

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

Seminar Research Paper Series

Schmidt Labor Research Center

2013

The Motherhood Penalty: How Gender and Parental Status Influence Judgements of Job-Related Competence and Organizational Commitment

Noël Burgess

University of Rhode Island

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/lrc_paper_series

Recommended Citation

Burgess, Noël, "The Motherhood Penalty: How Gender and Parental Status Influence Judgements of Job-Related Competence and Organizational Commitment" (2013). *Seminar Research Paper Series*. Paper 32. https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/lrc_paper_series/32

This Seminar Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Schmidt Labor Research Center at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Seminar Research Paper Series by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu.

The Motherhood Penalty: How Gender and Parental Status Influence Judgments of Job-Related Competence and Organizational Commitment

Noël Burgess

University of Rhode Island

The Motherhood Penalty is an ongoing problem in the United States as many women find themselves working full-time after becoming mothers. Women who become mothers are perceived as less competent, less committed, and thus less employable and/or promotable in the workplace. Unfortunately the status of “mother” has certain perceptions associated with it that are incompatible with the image of an “ideal worker.” Given this reality, the purpose of this research, which uses a literature review, is to examine the reasons for the Motherhood Penalty, the theory behind the negative perceptions of mothers, and how women and organizations can confront these realities.

Even though female labor force participation has increase dramatically during the past thirty years, women still encounter barriers that prevent them from attaining success as quickly as men (Hielman & Okimoto, 2008). Mothers face even greater challenges than childless women owing to often false judgments about their competence, which lead to negative workplace outcomes (Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007). In comparison, men do not face the same negative perceptions when they become fathers (Gungor & Biernat, 2009).

In this paper, I examine how mothers are perceived in the workplace compared to childless women and men. The purpose of this literature review is to compare the relative effects of gender and parental status on evaluations of work performance. Prior to reporting the findings of the literature review, several relevant theories will be discussed.

PENALTY FOR PARENTHOOD

There is growing evidence that women suffer additional disadvantages in the workplace when they become mothers. A Budig and England (2001) study shows, for example, that employed mothers in the U.S. experience, on average, a five percent wage penalty per child even after controlling for other factors that affect earnings. Regardless of the precise percentage, the Motherhood Penalty is detrimental to all women in the workplace.

Research has found that all women of childbearing age face some disparity because employers expect they will have children at some point during their careers (Etaugh and Study, 1989). Women with children, however, are more disadvantaged than both men and childless female employees (Heilman and Okimoto, 2003). This disadvantage begins early in the employment process. Despite the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission prohibiting discrimination against women on the basis of pregnancy, pregnant women are still being rejected for employment on that basis (EEOC, 2013).

Motherhood as a Status Characteristic

Motherhood is a role with a distinct status, independent of implications associated with gender (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004). According to Ridgeway and Correll (2004) women are generally perceived as less competent than men, and mothers are perceived as being even less competent than men and childless women. This perception may be caused by a belief that a mother could not be an “ideal worker.” With an “ideal worker” being defined as one who typically works forty hours a week or more; works without interruption until retirement; and focuses the majority of her time and resources on her job (Ridgeway and Correll, 2004).

As a result of societal expectations of the inherent responsibilities of motherhood, a penalty is assessed on mothers who work because of the

violation of workplace norms (i.e. the perception of an “ideal worker”) and social norms (i.e. raising the children, housework, etc).

Glass Ceiling

The concept of “glass ceiling” refers to the “artificial barriers to the advancement of women...it is unseen, yet an unbreachable barrier that keeps women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995).” The glass ceiling comprises two different components: the first makes it harder for women to be seen as competent; the other assesses women’s performance with stricter standards than men’s.

Women are caught in a paradox--if they are perceived as too feminine, they are perceived as not qualified; yet if they are not feminine enough they are perceived as competent but lacking in social skills (Williams, 2005). Hence, for women you can be competent or liked, but not both.

Maternal Wall and Mommy Track

The “maternal wall” is sometimes triggered when a woman is pregnant and decides to take maternity leave (Williams & Segal, 2003). It is the continuation of negative associations of glass ceiling effects but specifically for mothers. Due to the stereotypes associated with a woman who works, particularly one who stays employed after becoming a mother for personal satisfaction rather than due to financial need, she is considered to be outside the norm and is looked at negatively by her those in her organization (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004; Barnett, 2004).

