

The Inevitable Stigma for Childbearing-Aged Women in the Workplace: Five Perspectives on the Pregnancy-Work Intersection

Rachel C.E. Trump-Steele, Christine L. Nittrouer, Michelle R. Hebl
and Leslie Ashburn-Nardo

Abstract The most commonly researched group of women of childbearing age are those who get pregnant and/or have young children in the workplace. Given employers' anticipation that employees will invest the majority of their physical and psychological time and energy to their work (Greenberg et al. 2009), deviations from these expectations often result in negative perceptions of both male and female employees. But stigmatization toward childbearing-aged women is not just reserved for those who are pregnant. Childbearing women who, for a variety of reasons (e.g., choose not to, cannot physically have them), do not have any children (e.g., Lisle 1999) also face stigmatization. Similarly, recent evidence suggests that working women who choose to have only one child also face a barrage of inappropriate questions and associated stigmatization (e.g., Lombino 2011; Zamora 2012). This chapter takes a broad approach to examining the intersection of pregnancy and the workplace by examining five different groups of childbearing-aged employees: women who are not pregnant and do not ever plan to have children (Group 1), women who are not pregnant but plan to have children (Group 2), women who are currently pregnant with their first child (Group 3), women who are currently pregnant and already have at least one child (Group 4), and women who have at least one child and do not plan to have any more children (Group 5). For each group of women, we provide descriptive statistics and a content analysis of items asking them about their biggest worries, advice to past-selves, and how successful they have been at attaining their goals.

Keywords Childbearing-age · Women · Pregnancy · Work · Stigma

R.C.E. Trump-Steele (✉) · C.L. Nittrouer · M.R. Hebl (✉)
Rice University, Houston, USA
e-mail: rachel.c.trump@rice.edu

M.R. Hebl
e-mail: hebl@rice.edu

L. Ashburn-Nardo
Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis, Indianapolis, USA

Both women and men experience work-family stress and struggle to balance different spheres of their lives (e.g., Shockley and Singla 2011). Although, research is mixed as to whether women experience greater work-life stress than men (e.g., Bagger et al. 2008; Ford et al. 2007; Keene and Quadagno 2004), women unmistakably experience *different* sorts of stressors when they are navigating whether and when to have children and how many children to have. Moreover, most women of childbearing-age report experiencing workplace stigma regarding their personal decisions about having children.

The most commonly researched group of women of childbearing age are those who get pregnant and/or have young children in the workplace. Given employers' anticipation that employees will invest the majority of their physical and psychological time and energy to their work (Greenberg et al. 2009), deviations from these expectations often result in negative perceptions of both male and female employees. Women who take time away from work to have a child (a) are perceived to be less serious about work and careers, (b) consequently limit themselves in their potential for work success and advancement, and (c) are thought to commit career suicide (Greenberg et al. 2009). Furthermore, policies intended to help pregnant employees and/or those with infants achieve work-life balance are often underutilized because there is often an additional stigma associated with using such policies (Greenberg et al. 2009). But stigmatization toward childbearing-aged women is not just reserved for those who are pregnant. Childbearing women who, for a variety of reasons (e.g., choose not to, cannot physically have them), do not have any children (e.g., Lisle 1999) also face stigmatization. Similarly, recent evidence suggests that working women who choose to have only one child also face a barrage of inappropriate questions and associated stigmatization (e.g., Lombino 2011; Zamora 2012).

This chapter takes a broad approach to examining the intersection of pregnancy and the workplace by examining five different groups of childbearing-aged employees: women who are not pregnant and do not ever plan to have children (Group 1), women who are not pregnant but plan to have children (Group 2), women who are currently pregnant with their first child (Group 3), women who are currently pregnant and already have at least one child (Group 4), and women who have at least one child and do not plan to have any more children (Group 5). For each group of women, we consider the main issues and challenges that they report facing.

Impetus for Considering Women's Intersection of Pregnancy and the Workplace

The majority (over 80 %) of women who enter the workforce today will become pregnant while they are employed (Riley 2013), and many will be pregnant when applying for jobs (Hebl et al. 2007). In a study conducted by Hebl et al. (2007),

visibly pregnant job applicants faced greater hostility than female applicants who were not pregnant. Cuddy et al. (2004) suggest that women who are seen primarily as professionals are viewed as being competent, but interpersonally cold. However, women seen primarily as mothers are viewed as warm but incompetent. In a study conducted by Cunningham and Macan (2007), participants rated women who appeared pregnant significantly lower for hiring; one possible reason was the pregnant applicant was rated as significantly more likely to need time off and to miss work. They found that even when applying for a temporary position (a 3 month job) when only 3 months pregnant, when arguably work would be largely unaffected by pregnancy and the birth of the child, pregnant candidates received significantly lower hiring and starting salary recommendations (Masser et al. 2007). Further, in research by Masser et al. (2007), although pregnant women were rated as being warmer across conditions, no significant difference in competence ratings was found between the pregnant and non-pregnant job applicants. Despite being seen as equally competent, pregnant job applicants were rated as less hireable than non-pregnant applicants. Given society's cultural acceptance of pregnant women's visible identities affirming their societal gender roles (Greenberg et al. 2009), females' experiences on the job may vary as a function of their pregnancy status. Thus, one aim of the present research was to shed light on the work-life interface challenges pregnant women face.

Importantly, though under-researched, women of child-bearing age who have few or no children also face stigmatization in the workplace. For example, women who choose not to have children are seen as selfish (see Sandler 2013), and those with one child are denigrated for leaving their child to be alone (see Babycenter 2014). These latter two groups of women—those without children and those with only one—have been the focus of scant empirical research and their perspectives and work-family challenges are not well understood, underscoring the need for the present research. In short, all working women of child-bearing age experience an involuntary stigma associated with the intersection between pregnancy and work: the stigma of not wanting kids, the stigma of not being able to have kids, the stigma of being pregnant, the stigma of only having a single child, and/or the stigma of being a working mom.

