidify the connection between positive social change and increased gender equity. Speaking to the hope held with the concept of improving social relations, I suggest further research into gender equity and ways in which progress is being made towards that goal. “Gender relations are dynamic and respond to economic incentives and opportunities (Doss 2001)” (Manda and Mvumi, 2008, p.92). Further study is needed to test this idea of gender relations and contributing factors, but shifting gender roles is a sign that small and powerful changes could lead to larger systematic advancements. If gender roles are responsive and dynamic, further research into solutions that are leading to progress on a grassroots level will lead to further discourse of change within the food system. As Allen and Sachs (2007) suggest, there is a significant gap in scholarly proposed solutions to gender equity, and existing attempts often leave women out of the conversation. Van Esterik (1998) highlights this point through the lens of food security concerns and available projects: “...food security cannot be realized until women are centrally included in the policy discussions about food as a human right and until food issues are analyzed from a gender perspective” (p.225). This issue is compounded by the engrained social nature of these systems of oppression, as described Wangui (2007) using the Maasai: “Quantification of women’s roles is especially relevant because the role of women is consistently downplayed by both men and women among the Maasai, even in single gender meetings (Wangui 2004)” (p. 366). If change is to happen, where should it begin? Van Esterik (1998) suggested starting in the home, with the corporeal effects of consumption: “Through food work women enact their place in the world, influence others, and define themselves. However, the fact that women and girls often eat last and least have not been analyzed in the food security discourse” (p.226). Therefore, further study of all equity programs, across academia could

benefit efforts to develop feasible, and well-informed approaches to the complex and entrenched system that reproduces gender inequity.

My research is contributing to the transformative discourse surrounding the academic discourse, and by extension the food system as a whole, in terms of gender equity study. Further proposed research projects include: studies of communities that have increased gender equity through cultural understanding, and culturally appropriate means for all community members. Also suggested is a survey of gender equity in specific landscapes: rural vs. urban areas, developed vs. undeveloped nations, or planned vs. sporadic communities to see if solutions are more present in different localities or across socio-economic levels. Lastly, a combination of field work and ethnographic work surrounding an organization aimed at promoting gender equity through community involvement on both a short and long term scale would yield invaluable insight into a world of a gender equity projects' intentions and results.

Additional research conducted to find additional solutions to gender inequity on a grass roots level including NGO's, community organizations and non-profits, perhaps expanding to include those outside the food system would be helpful. These topics of research would be best applied to communities which have high rates of gender inequity, preferably those with community members of both genders who are actively engaged in finding solutions, rather than a hegemonic solution forcing its way into a community that is not in need of its services, as described by Wangui (2007) "...women lose control over resources with commercialization. Since most livestock development projects stress modernization through commercialization of livestock products, they must also incorporate objectives aimed at addressing gender inequality within households" (2007, p. 375). Therefore, further research must be conducted not in

communities that are perceived as needing change by those from the outside, but rather those that are ready to see real evolution and change within their social structures.

Additionally, I am suggesting further research into the connection between civil rights litigation cases pertaining to gender and increased equity to investigate whether a connection can be forged between pursuing legal action against those who perpetuate extreme cases of gender inequity. If increasing social equity for genders is not part of the culture of civil rights law within this country, and food system, it should be. For example, the potential for cases of injustice based on gender in the food system could lead to required changes in the oppression of women as a socially acceptable practice.

In conclusion, conducting my literature review revealed to me how widely known gender inequity is within the food system, and how few solutions are being presented. Using the “food domains” outlined by Allen and Sachs (2007) which incorporates the socio-cultural, material and corporeal domains to address the main points of contact women have within the food system I examined how authors are studying and thinking about the different social locations of gender inequity. I also analyzed the articles for how they address the roles women play as explained by Van Esterik (1998) as empowered or victimized. Additionally my research investigates the ways in which gender is examined within the context of academic literature to understand the presentation, studies of, and discourse surrounding gender in order to identify similarities and divergences to further the gender equity discourse. My research examined the literature for strategies identified that could lead to lasting social change and an improvement in gender equity.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to provide an investigation into the perpetuation of gender inequity within the food system in order to identify solutions to aid in increasing equity and paving the way for a more socially just food system. This research supports the conclusion that gender equity is pervasive within the food system, is present in academic literature, and continues to oppress women in all levels of society. Gender is an important part of the social inequities facing our food system participants both because it represents everyone in the system, oppresses the majority of the population, and helps to shape our interaction with our food, a most personal of actions.

In summary, this research illustrates that gender inequity is pervasive within the food system in which women remain oppressed women in all domains, and are often victims of the continuation of social institutions which are inherently inequitable. Of particular note is that the articles returned in the search within the AAM, do not present a higher frequency of solutions to address gender inequity, and can sometimes re-inscribe traditional gender roles, and with them, continued verification of existing gender inequity. Overall, this research has yielded a better understanding of how academic literature addresses gender inequity in the food system, the gender discourse being studied and assessed by the academic community, and the solutions proposed. Women as subjects within academic literature are not being treated as agents of their own change, but rather as victims of their circumstances, thus removing their power to provide lasting and meaningful social change. Gender inequity is written by scholars as predominantly skewed towards benefitting men and their needs, with an emphasis on systematic oppression of

women within the home, disadvantages in workplace settings, and reciprocation of women oppressive effects to the greater community.

As discussed above, the limitations of this research include, but are not limited to, the search terms used in the retrieval of academic works. As authors are not limited in their subject matter, they use terms which they find to be applicable to their work. Thus articles that could have fit nicely into this research could have been categorized under other search terms and not returned in my database searches. Additionally it is possible that articles that were discussing applicable terms or social interactions may use a different frame of reference, thus adjusting the subject matter away from applicable terms for this research. Finally, the limitations I placed on my database searches; limiting subject matter to work with the United States had a large impact on the number of applicable articles. In the future work suggested below, it may be necessary to loosen some of these restrictions to yield a wider sample of work.

Gender equity is clearly a problem that is a long way from being solved, what follow is my plan for future work within the realm of gender inequity. This research has shown that the discourse within our food system acknowledges gender equity as a social problem, however, many factors lead to further inscription of traditional roles and oppressive structures. It is this knowledge in this movement for change that presents the most compelling evidence for further research into substantial solutions. Looking into solutions to gender inequity is one of my main arguments for further studies. As my research did not yield many working solutions, I propose that looking outside food systems discourse into local non-profits or and community resources perhaps will reveal those working towards increasing social and gender equity within our food system. Finally, I see immense potential in the exploration of the connection between civil rights

litigation and the inclusion of social justice through an increase in gender equity. I look forward to the day that feminism and increasing gender equity is a thing previous generations dealt with and moved on from, and am optimistic that solutions are not just possible, but inevitable.

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