For women to succeed in light of ideal worker norms, women must forgo having children or be able to maintain the work habits of men or childless women, despite the fact that mothers typically are responsible for most child-rearing (Crosby, Williams, Biernat, 2004). For many women this tension is unsustainable and leads to serious conflict between work and private life.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Does parenthood effect judgments of women and men to the degree that mothers are held to different employment standards than childless women and men with or without children? Before

examining the empirical research on this issue, underlying theory is reviewed.

SOCIAL THEORIES

Social Role Theory

Social role theory suggests that men and women behave differently in social situations and take on distinctive roles, because of the expectations society places upon them (Eagly, 1984). Gender roles are conceptualized as the beliefs about the characteristics of women and men (Eagly, 1984). Eagly (1987) asserts that the classification of roles for men and women—for example, breadwinner versus homemaker—have contributed to gender differences through stereotypes, expectations, beliefs, attitudes, and skills. This, in turn, leads to differences in behavior by men and women.

Gender role violations occur when men and women to cross into counter-stereotypic roles. Men are generally possessing the status of breadwinner, which is associated with “agentive” characteristics such as commitment and competence. Whereas women traditionally have the status of caregiver and are associated with more communal characteristics such as: warmth, nurturing, and submissiveness (Eagly, 1984). While some of these perceptions have no doubt changed since Eagly’s work in the 1980s, many persist. Consequently, these concepts of social role influence employers regarding female workers once they become mothers because women are expected to be committed more to their children, thus less committed to their work (Eagly, 1987).

Role Congruity Theory

Role congruity theory addresses the association between gender roles and other roles. In addition it points to some of the specific variables that lead to negative consequences when there is a perceived lack of congruity (Eagly & Karau, 1991). The less congruity between the role of women and the role of worker, the greater are the negative expectations about a woman’s performance. Women are prone to discriminatory behavior when the role of a woman or mother contradicts the perceptions of a successful worker. Discrimination may occur when companies perceive mothers as

workers because of the incongruence between the communal qualities associated with motherhood and the agentic qualities associated with being a successful employee (Eagly & Karau, 1991).

Stereotyping

Stereotypes are characteristics ascribed to individuals based on their association with a social group (Dickman & Eagly, 2000). Stereotyping has led to the idea that men and women are different with regard to traits associated with commitment and productivity in the workplace. Therefore, men are described as strong-minded, independent, and aggressive, while women are perceived as sympathetic, helpful, and kind (Heilman & Okimoto, 2003). These ideas help illustrate how gender stereotypes contribute to the treatment of women in the workplace.

Cognitive bias may occur when an employer disadvantages women by assuming that they will conform to a stereotype. For example, an employer assuming that mothers will work fewer hours after they have children is an example of how stereotyping is dangerous. This perceived lack of congruence between being a woman and an employee is incompatible with jobs stereotyped as requiring agentic (i.e. masculine) qualities. This may result in reduced expectations of success for women and reluctance to hire, promote, or train them (Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997).

Descriptive Versus Prescriptive Stereotyping

Descriptive stereotypes are generally shared attitudes about the different characteristics the genders have concerning one another (Burgess and Borgida 1999; Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Heilman & Okimoto, 2001). Men are assumed to have greater agentic qualities, such as competence, assertiveness, and intelligence, while women are linked to communal qualities such as warmth, kindness, and helpfulness. These perceptions lead to people believing that men are naturally suited for more agentic higher positions in organizations, such as in management, while women are best suited for communal occupations, which are typically lower in the hierarchy (Burgess and Borgida 1999; Eagly and Karau 2002; Heilman 2008).

Perceptions associated with descriptive stereotypes occur when women are seen as unfit or incompetent to perform a job with agentic qualities (Eagly and Karau 2002).

Prescriptive stereotyping is the progression of an assumption to an action (Burgess & Borgida, 1999). For example, prescriptive stereotyping may occur when an employer sends a new mother home early because she has a new born, yet keeps a new father at work because he needs to be a provider for his family (William & Segal, 2003). Most high-status jobs are “masculine typed,” that is, the traits associated with success in these jobs are agentic traits stereotypically associated with men (Eagly and Karau 2002; Heilman & Okimoto, 2008).