In this vein, this chapter seeks not only to provide a comparison of perceptions between pregnant professional women, pregnant mothers (viewed primarily as mothers), and non-pregnant women, but also to examine the work-life experiences of a wider scope of child-bearing aged women than previously has been considered.

Background for Data Collection

In this chapter, we examine the experiences of female employees between the ages of 20 and 55 who are pregnant with their first child, pregnant and have other children, will not have children, will have only one child, or who have multiple children. In considering women according to these categories, we take a much more

nanced approach to understanding the worries and experiences that women have about work-life balance. In sum, we focus on how pregnancy decisions involve all women of child-bearing age in the workforce. This work is an attempt to look at not only the differences that may exist between women in these different groups, but also the common experiences shared by women of child-bearing age.

Participants

We solicited for this survey 737 professional women, who, at the time of the survey, had been working for at least three years. We recruited participants via research assistants (undergraduates at a small, southwestern, private university), social media (Facebook, Linked-In, list-serves, and virtual communities), mTurk (Amazon Mechanical Turk is an electronic marketplace where organizations can access an on-demand workforce to complete human intelligence tasks), word-of-mouth, and snowball techniques (referral sampling). Since this is typically a difficult population to access, we used a combination of techniques over an approximate 6 month period to accumulate a large enough sample of women. Snowball sampling was especially effective, particularly if participants who have access to large networks of potential participants are identified and willing to recruit. In total, 553 women between the ages of 20 and 55 who responded to the survey had usable data. These women were 84 % White/Caucasian, 6 % Black/African American, 5 % Asian/Pacific Islander, 5 % Hispanic/American, and 1 % American Indian/Alaskan Native. The average age of our sample was 35, with a range of 20–55 years-of-age. The sample was divided into five groups: 20 % of respondents (112) were not currently pregnant and not planning to have children in the future, 25 % of respondents (137) were not currently pregnant but planned on having children in the future, 6 % of respondents (35) were pregnant with their first child, 7 % of respondents (42) were pregnant and already had children, and 41 % of respondents (227) were not currently pregnant and already had children.

We chose to ask these women about their work histories, pay, and hours. We also wanted to hear from them regarding their partner status, strategies regarding childcare, and experiences requesting maternity leave. Finally, qualitatively, we wanted to compare and contrast what these different groups of women worried about regarding having children and why. Since the premise of this study was that each of these groups experience unique stigmatization, we asked questions that attempted to differentiate the experiences of the members in these different groups and provide themes we could examine.

Methodology

We asked participants to respond to three open-ended questions. First, we asked them to indicate their biggest worry about deciding to have children. Second, we asked them to indicate the goals that they had wanted to accomplish before considering children. And third, we asked them to indicate advice that they would give to other working women who were thinking about having or already had children. Further, we asked them about their preparedness for balancing pregnancy and work and family and work, and their behaviors and beliefs regarding caregiving. We also asked all participants to indicate demographic information including their age, their highest educational attainment, number of hours worked, number of children, and whether or not they took maternity leave.

Analyses consist of descriptive and comparative assessment of both quantitative and qualitative data collected from the participants. Qualitative responses were coded to determine the themes of the responses. Basic frequency calculations were done based on this coding to determine the most common responses. These themes were also compared to and found in the quantitative data collected about participants' worries and advice. Analyses were split into five groups of women: (1) those who were not pregnant and did not wish to ever have children, (2) those who were not pregnant but wanted to have children in the future, (3) those who were pregnant with their first child, (4) those who were pregnant and already had at least one child, and (5) those who already had children and did not anticipate having more. The results below aim to provide a snapshot of the most common concerns and pressures for women in each of these groups.

Results

Out of the total 553 respondents, 81 % took a maternity leave from their workplaces while 19 % did not. In the sections below, we discuss the similarities and differences between the groups and their experiences.

Working Women Who Are not Pregnant and Do not Plan to Have Children (Group 1)

Both base rates and societal expectations dictate that most women will become mothers at some point in their lives. According to reports by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC; Martin et al. 2013), American women today average 1.88 children over their lifetimes. A 2010 Pew Research report indicates that approximately one in five American women remain childfree (Livingston and Cohn 2010). Thus, while

most women do have children and have more than one, there is a substantial number of women (20 %) who do not have any.

Social science research has documented clearly that women in American society are prescribed to be warm, kind, patient, sensitive, and, most importantly, interested in having children (Prentice and Carranza 2002). Thus, women seem to face a particular stigmatization for not wanting to have children. Research suggests these women are stereotyped as being less sensitive, less loving, more poorly psychologically adjusted, and less likely to lead fulfilling lives than women who want children (Jamison et al. 1979; Mueller and Yoder 1997; see also Vinson et al. 2010). People often feel confused by women who indicate that they do not wish to have children, as if they are being “defeminated” (see Safire 1986).

Despite such descriptive and prescriptive pressures to have children, it is noteworthy that the American birthrate is at an all-time low in recorded history; 2012 CDC data reveal a rate of 63 births per 1000 women ages 15–44, the fifth consecutive year of decline (Martin et al. 2013). In addition, 2012 CDC data indicate that women are increasingly delaying the decision to have children (Martin et al. 2013), and such delays increase the likelihood of their not being able to become pregnant (Birrittieri 2005). Collectively, these data suggest that in today’s US workforce, more women than ever comprise our Group 1: Women who are not pregnant and do not plan to have children.

Previous Research on Group 1

This group is, perhaps, the least studied group of all five that we examined. Simply put, there is little empirical research on this group of women, particularly when it comes to work-family balance. The assumption may be that because they do not have children, they essentially have no problems balancing work and family. However, many of these individuals are married, have pets, engage in eldercare, and play significant roles in their extended families (e.g., childcare and/or significant involvement with nieces and nephews), prompting some researchers to use the term work-life rather than work-family conflict and/or balance. The fact that childfree women are a growing, yet understudied, population underscores the significance of the present findings.