Shifting Standards Model

The shifting standards model incorporates the role of stereotypes in the creation of judgment standards against individual groups. The shifting standards model suggest that when individuals are judging group members on dimensions of a stereotyped nature, perceivers will use within-category reference points for their estimations (Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997). Therefore, similar scores on a performance appraisal scale may mean different things when applied to man versus a woman.

Objective Versus Subjective Judgments

Objective scales are tied to factors, such as money or some types of test scores, that cannot be reconceived based on categorical characteristics of the evaluator. Thus, because of the invariable meaning of objective scales they are more likely to expose an individual's stereotyped perceptions (Biernat & Vescio, 2002). Conversely, subjective scale judgments, such as light/dark, attractive/unattractive, and tall/short are susceptible the shifting standard patterns of stereotyped perception (Biernat & Vescio, 2002).

For instance a statement such as “he is good for a man” can mean something entirely different than “she is good for a women.” Studies have supported the view that the shifting standards model is associated to gender perceptions of job competence, commitment, and ability due to their

subjective nature (Biernat, 1994, Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997; Biernat & Vescio, 2002).

HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis 1: Mothers are perceived as less competent than non-mothers and fathers.

Hypothesis 2: Parents, whether mothers or fathers, are perceived as less committed to their job than men and women without children

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE OF THE MOTHERHOOD PENALTY

The “ideal worker” in the United States works long hours, willing to sacrifice personal interests for the sake of the organization, and does not have interruptions from home (Blair-Loy, 2005). Motherhood affects perceptions of competence and commitment because of the incompatibility of family and work roles (Blair-Loy, 2005). Even though long hours are not definitively associated with higher performance, there is a perception that time-effort is linked to productivity (Blair-Loy, 2005). Thus, a mother will have fewer resources to devote to her job (less productivity) and more to her child.

Competence

The issue of perceptions of competence among women in the workforce affects women in several ways. The successful performance of women is usually more scrutinized and assessed by stricter standards than that of men. (Foschi, 2001).

Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick (2004) conducted a study of stereotypes of mothers in the workplace. They hypothesized that: (1) female workers will be viewed in the same way that housewives are viewed (i.e. having communal qualities and being incompetent); (2) working mothers would be viewed as warmer than female workers without children, but less competent than female workers without children; (3) if the working mother is viewed as higher on warmth (a communal attribute) than on competence, then people will be less interested in hiring, promoting, or training her; and (4) fathers will not experience the same disadvantages at working mothers.

Participants were asked to rate three fictitious consultants on traits reflecting competence and warmth. In addition participants were also asked to rate three items that will determine discrimination. The participants were asked to give their first impression of the three candidates. Of the three candidate profiles, the middle profile operationalized the critical manipulation—it varied sex and whether the subject was a parent, resulting in four between-participant conditions.

The measured traits related to competence were: capable, efficient, organized, and skillful and the four related to warmth were: warm, sincere, organized and good-natured. A Likert-type seven-point scale was used ranging from 1=not at all to 7=extremely. After rating each consultant the participant was asked three questions to determine discrimination: Who would you hire as one of your consultants? How likely would you be to recommend Bob or Michelle for a promotion?, Who would you recommend to the company to invest in continuing training and education for?

The results were: First, parental status ignoring sex did not affect competence ratings. However looking at men and women separately did affect competence ratings. Second, participants rated working mothers as less competent than childless working women. Third, there was no difference in the perception of competence between working fathers and childless men. Fourth, parents were rated as significantly warmer than non-parents but parental status controlling for sex did not affect competence. Fifth, looking at female and male workers separately, working mothers were rated as significantly warmer than competent, and childless woman as significantly more competent than warm. Sixth, fathers were rated equally warm and competent but childless men were rated significantly more competent than warm. The three discrimination proxy items uncovered a significant interaction (ANOVA reliability .83). Seventh, working mothers were preferred less than childless women and working fathers were preferred more than childless men. Working mothers received a significantly lower discrimination score than childless women and fathers. Finally, gaining a child did not affect male workers, working fathers and childless men received equal discrimination scores. In addition the researchers performed a correlation

analyses to examine if competence ratings predicted whether a consultant would be requested, promoted, and trained. Competence ended up strongly predicting the discrimination proxy scale even when controlling for sex and parental status.

The study suggests that working mothers are not only viewed as less competent and less worthy of hiring, promoting, and training than childless women but they are also viewed as less competent than they were before they had children. Also possessing communal attributes, such as warmth, did not help them professionally, but rather had negative consequences in the workplace. Adding a child caused people to view the woman as lower on traits such as capability and skillfulness, and decreased people's interest in training, hiring, and promoting her. Interestingly, their findings revealed no significant difference in competence for working mothers compared to working fathers. However such trait ratings are subjective and therefore subject to shifting standards that can mask stereotyping effects. Stereotypes can affect behavioral predictions (hiring, promoting, and training) even when they do not affect trait ratings. Keep in mind that working mothers in this study were rated lower than working fathers on all three dimensions of the discrimination items.

One of the limitations of the study is that the researchers did not measure job commitment, which may have acted as a mediator in the evaluation of the discriminatory items on which working mothers were rated poorly. Opportunity related decisions, such as promotion or additional training may be linked to the perceived commitment in addition to the perceived ability.

So, in conclusion, working mothers in comparison to working fathers or childless women are stereotypically assumed to be more distracted by family commitments and, therefore, more likely to work fewer hours, be absent more often, or quit. Thus even though woman may not be perceived as suddenly losing her intellectual ability when becoming a mother, she may be deemed an unlikely candidate for advancement within an organization.

Warmth and High Status Jobs

A high warmth rating for mothers did not translate into career opportunities for women. Following the description of stereotyping above, high status jobs have agentic qualities attached to them, while warmth is a communal characteristic associated with women.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment may be conceived of as a psychological state that determines one's attitude toward continuing membership in an organization. (Meyers, Allen, Smith, 1993).

In two studies by Heilman and Okimoto (2008), the authors examined the effects of parental status on perceptions of men and women in attaining upper level jobs. They hypothesized that parenthood is associated with reduced commitment, yet mothers would experience greater consequences when it came to perceived competence than fathers.

In their first study Heilman and Okimoto (2008) set out to determine if there is a bias against mothers who are seeking a promotion to an upper level management position. The participants were 65 undergraduates, 72 percent of whom were female and who had an average age of 19. The participants were asked to review four applicants for the position of assistant vice president of financial affairs. The four applicants consisted of one male parent, one female parent, one female nonparent, and one male nonparent. All the candidates had MBAs, worked at the company for two to three years, were in their mid-30s, married, and currently held finance or accounting positions. The dependent variables in the study were ratings of anticipated job commitment, ratings of anticipated job competence, and screening recommendations. Commitment was measured using a nine-point scale that assessed the likelihood that if the applicant was promoted to assistant vice president the applicant would be very committed to the job, be willing to make sacrifices for the job, and make work a top priority. The measure of competence was a combination of three nine-point bipolar scales on which participants evaluated the applicants expected job performance as competent or non-competent, productive or not productive and effective or ineffective. Screening

recommendations were assessed by two measures on a nine-point scale. The first measure was a choice between two statements: "I think this person should be considered for the associate vice president position" or "this person should be eliminated from consideration for the job." The second measure was the participant's recommendation about which of the four applicants reviewed should be eliminated from further consideration for the job.

As predicted, anticipated job commitment revealed that women, regardless of parental status, were perceived to be less committed to the job than men. Parents, male or female, were expected to be less committed than were applicants without children. Anticipated competence revealed there was a significant interaction between sex and parental status. Female applicants who were described as having children were expected to be significantly less competent on the job than were female applicants without children. Differences in male applicants were expected to be non-significant. Also participants expected mothers to be less competent than fathers.

With regard to screening recommendations, female applicants with children received fewer significantly weaker screening recommendations than females without children. There was not a significant difference in screening recommendations made about male applicants with or without children.

In addition, participants chose to eliminate female applicants with children more often than females without children. Parental status did not, however, have an effect on decisions regarding men.