Empirical and Qualitative Insights from Our Data Collection on Group 1

Our findings revealed that the 132 women who were not pregnant and did not plan to ever have children worked roughly 40 h per week ($M = 40.6$, $SD = 13.5$). They were, on average, 34 years of age ($M = 34.4$, $SD = 9.6$), and most frequently had

earned 5 years of post-secondary education. This group, in response to their *biggest worry* about balancing work and pregnancy, indicated three main reasons that helped dictate and reinforce their decision not to have children. The first of these worries was the *inability to find good childcare for their children*. In fact, 73 % of respondents mentioned “care” or “daycare” in their responses. As one participant reflected, “Child care is a big issue right now. There does not seem to be adequate child care around.” Second, others indicated their worries focused on *not having enough time to manage both their professional lives and their home lives*. Specifically, 29 % discussed “balance,” “life,” “plan,” “professional,” and “responsibilities” in their responses. As one participant indicated in deciding not to have children, “I would worry that despite my best efforts, I’d wind up leaving the work force for many years to care for my child and would never be able to catch up professionally.” Third, others cited the fact that adding children to the mix would make them *unable to manage their finances*. Specifically, out of the people who answered the question, 26 % mentioned “finances” or “money.” As one participant put it succinctly in deciding not to have children, “My biggest fear is being able to be financially stable for my child.”

In terms of *goal-attainment*, women in this group expressed interest in finding financial stability (29 %), an ideal career fit (16 %), and a supportive partner (7 %). As one participant said, she would simply need to have “advanced to a higher paid position with more flexibility.”

Finally, concerning *their advice to future generations of women*, the women in this group indicated a need to be better prepared and planful (21 %), a need to first accomplish more of their career goals (i.e., school, getting to a point where they would not have to work, 18 %) and a need to save money (19 %). Several women advised future generations specifically not to have children. One participant said, “Make sure you have a plan and that you have a lot of support (from partner, family, and at work) or don’t have children,” and another participant more blatantly said, “Don’t have children!”

Other Findings Regarding Group 1

The majority of women in this group had partners (72 %), and 83 % of these women believed either gender could be the primary caregiver. Further, 60 % of women in this group believed the primary caregiver should perform 50 % of childcare duties. Additionally, 60 % of women in this group thought that secondary and primary caregivers should work equal hours. Additionally, it is important to note that while stereotypes about these women would suggest that they are cold or hate children, these ideas did not arise from their answers. Instead, many expressed pragmatic concerns and a different focus.

Women Who Are not Pregnant but Plan to Have Children (Group 2)

Women who are planning to have children 1 day, but have not begun yet, provide interesting insights into the anticipated concerns of having children and working. Based on findings from Group 1, for these women, perhaps being a working mother is an abstract idea that will become concrete only after a collection of resources (e.g., finances, job security). If that is the case, Group 1 could be on average older and face different concerns than those of Group 2.

Previous Research on Group 2

Clearly women who are not pregnant are not protected under the pregnancy EEOC regulations (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 2013a). Pregnancy discrimination specifically involves “treating a woman (an applicant or employee) unfavorably because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth” (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 2013a). However, women who are of a certain age and by circumstance or choice are not (yet) pregnant, can face reverse discrimination. Uncomfortable questions or thoughts can come up in interviews: “Do you plan to have kids?”, “How old are your kids?”, and “When are you going to have kids?” are all varying ways of feeling out a potential hire’s position regarding having children themselves. On-the-job, colleagues can be similarly insensitive and even more direct, asking, “Why don’t you have kids yet?” and “Is there some reason you don’t have kids?” In some cases, the answer may be simple—the woman may not have a partner, may not feel ready, or may want to be more established at work first.

However, the longer these women delay having a baby, the more others may stigmatize them as being childless (Bragger et al. 2002; Cunningham and Macan 2007; Halpert et al. 1993; Masser et al. 2007). That is, they may be perceived as being cold but competent high-status competitors, evoking an envious type of prejudice (i.e., feelings of both respect and resentment) among other women (Cuddy et al. 2004). Regardless, research reveals that women who are childless are rated as more desirable for hiring, promoting, and educating than women who are mothers. How can there be a downside for this group?

If pregnancy for women of a certain age is a cultural norm, what happens when a person does not meet this criteria? Perhaps women without children at home carry more of a burden when working in a team than women (and men) who do have children. Thoughts like, “Oh, she can work the late hours, she doesn’t have a family at home” may quickly dominate. Given that women in this group are already perceived to be more competent and cold than women who are mothers, it may

quickly be that these women become the “in-a-pinch” people, the “go-to” employee when someone needs to shift around his/her schedule, work late, or work more. While this may bode well for career success, it also may quickly stifle out any semblance of work-life balance. Moreover, if women in this group experience additional responsibility and pressure at work because they do not currently have children, this may jade their perceptions regarding the feasibility of themselves to simultaneously have children and work. They may begin to feel that these responsibilities become a part of their job descriptions, and that they truly may lose their jobs if their personal commitments preclude them from being able to meet these additional responsibilities. Given the relative dearth of research on this group, we turn to the data to paint a better picture of the experiences of women who fall into this category.

Empirical and Qualitative Insights from Our Data Collection on Group 2

Our findings revealed that the 160 female participants taking our survey who were not pregnant but planned to have children in the future worked roughly 41 h per week ($M = 41.1$, $SD = 13.6$). They were on average 27 years old ($M = 27.4$, $SD = 4.5$), and most frequently had earned five years of post-secondary education. They anticipated that they might work 39 h per week if they became pregnant ($M = 38.5$, $SD = 14.3$), and approximately 33 h per week ($M = 33.3$, $SD = 18.2$) after having a child.

This group indicated that their *biggest worry* involved the additional work that children would require over the time currently committed to their jobs (28 %), the tradeoff it may have on their careers (23 %), and the impact of leaving/missing work (20 %). Their comments also reflected this as they indicated worrying about “the after hours work on top of the 40 h,” “having a child will make me not want to go back to work,” and “losing my job because I am pregnant and not able to work as much.” Like those women in Group 1 who did not want children, this group (Group 2) also expressed worries about their finances (41 %) and balance issues (13 %).

In terms of *goal-attainment*, women in this group indicated goals that reinforced the fact that women in Group 2 were slightly younger and earlier along in their careers than those in Group 1. Specifically, they wanted to complete their educational goals (53 %); as one participant said, “I have almost completed college. Then I will need a résumé and internship experience.” They also wanted to gain financial stability/promotions (20 %); one participant said, “I need financial stability and would like to achieve this prior to pregnancy.” And finally, they indicated wanting to be in a relationship with a strong partner prior to having children (15 %). This group may be thought of as planners; women in this group seemed to have certain milestones that they wanted to complete before moving on to having a child.

Finally, concerning *their advice to future generations of women*, the women in this group indicated that women should save as much money as possible (24 %) and advance in their careers as much as they can before having children (17 %). One participant indicated, “Advance as far as you can before you get pregnant so that you can come back from maternity leave in a good position.” Another stated, “Be at least somewhat financially stable before children. Get ahead first.”

Other Findings Regarding Group 2

Women in this group were generally in their mid- to late-twenties. These women commented that they wished to have their first child between 30 and 35 years-of-age. They anticipated that they would have to work on average 2 h less per week should they become pregnant (from 41 to 39 h/week). Regarding their *preparedness for pregnancy-work balance*, most indicated that they felt unprepared. Regarding their *preparedness for family-work balance* (post-pregnancy), most also commented that they felt unprepared.

Working Women Who Are Currently Pregnant with Their First Child (Group 3)

The third group that we examined included women who were pregnant with their first child. This group was anywhere from being weeks along to being very close to delivering their first child. Thus, balancing work and children was about to become their reality. This group of women, along with the next group (Group 4, women who were currently pregnant and already had at least one child), have been the subject of a substantial amount of research on the effects of pregnancy on workplace concepts such as discrimination and organizational policies intended to reduce such discrimination.

Previous Research on Group 3

Past research has examined the experiences of women while pregnant in the workplace (Ladge et al. 2012; Reitmanova and Gustafson 2008; Mäkelä 2012), while pregnant and applying for jobs (Hebl et al. 2007), while negotiating maternity leave (Greenberg et al. 2009), and when disclosing pregnancy status (King and Botsford 2009; Morgan et al. 2014). Due to the federal protection of this group (pregnant), discrimination faced by its members is fairly well-documented. Many

Americans believe that pregnant employees limit team productivity, should not be hired or promoted, and should be given fewer accommodations by organizations (see King and Botsford 2009). Working mothers in general are viewed as less dedicated to their families than mothers who do not work, and those who do not take a maternity leave after having a child are generally judged more harshly than those who do (Cuddy et al. 2004). This is a relation that is mediated by the perception that no-leave mothers are less committed to their children (Cuddy et al. 2004). Further, mothers who choose to work for personal fulfillment (rather than necessity) are evaluated more negatively (Cuddy et al. 2004).

The nature of pregnancy is that it is, at first, a concealable stigma that involves the complex process of disclosure (King and Botsford 2009). Because disclosure involves dual and contrary motives, to be authentic and to self-protect, it can be a delicate balance. However, women are in fact physiologically different when pregnant. In many cases, their physical appearance will accentuate this difference (Greenberg et al. 2009). Regardless, whether concealable or not, many women fear disclosing their pregnancy due to anticipated backlash. In one example from our study, an academic researcher hired for an assistant professor position during her pregnancy commented that she waited as long as she could (more than 5 months), until the renovations for her new lab had been completed, to disclose her pregnancy. There was contention about where the lab should go, and she was worried about losing her position of negotiating power. Deciding exactly when to disclose can be very challenging—the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) mandates that employees only have to give 30 days notice for intent to take leave, but most pregnant employees disclose within several months of their, on average, 270 days of being pregnant (King and Botsford 2009).

Importantly, research suggests that the total number of pregnant women in the workforce in any given year is small (5 %) and that many of these women (more than 60 %) work throughout their pregnancies without needing any accommodation (Tannenbaum 2012). Furthermore, federal laws neither require employers to provide workplace accommodations to pregnant employees nor do they require paid medical or parental leave. Thus, there is little direct cost to organizations for employing explicitly pregnant women. Furthermore, research suggests that keeping pregnant women in the workforce is good business (Robinson and Dechant 1997). For example, it can lead to cost savings, winning the competition for talent (i.e., having good maternity policies may tip the scale), and business growth from leveraging the perspectives from this diverse group (Robinson and Dechant 1997). In sum, then, it seems that keeping pregnant women in the workforce, helping to accommodate the few that need it, and not discriminating against them would make good business sense. Unfortunately, research shows a substantial amount of continued discrimination on the basis of pregnancy (N = 3541 cases in 2013; U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 2013a, b) and some reports even suggest it is on the rise (Fair Work Ombudsman 2011).

Empirical and Qualitative Insights from Our Data Collection on Group 3

Our findings revealed that the 43 women who were pregnant with their first child and currently working full-time were on average 28 years old ($M = 28.2$, $SD = 3.4$), and most had earned 5 years of post-secondary education. They reported working approximately 41 h per week ($M = 41$, $SD = 11.9$) before they were pregnant and 41 h per week while pregnant ($M = 40.7$, $SD = 10.4$). They anticipated that they might work 33 h per week ($M = 33$, $SD = 14.3$) after they had a child. Finally, they were planning on taking on average 4 weeks of maternity leave ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 1.2$).

Individuals who were pregnant with their first child indicated that their *biggest worries* involved an inability to balance (46 %), finding quality and affordable childcare (29 %), and having sufficient finances (21 %). Additionally, this group of woman had concerns about a loss of productivity (25 %) and the lack of workplace flexibility a future child would bring them (13 %). One participant stated that she was particularly worried about her “productivity and loss of professional status,” while another indicated that it was worrisome to think about the “unpredictable nature of the hours at my job.”

In terms of *goal-attainment*, women in the workplace who were pregnant for the first time reported a desire to achieve more career advancement (29 %). In line with this, a participant explained that she hoped she could “publish the research I did as a postdoc and the last chapter of my Ph.D. thesis.” Another goal was to find satisfaction in their personal and professional lives (24 %). In line with this, one participant indicated that she was seeking to “find a career that makes me happy and inspires me.” Finally, many indicated a goal to work less (14 %). One person specifically stated that her goal was “not to work as much.”