In summary, the researchers' hypotheses were supported. Nonetheless, Heilman and Okimoto (2008) conducted a second study using older and more experienced participants to further test the relationship between judgment of competence and employment decisions.

In the second study, they recreated the condition from the first study but also tested the role of gender stereotyping as a mediating effect in the perceptions of job competence of employed mothers. The researchers in this study used one hundred MBA students, 34 percent of whom were female with an average age of 29. They were all

full-time employees of a business and had an average of six years of work experience. The results were consistent with the previous study, which found that anticipated job commitment was negatively affected by parental status and anticipated job competence, and that screening recommendations were negatively affected when the female was a mother. In addition their test of gender stereotyping as a mediating variable in the perception of job competence of employed mothers found that agentic behavior, not dependability, mediated the relationship between motherhood and anticipated competence.

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

Earlier I hypothesized that a Motherhood Penalty affects women in the workplace, resulting in perception woman are less competent than men. A secondary hypothesis was that parents, both men and women, are perceived as less committed to their organizations than childless employees.

Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick's (2004) research provides the clearest support for the first hypothesis. Their study showed that not only are mothers viewed as less competent than men, but that women are perceived as less competent following the birth of child than they were before.

Support for hypothesis two is provided by the studies done by Heilman and Okimoto (2008), which found that parents were perceived as less committed to their organizations than childless employees.

STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING THE MOTHERHOOD PENALTY

In recent decades, women's participation in the workforce has grown considerably. However, women are still expected to perform their traditional roles as wives and mothers (Biernat & Wortman, 1991). The strain of performing multiple roles at the same time may result in stress and conflict. (Rotondo, Carlson, & Kincaid, 2003)

Work/Family Conflict

Work/family conflict is a multidimensional construct that can be explained as how an individual's work role may interfere with his or her family role, and vice-versa (Greenhaus & Beutell,

1985). Studies have found that female employees are more likely to experience strain associated with conflicting roles than men (Rotondo et al., 2003; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Furthermore mothers suffer a greater impact than childless women or men, which increases exponentially the higher the job status (Brown, 2010). One factor to explain this is the assumption that women spend more time with work and family obligations than men (Rotondo et al, 2003).

Work Engagement

According to Bakker and Demerouti (2008) an engaged employee is one who is enthusiastic and fully engaged in his or her work, and, therefore, behaves in the best interests of the organization. Work engagement is associated with several positive organizational outcomes, such as organizational commitment, and high motivation and productivity (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008).

Job Demand Resource Theory (JDR).

JDR theory is based on the idea that employee well-being depends on two factors: job demands and job resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job demands are the aspects of the job that take continuous effort, which can drain an individual's physiological and/or psychological energies (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). Role overload, role conflict, time constraints and stress are all of examples of job demand (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job resources are factors that reduce the drain that job demands place on an individual, which can be a strong predictor of work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; 2008).

The JDR Model, Work/Family Conflict, and Work Engagement.

Bakker, Veldhoven, and Xanthopoulou, (2007) expanded the JDR model to include work/family conflict. Work and family roles are viewed as incompatible, thus participation in one role hinders participation in the other. Increased resources can ameliorate the effects of the demands place on individual due to work/family conflict leading to higher levels of engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007:2008)..

Flexible Work Practices

Flexible work practices allow employees to determine the location and schedule of their work (Glass & Estes, 1997). Under most flexible work practices, employees still work forty hours per week or more, but perhaps not on a standard eight hour a day, five day a week, schedule (Glass & Estes, 1997). Formerly, women sometimes chose to curtail working hours while raising children. Flexible work arrangements may now allow women to maintain full-time status, but on a schedule that meets their needs (Glass, 2004). Flexible work practices can enable workers with care giving responsibilities to perform at their peak capacity instead of conforming to standard work schedules that stifles their efforts to succeed (Glass, 2004).

These policies are often not expensive to implement. But, whatever the cost, the expense is balanced against the benefit of lower turnover, greater attachment by employees, and public approval (Glass & Estes, 1997; Ralson, 1989; Golden, 2001). Further, employees may benefit from the increased leisure time, reduced stress, and overall improvements in their well-being (Glass, 2004; Golden, 2001).

In addition, the advantages of flexible work arrangements extend beyond the workplace to decrease work/family conflict through the provision of more family time and more household production time.