Finally, concerning *their advice to future generations of women*, these first-time pregnant female employees advised others to give consideration to financial concerns (16 %), generally not stress too much about it (16 %), and complete professional goals sooner (5 %). Participants reflecting such advice stated, “save more money,” “get your master’s degree now and don’t wait,” and “remember that doing your best doesn’t mean things will be perfect.”

Other Findings Regarding Group 3

On average the women in this group worked the same amount before they were pregnant as they did while they were pregnant (41 h/week), thereby adding credence to the notion that most pregnant women work just as steadily as do their non-pregnant counterparts. Pregnant employees, however, did anticipate working fewer hours after having their child—approximately 8 fewer hours per week (33 h/week). The majority of women in this group currently had a partner and

planned to remain with their partner throughout the birth of their child. They also expressed a desire for having a supportive partner throughout both pregnancy and the raising of a child. In terms of their *preparedness for pregnancy-work balance*, about half felt well-prepared and half felt unprepared. Regarding their *preparedness for family-work balance (post-pregnancy)*, over 50 % felt unprepared.

Working Women Currently Pregnant and Who Already Have at Least One Child (Group 4)

Like Group 3, women who are pregnant with their second (or greater) child, face the well-documented stigma of pregnancy, but also potentially from already having a child. Although being a parent may afford a woman protection if she has maintained workplace productivity through earlier pregnancies, it also may lead to additional stigmatization in the workplace. Previous research is not so fine-grained as to distinguish between women who are pregnant with their first child versus those who are pregnant and already have a child (or multiple children) at home, underscoring the importance of our decision to delineate these two potentially distinct experiences from each other.

Empirical and Qualitative Insights from Our Data Collection on Group 4

A total of 46 participants were pregnant women who already had at least one other child. Our findings revealed that they were on average 32 years old ($M = 32.6$, $SD = 4.3$), and they most frequently had earned 5 years of post-secondary education. They reported working approximately 38 h per week ($M = 38.3$, $SD = 10.9$) before they were pregnant and 37 h per week while pregnant ($M = 37.4$, $SD = 8.96$). They anticipated that they might work 33 h per week ($M = 33.1$, $SD = 13.03$) after they had a child. Finally, they were planning on taking on average ten weeks of maternity leave ($M = 9.8$, $SD = 5.6$).

Individuals who were pregnant and already had at least one child at home indicated that their *biggest worry* was balancing the competing demands at both work and home (42 %). As one participant stated, “Balancing two kids with two full-time working parents. Balancing one is difficult enough; I am worried that with two, there won’t be any time for relaxation, exercise, time with my husband, etc.” Another worry was having sufficient finances, indicated by 18 % of the women, and one participant summed this up cogently by simply stating, “Finances are a big worry.” These already-parents also indicated that they were worried about adequate daycare (15 %) with one participant indicating that she was worried about “child care for when my last minute schedule changes arise” and about “being able to take

my kids to after school enrichment activities” if she still needed to work. Finally, these women cited that they were simply worried about being too tired (15 %) with one participant explaining that she was worried about having “enough time to do it all and still sleep!”

In terms of *goal-attainment*, women in the workplace who were pregnant with at least one other child at home reported feeling accomplished professionally and personally (53 %), but also had additional (largely) professional goals they identified as still wanting to obtain (40 %). As one woman indicated, “I have not obtained my masters which I had hoped to do before I had kids.” Furthermore these women felt they had to compromise the age at which they became pregnant because of their professional goals. As one participant cited, “I delayed pregnancy to obtain my professional goals (which I did), but the downside is that I will be 36 when my second child is born, which is technically a high-risk age category.”

Finally, concerning *their advice to future generations of women*, these pregnant female employees who already had at least one additional child at home suggested that women remain calm and flexible. More specifically, they suggested women in their situation should not stress too much (28 %), find a career that is flexible enough to accommodate working parents (or work parttime) (28 %), and to save money (13 %). They specifically cited “Have more children and don’t stress.” Additionally, they said, “Embrace as many professional experiences/roles as possible to give yourself lots of flexibility for different positions (that might fit your schedule better) when you have a family.”

Other Findings Regarding Group 4

Women in this group stated that 28 years of age would have been a good age to have their first child. They also commented that they worked on average 38 h/week during their previous pregnancy(ies). On average, they reported currently contributing 50 % to childcare duties. They expected this to go up to approximately 65 % after pregnancy. In this group, over 50 % of mothers with just one child and currently pregnant in terms of *preparedness for pregnancy-work balance*, conveyed that they were prepared for balancing pregnancy and work. However, over 50 % of mothers of two or more children stated that they were not prepared for balancing pregnancy and work. In terms of *preparedness for family-work balance (post-pregnancy)*, over 50 % of mothers of just one child and currently pregnant expressed that they were also prepared for balancing family and work. Yet, 50 % of mothers of two or more children also felt unprepared for balancing a family and work. Overall, most women in this group felt prepared for both balancing pregnancy and work and family and work. Indeed, one might assume that these women may have a more realistic idea as to what the experience of being a parent and balancing work is actually like.

Working Women Who Have at Least One Child and Do not Plan to Have More (Group 5)

The final group that we examined consisted of women who already had at least one child, and were not planning on having more. These women were able to speak to many aspects of being a woman of child-bearing age: prior to being pregnant, being pregnant, being a mother, potentially being a mother to more than one child, and potentially being a parent to older children. These women also were able to speak to their potentially evolving perceptions of concerns across these changes.

Previous Research on Group 5

Research such as that of Ladge et al. (2012) addresses the idea that women can assume multiple, discrete identities over the course of their professional lives with respect to being pregnant. Additionally, modern organizations are beginning to offer a growing number of family-friendly policies that are intended to help employees who have personal obligations outside of work manage their work commitments (Greenberg et al. 2009). However, even when women are no longer pregnant, they can confront discrimination in the face of child rearing and family obligations. For example, they may battle an assumption that they are not as committed to their work as women without families and that they are intentionally limiting their potential for work success (Greenberg et al. 2009).

Further, women in this group may be seen as warmer and more communal (Cuddy et al. 2004) because they have families and may be therefore inadvertently enhancing perceptions of their femininity (King and Botsford 2009). However, it is also important to note that the more a woman is associated with her motherhood the less competent she is perceived to be (Cuddy et al. 2004). It seems plausible that gender-based discrimination becomes heightened towards women who are perceived more communally due to their family situation, but possibly more agentic due to the high-status they hold as a working (rather than stay-at-home) woman. This may heighten the incongruity experienced by perceivers of these women, as Heilman's (1983) lack of fit model describes, and lead to greater stereotypes against women with families (despite not currently being pregnant).

Empirical and Qualitative Insights from Our Data Collection on Group 5

Our findings revealed that 227 female employees already had at least one child and did not plan to have more children. These women worked roughly 37 h per week

($M = 37.0$, $SD = 13.1$), were on average 41 years old ($M = 40.8$, $SD = 9.2$), and most frequently had earned five years of post-secondary education (37 %).

These women identified their *biggest worry* as childcare, with 53 % reporting this as a worry. Secondly, 50 % were worried about work-life balance. As one participant said, it is “hard to divide my attention between my children and my career. Consequently, I worry that both suffer. Those without children will pass me by or be better at their jobs; those without jobs will be better, more patient parents.” These women also cited additional worries such as finances (16 %) and loss of job or productivity (6 %).

In terms of *goal-attainment*, these women reflected that they wished they had finished school (31 %) and saved more money along the way (15 %). Furthermore, several women discussed the experience of a tradeoff they made in their lives—either work over family or vice-versa (23 %). For instance, one participant said, “I raised my children myself—that was a goal I attained. I intended to also keep up with my profession; I failed to do that. I regret not keeping up with my profession.”

Finally, concerning their *advice to future generations*, these women reported the need to balance better family, social, and work lives simultaneously (17 %). One woman commented, “I have not attained a peaceful, smooth-running household with space for my husband, children and myself to grow physically, spiritually, intellectually. I have continued a few friendships outside of work and family, but have not kept up with most friendships outside these categories. I have achieved being a working mom, taking care of patients. I do not feel as if I am doing either as well as I would like.” However, they also advised women not to stress out so much (12 %), to save as much money as they could along the way (11 %), and to be realistic with their goal-setting. For instance, one participant said, “You cannot be supermom, it doesn’t exist. Get organized and do a little at a time.” Another urged, “Be more financially secure.”

Other Findings Regarding Group 5

These women had on average two children and reported wishing they had their first child around 28 years of age. They worked approximately 40 h/week before having children, 35 h/week while pregnant, and 30 h/week after they were pregnant. Many of these women had the responsibility of 95 % of the childcare (21 %), with the second largest group of women contributing to a little more than 50 % of the childcare (20 %), and the third largest group of women contributing to a little more than 80 % of the childcare (18 %). A total of 46 % of women reported that their partner worked more than they did while they were pregnant, while 34 % of women said they and their partners worked equal amounts. A total of 45 % of women reported that their partner currently worked more than they did, while 31 % reported that they and their partners worked equal amounts. Further, women said that in terms of their *preparedness for pregnancy-work balance*, the majority had

felt prepared (57 %). Regarding their *preparedness for family-work balance (post-pregnancy)*, the majority had actually felt unprepared (59 %).

Discussion

The goal of this chapter was to elucidate the experiences of women of childbearing age in the workplace. Although previous research has documented well the work-life balance issues that working women face, including the stigma associated with pregnancy, our chapter is perhaps the first attempt to capture the range of experiences for *all* women of childbearing age. Our findings suggest that pregnancy is a much larger construct than previous research has suggested. Indeed, all women in this age group must consider the decision of whether or when to have children, and, if so, how many children to have. These decisions have implications for how working women are perceived by others, including whether they experience workplace discrimination. Given the increasing representation of women who work (Department of Labor 2014), such issues are important for researchers and organizations alike.

Theoretical Contributions

By examining the perspectives of five different groups of women of childbearing age—those who are not pregnant and have no plans to become pregnant, those who plan to become pregnant in the future, those who are currently pregnant but have no previous children, those who are currently pregnant and have one or more children, and those who are not currently pregnant but have one or more children—we hoped to demonstrate that, as with any social group, women of childbearing age are not a monolithic entity. Rather, they are quite heterogeneous. Understanding their unique perspectives adds value to the extant literature and helps better inform organizational policy and practice.

So how did these groups differ? First, it is noteworthy that women in Groups 1 (not currently pregnant, no plans to have children) and 5 (not currently pregnant, already had children) were older, on average, than women in the other groups. This could potentially confound the interpretation of some of our results, as age is likely an important moderator of the effect of childbearing decisions on women's experiences. More importantly, women varied across the childbearing continuum in their reported goal attainment, advice for others, and their self-reported experiences with discrimination.

With regard to goal attainment, women without children—whether or not they had plans to have children in the future—emphasized the importance of having a supportive partner as being highly influential in their decision. Women in the other three groups did not emphasize this goal, so it could be that finding a supportive

partner is an antecedent to women seriously considering becoming pregnant while working. Interestingly, the majority of the women who did emphasize partnership reported having a current partner, perhaps suggesting a perceived lack of *sufficient* support or simply a fear of the unknown. Indeed, discussion of this issue is timely, given the recent publication and widespread media coverage of Sheryl Sandberg's *Lean In* and the encouragement of working women to encourage greater input from their partners with family and home responsibilities.

Women also differed in their advice for other women as a function of their own pregnancy status. Those women without children came across as avid planners, advising women to prepare and strategize when navigating decisions about work and pregnancy. In contrast, women who were pregnant and/or already had children were more likely to advise women not to stress about the decisions too much, to remain flexible. Interestingly, *all* of the groups reported feeling unprepared to balance work and family/life. We can only speculate about these discrepancies between the advice women are giving to others versus their own admission of feeling ill prepared for work-life challenges. On one hand, perhaps women who already have children are rationalizing their own choices and experiences, convincing themselves that despite lack of preparation, things turn out okay and should not be something over which to fret. On the other hand, however, it could be that women without the experience of having a child overestimate the difficulties associated with work-life and/or work-family balance. The truth is probably somewhere in the middle. Finding balance *is* hard, but whether one feels the need to stress and plan likely depends on one's own status.