In a study by Ralston (1990) one hundred women were interviewed over a 10-month period after flexible work practices were introduced in two work sites. Just over 75 percent reported a higher degree of balance between family/work responsibilities. Also fifty percent reported their productivity increasing because of flextime, and 65% decreased their absenteeism as well. Furthermore, this study suggests that the benefits of flexible work arrangement are greatest among parents, but even more so for mothers because they may have the most to gain from flexible work practices (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002).

Sandberg's Lean In

How do we take down the barriers that prevent women from making it to the top of the ladder? Mothers do not have sufficient access to childcare arrangements and workplace flexibility in order to

succeed according to Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook and author of the book *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* (2013). Sandberg understands the external barriers faced by women in society, but she also addresses the barriers that exist within women themselves. Sandberg (2013: 8) writes:

We hold ourselves back in ways big and small, by lacking self-confidence, by not raising our hands, and by pulling back when we should be leaning in. We internalize the negative messages when we get throughout our lives—the messages that say it wrong to be outspoken, aggressive, and more powerful than men. We lower our expectations of what we can achieve. We continue to do the majority of the housework and childcare. We compromise our career goals to make room for partners and children who may not even exist yet. Compared to our male colleagues, fewer of us aspire to senior level positions. This is not a list of what other women have done. I have made every mistake on this list. At times, I still do. (Sandberg, 2013: 8).

Sandberg is not debating whether individual or institutional barriers are more to blame for the position of women in the workforce, rather she is saying that while they are fighting the institutional battle, women must fight the battle within themselves. Sandberg dismisses the claim that she is blaming the victim or that it is easy for her to make the case for “leaning in” given her financial situation. Her intention, she writes (Sandberg, 2013: 11), is to “offer advice that would have been useful to her long before she had heard of Google or Facebook that will resonate with women in a broad range of circumstances.”

For example, Sandberg (2013) describes how society expects women to start looking for husbands at a young age. As a result, Sandberg

turned down a prestigious international fellowship because she thought a foreign country would be an unlikely place to find a suitable mate. Sandberg admits that there is more to life than promotions and success in the workplace. However, if these are the things that a woman values, she should pursue them as hard as some women go after marriage and motherhood (Sandberg, 2013).

Run through the finish line

Women start planning their careers long before they have children. It is not an overnight decision to leave the workforce; there are many small decisions along the way that hold women back. Sandberg (2013: 93-4) states:

An ambitious and successful woman heads down a challenging career path with the thought of having children in the back of her mind. At some point, this thought moves to the front of her mind, typically once she finds a partner. The woman considers how hard she is working and reasons that to make room for a child she will have to scale back. A law associate might decide not to shoot for partner because someday she hopes to have a family. Often without realizing it, the woman stops reaching for new opportunities. The problem is that even if she were to get pregnant immediately, she still has nine months before she has to care for an actual child. By the time the baby arrives, the woman is likely to be in a different place in her career than she should have been had she not leaned back. (pg. 93-94)

The issue with this scenario is that the woman may have been on par with her successful male counterparts but as soon as she started pulling back she has or will be behind.

Marry a Partner not Just a Husband or Wife

Earlier in this paper I stated that women who work as many hours as men still do the majority of

the housework. Sandberg (2013) talks about finding a true partner in this regard. She freely admits that men are not biologically capable of breastfeeding, but breast milk can be refrigerated and a husband capable of waking up in the middle of the night and giving his child a bottle. As much as women need be empowered at work, men need to be empowered at home. This idea is in sync with work family/conflict and the problem of limited resources discussed earlier in this paper. Perhaps if women had more support in the home, they would be perceived as not having divided commitments.

CONCLUSIONS

One of my favorite quotes by Gloria Steinem is “You can’t do it all. No one can have a full-time job, raise perfect children, prepare meals and be multi-orgasmic ‘til dawn ... Superwoman is the adversary of the women’s movement.”

The studies I presented illustrate how perceptions of anticipated competence and commitment negatively affected employment outcomes for mothers. These perceptions were not based on fact or data, but rather assumptions. These assumptions, in turn, are rooted in expected social roles to which men and women are expected adhere. The issue is complicated by the fact that these assumptions are acted upon and have extremely negative consequences for mothers, but don’t appear to have the same affect for males, childless or not.

Admittedly, there are overwhelming institutional barriers for women in general. However, as I addressed in the previous section, women have to fight the barriers within themselves that hinder their potential successes in the workplace. Women cannot, nor should they try, to do it all, but can affect their position in the workplace.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, D., Binder, M. & Krause, K.. (2002). The Motherhood Wage Penalty: Which Mothers Pay it and Why? *American Economic Review*, 92 (2),354-358.
- Anderson, D., Binder, M. & Krause, K. (2003). The Motherhood Wage Penalty Revisited: Experience, Heterogeneity, Work Effort and Work Schedule Flexibility. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*. 56(2), 273-294.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2008). Towards a model of work engagement. *Career Development International*, 13(3), 209-223.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2009). The crossover of work engagement between working couples: A closer look at the role of empathy. *Managerial Psychology*. 24(3), 220- 236
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Euwema, M. C. (2005). Job resources buffer the impact of job demands on burnout. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 10, 170-180.
- Bakker, A. B., Van Veldhoven, M. J. P. M., & Xanthopoulou, D. (2010). Beyond the Demand-Control model: Thriving on high job demands and resources. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, 9, 3–16
- Barnett, R. C. (2004). Preface: Woman and work: Where are we, where did we come from, and where are we going? *Journal of Social Issues*, 60, 667-674
- Bielby, D. D. V., & Bielby, W. (1984). Work Commitment, Sex-Role, and Women’s Employment. *American Sociological Review*, 49, 234-247
- Biernat, M. (1994). Shifting standards and stereotype-based judgments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 66, 5-20
- Biernat, M. & Kobrynowicz, D. (1997) Gender and race-based standards of competence: Lower minimum standards but higher ability standards for devalued groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 544-557
- Biernat, M. & Vescio, T (2002). She Swings, She Hits, She’s Great, She’s Benched: Implication of Gender-Based Shifting Standards for Judgment and Behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 67-77
- Biernat, M., & Wortman, C. B. (1991). Sharing of home responsibilities between professionally employed women and their husbands. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 844-860

- Blair-Loy, M. (2005). Competing devotions: Career and family among women executives. *Harvard University Press*.
- Blair-Loy, M. & Wharton, A.S. (2002). The Paradox of the family-friendly workplace: employees' use of family-responsive policies and the social context of work *Social Forces*, 80 (2002), pp. 1–30
- Boask, J., Sczency, S., & Eagly, A. (2011). The Impact of Social Roles on Trait Judgments: A Critical Examination. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(4) 429-440
- Bridges, J. S., Etaugh, C., & Barnes-Farrell, J. (2002). Trait judgments of stay-at-home and employed parents: A function of social role and/or shifting standards? *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 26, 140–150.
- Brown, L. M. (2010). The relationship between motherhood and professional advancement: Perceptions versus reality. *Employee Relations*, 32(5), 470-494
- Budig, M. & England, P. (2001). The Wage Penalty for Motherhood. *American Sociological Review*. 66, 204-225.
- Burgess, D. & Borgida, E. (1999). Who Women are, Who Women Should Be: Descriptive and Prescriptive Gender Stereotyping in Sex Discrimination. *Psychology, Public Policy, and the Law*, 5, 665-692
- Correll, S., Bernard, S., & Paik, I. (2007). Getting a Job: Is there a motherhood penalty? *American Journal of Sociology*. 112, 1297-1338.
- Crosby, F. J., Williams, J. C., & Biernat, M. (2004). The maternal wall. *Journal of Social Issues*, 60, 675-682
- Deutsch, F. M., & Saxon, S. E. (1998a). The double standard of praise and criticism for mothers and fathers. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 22, 665–683.
- Dickman, A. & Eagly, A. (2000). Stereotypes as dynamic constructs: Women and men of the past, present, and future. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26, 1171-1188.
- Eagly, A.H, (1987). Sex differences in social behavior: A social role interpretation. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Eagly, A.H & Karau, S.J. (1991). Gender and the emergence of leaders: A meta analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 685-710.
- Eagly, A. H., & Steffen, V. J. (1984). Gender stereotypes stem from the distribution of women and men into social roles. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 735-754
- Etaugh, C., & Folger, D. (1998). Perceptions of parents whose work and parenting behaviors deviate from role expectations. *Sex Roles*, 39, 215–223.
- Etaugh, C., & Moss, C. (2001). Attitudes of employed women toward parents who choose full-time or part-time employment following their child's birth. *Sex Roles*, 44, 611–619.
- Etaugh, C., & Nekolny, K. (1990). Effects of employment status and marital status on perceptions of mothers. *Sex Roles*, 23, 273–280.
- Etaugh, C., & Poertner, P. (1992). Perceptions of women: Influence of performance, marital and parental variables. *Sex Roles*, 26, 311–321.
- Etaugh, C., & Study, G. (1989). Perceptions of mothers: Effects of employment status, marital status, and age of child. *Sex Roles*, 20, 59–70
- Federal Glass Ceiling Commission. (1995). Good for Business: Making Full Use of the Nation's Human Capital. U.S. Department of Labor
- Foschi, M. (2000) Double Standards for Competence: Theory and Research, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 21-42
- Foschi, M. (1996) Double Standards in the Evaluation of Men and Women, *Social Psychology Quarterly* 59, 3, 237-254
- Glass, J. (2004). Blessing or Curse? Work-Family Policies and Mother's Wage Growth Over Time. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 23(1), 51-72.