In our sample, 10 % of women who were not pregnant and not interested in having children and 6 % of women who were not pregnant but interested in having children reported that they had experienced discrimination. A total 23 % of women who were pregnant with their first child, 23 % of women who were pregnant and already had a child/children, and 13 % of women who had children and were done being pregnant reported that they had experienced discrimination in the workplace. Given the prevalence and past research documenting rates of discrimination, these numbers are not as high as they might be; however, it is important to note the fact that many people under-report discrimination, particularly the discrimination that they themselves have experienced relative to the discrimination that other members of their ingroup have experienced (Crosby 1984). Moreover, research has shown that *any* amount of discrimination, even when it is seemingly small, can compound to be very influential in deciding careers (Martell et al. 1996; Valian 1999). Hence, the discrimination that our participants reported is noteworthy, worrisome, and worth discussing.

Some women reported experiencing perceived discrimination in terms of when they were obligated to take sick days to care for their children. For example, one woman commented, "After I had my son, a supervisor told me not to take sick days for my children; he hired me, not my kids, and to find a solution to the problem." Other women reported losing the esteem and professional respect of their coworkers after returning from maternity leave. Another participant reported, "After my first child, I went back to work part time in government consulting. My firm pulled me

off of management of projects and gave all of my projects to a man who didn't even want them." Finally, women reported having to endure fallout due to the visible nature of their changing identity. Specifically, one woman described having a "coworker with a supervisor who has made comments to her about being 'too emotional' while pregnant and that she's not doing enough [at work]."

Perhaps most important for our purposes, women's self-reported experiences with discrimination varied as a function of their pregnancy status. Although all groups reported some degree of stigma, those who were not currently pregnant (Groups 1, 2, and 5) reported the least perceived discrimination. This speaks again to the importance of perceived identities (Ragins 2008); those women who were currently pregnant—although at various stages of pregnancy—have a relatively visible stigma. Although physiologically pregnant women *do* differ from non-pregnant women and may therefore behave differently, they are also treated differently and perceive differential treatment.

Although the five groups we examined clearly differed in some regards, they also reported a lot of commonalities. In terms of demographic characteristics, across all groups, these working women averaged about a 40 h work week and were well-educated, averaging 5 years of post-secondary education. They also reported many shared worries, goals, and words of wisdom for others.

More than any other question we asked, women responded most similarly in terms of their worries about the pregnancy-workplace interface. All groups emphasized worries regarding the ability to balance work and family, and all felt ill prepared for such challenges. In addition, women across groups reported financial worries, and most reported concerns about the availability of good childcare.

With regard to goal attainment, women across all groups wished to achieve more professionally. Some specifically expressed goals pertaining to education, including regret that they had not attained a certain level of advanced education prior to having children or fear that having children might preclude achieving their goals. Others expressed goals specifically concerning opportunities for career advancement. Clearly their professional identities were important regardless of their pregnancy status, thus contradicting stereotypes that such aspirations are held only by women who choose to have one child or no children at all.

Across the childbearing continuum, one piece of advice was common: save money. In part, this may be a reflection of the times. Having recently faced a national recession, women may find financial concerns especially salient, regardless of whether they have children, or even plan to have children in the future.

In sum, the differences and commonalities identified in the present research help provide a more complete and accurate picture of working women who are of childbearing age than provided in the extant literature. Most importantly, all of these women faced an inevitable stigma, a catch-22 regarding their pregnancy decisions. The nature of this stigma, however, varied as a function of their pregnancy status, and perhaps even in more ways than they could articulate, influenced decisions about whether to have children and, if so, how many to have. Given the hostile nature of the discrimination reported by currently pregnant women (e.g., snide remarks about taking sick leave, differential treatment regarding their

changing physical appearance, differential and less favorable work assignments), it seems quite likely that concerns about balancing work and family (reported by all women) were shaped by such incidents, whether experienced directly or as third-party witnesses. Clearly, decisions pertaining to childbearing are a meaningful part of all women's lives.

Practical Implications

The present findings lend themselves to a number of practical recommendations for organizations. Consider first the common findings across groups. Given the worries reported across groups in this research, organizations would be well advised to develop comprehensive programs to address work-life balance issues for *all* employees. All the groups surveyed reported feeling unprepared to address these issues adequately, suggesting there is room for organizations to implement policies to help women workers and their partners negotiate this process, as well as cultivate positive, cultural norms for utilizing these programs and policies (which research confirms are inherently stigmatizing). Flexible working hours and promotion policies could allay some concerns women have about starting a family, such as how having children might interfere with career advancement. Universal parental leave (i.e., maternity and paternity) policies, opportunities for telecommuting, and on-site daycare options could likewise reduce career advancement concerns for those who already have children, address worries regarding the availability of adequate and affordable childcare, and alleviate some employer complaints about absenteeism, productivity loss, and turnover. Many of these policies would simultaneously benefit employees without children. For example, flex-time and telecommuting would enable individuals to find time for important life activities that need not revolve around family, such as volunteering and health/fitness programs—programs that have been shown to increase job satisfaction and productivity (Sirgy et al. 2012). In a related vein, organizations might incentive such programs, for example, by sponsoring day-of-service activities and on-site exercise and wellness programs. Finally, given that women across all groups surveyed reported financial concerns and advised other women to save money, organizations could invest in on-site financial planning advice for all employees. It is important to highlight that these provisions should be made for all employees, lest certain groups (e.g., women who have no plans to have children, men) feel marginalized by these well-intentioned policies.