- Glass, J. & Estes, S.B., (1997). The Family Responsive Workplace. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 23, 289-314.
- Glass, J. & Noonan, M. (2007) Workplace Flexibility Policies and Wage Growth: Do Organizational Characteristics Matter?
- Golden, L. (2001). Flexible Work Schedules: Which Workers Get Them? *American Behavioral Scientist*, 44(7), 1157-1178.
- Glauber, R. (2007). Marriage and the Motherhood Wage Penalty among African Americans, Hispanics and Whites. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 69(4),951.
- Gorman, E. (2005). Gender Stereotypes, Same-Gender Preferences, and Organizational Variation in the Hiring of Women: Evidence from Law Firms. *American Sociological Review*. 70(4), 702-728.
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review*, 10, 76-88
- Gungor, G. & Biernat, M. (2009). Gender Bias or Motherhood Disadvantage? Judgments of Blue Collar Mothers and Fathers in the Workplace. *Sex Roles*, 60, 232-246.
- Halpert, J. A., Wilson, M. L., & Hickman, J. L. (1993). Pregnancy as a source of bias in performance appraisals. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 14, 649-663
- Heilman, M. E. & Okimoto, T. G. (2008). Motherhood: A potential source of bias in employment decisions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(1), 189-198.
- Kalist, D. (2008). Does Motherhood Affect Productivity, Relative Performance, And Earnings? *Journal of Labor Research*, 29(3), 219-235.
- Masser, B., Grass, K. & Nestic, M. (2007). We Like You, but We Don't Want You. The Impact of Pregnancy in the Workplace. *Sex Roles*. 57, 703-712.
- Meyers, J., Allen, N., Smith, C (1993) Commitment to organizations and occupations: Extension and test of a three-component conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78, 538-551.
- Ralson, D.A. (1989). The Benefits of flexitime:Real or Imagined? *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 10 (4), 369-373
- Ralston, D. (1990). How flexitime eases work/family tensions. *Personnel*, 67, 45-48.
- Ridgeway, C. & Correll, S. (2004). Motherhood as a status characteristic. *The Journal of Social issues*, 60, 683-700.
- Robertson, I. T., & Cooper, C. L. (2010). Full engagement: The integration of employee engagement and psychological well-being. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 31(4), 324-336
- Rotondo, D. M., Carlson, D. S., & Kincaid, J. F. (2003). Coping with multiple dimensions of work family conflict. *Personnel Review*, 32(3), 275-296
- Sandberg, S. (2013). *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*. Knopf:New York.
- Schwartz, F. (1989). Management women and the new facts of life. *Harvard Business Review*, 67,65-76.
- Williams, J, & Segal, N. (2003). Beyond the Maternal Wall: Relief for Family Caregivers who are discriminated Against on the Job. *Harvard Women's law Journal*, 26, 77.