Importantly, the present findings underscore the need for organizations to be attentive not only to their common needs, but also to the unique needs of different groups of women of childbearing age. As previously mentioned, the fact that women who were currently pregnant reported experiencing more discrimination than women in the other groups suggests the need for sensitivity training regarding pregnancy and related changes in identity. In addition, programs (like the aforementioned) that benefit all and thus serve to normalize child/family issues help

create a climate of inclusivity that should reduce the experience of such discriminatory incidents. Finally, given the fact that no women reported feeling well prepared to navigate work-family issues and yet differed in the degree to which they advised others to plan versus not worry, it could be helpful to develop peer mentoring programs in which women help prepare each other.

Limitations

Although the present findings have helped shed light on real issues faced by many working women of childbearing age, we also should note some key limitations where findings should be interpreted with caution. First, the present sample may not fully represent the population. For example, across groups, most women had an average of 5 years of postsecondary education, thus relatively well educated and poorly representative of working women who did not complete or who only completed high school. Indeed, we limited our study to professional women, but certainly working class women may face a variety of additional challenges that remain largely unaddressed in the extant literature. In addition, we did not collect salary data, something that could potentially moderate some of the findings regarding concerns about finances and affordable childcare. For example, it would be interesting to see how women who are the primary earners in their households compare to women who are not, and whether the importance of supportive partners and the division of childcare duties differs between the two groups. Finally, the sample was overwhelmingly White (84 %), thereby not capturing potential cultural differences in gender roles regarding maternity that could qualify some of the present findings. Although this chapter is a step toward understanding work-life challenges and stigma for women across the continuum of childbearing age, future research should address these limitations and expand our scope.

Future Research Directions

Future investigators may want to ask about their regrets and their goals in terms of work life balance. Perhaps also it will be important to have a more marked delineation of worries about work, family, and the balance of the two. There may be other and more meaningful characteristics to consider when defining groups, other than where they fall on the pregnancy spectrum. Further, while we touched on the role of partner support, more could be asked in the future to identify the types of support women find to be the most important and effective. Or, alternatively, perhaps partner support is not actually all that important to certain women, and we are overestimating its role.

Additionally researchers should pay attention to what these women are expressing areas of concern, and what cannot workplaces actually do to address these concerns. Some potential ideas may be utilizing realistic job previews, informative classes, progressive policies, and the beliefs that women are actually allowed to utilize these policies without negative repercussions to the workplace. Importantly, organizations may be able to do more to prepare women for their jobs and provide them with more realistic job previews (O'Brien and Hebl 2014). This could also involve creating cultures where it is not stigmatizing to take advantage of maternity/paternity leave policies and other benefits—what a difference it would make if a company mandated that its employees took advantage of its maternity/paternity policies. How could there be a stigma if it was compulsory?

There are not a lot of on-ramps for people to come back and obtain professional and educational development goals after having children. There are a lot of off-ramps for individuals who are pregnant and want to have families, but it is much easier to leave the workforce than it is to rejoin it post-pregnancy. Similarly, there are policies in place for off-ramps, such as maternity leave, but there are not policies in place to get women back in the workplace. This may include providing childcare. Future researchers and organizations will want to address ways in which the workplaces can help mothers get back to work.

Future research needs to examine how women perceive the tradeoffs involved in workplace balance. Is there an effect, or perceived effect that a woman may not be able to be as successful at either task when trying to balance both? While this seemed to come up from their perspectives in advice and worries, it is possible that this is not actually the case. It will be important to assess what these tradeoffs may actually occur. But also, anecdotal evidence suggests that for some women the attempts to balance are believed to actually make them more effective at both.

In addition, researchers should also strive to develop theory to account for the similarities and differences faced by working women of childbearing age. Throughout the chapter we referenced popular theories that were developed primarily to understand why women are thought to be poorly suited for certain (agentic, masculine) occupations (e.g., Heilman's lack of fit theory) or why women are stereotyped as competent but cold or warm but incompetent (e.g., Cuddy et al.'s stereotype content model), but neither theoretical frame may sufficiently address the unique issues raised by women's pregnancy decisions. For example, why are pregnant women particularly likely to report experiencing stigma? Is it mere visibility of their status or are other factors at play? In addition, why are women who have only one child vilified? They have fulfilled societal expectations by becoming mothers and, assuming their productivity was not adversely affected with this role change, others should perceive that they have fewer family "distractions" that make them less desirable employees. Such questions still left unanswered highlight the need for more theory development in this research domain, as well as for additional empirical studies to address these and other questions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, women who work during their childbearing years arguably face an inevitable stigma. Those who have children are “damned” for being less committed to the organization and yet are expected to navigate work-family challenges on their own. Those who do not have children are “damned” for being selfish and cold and are expected to be exempt from work-family challenges given society’s restricted definition of “family.” However, they all are faced with the common decision of whether or when to have children, and if so, how many children to have. Our research suggests that respect for all women of childbearing age might go a long way to diffusing stress and creating flexible solutions that make everyone as productive as possible and organizations more efficient and effective. We implore future research to continue considering different categories of child-rearing aged employees, to best meet the needs of these employees and the success of the organizations for which they work.

References

- Babycenter. (2014). Online community. Downloaded June 5, 2014, from http://community.babycenter.com/post/a2083375/only_child_stigma
- Bagger, J., Li, A., & Gutek, B. A. (2008). How much do you value your family and does it matter? The joint effects of family identity salience, family-interference-with-work, and gender. *Human Relations, 61*, 187–211. doi:10.1177/0018726707087784
- Bragger, J. D., Kutcher, E., Morgan, J., & Firth, P. (2002). The effects of the structured interview on reducing biases against pregnant job applicants. *Sex Roles, 46*(7-8), 215–226.
- Birrittieri, C. (2005). *What every woman should know about fertility and her biological clock*. Franklin Lakes, NJ: The Career Press. ISBN 1-56414-735-5.
- Crosby, F. (1984). The denial of personal discrimination. *American Behavioral Scientist, 27*(3), 371–386. doi:10.1177/000276484027003008
- Cuddy, A. J., Fiske, S. T., & Glick, P. (2004). When professionals become mothers, warmth doesn’t cut the ice. *Journal of Social Issues, 60*(4), 701–718. doi:10.1111/j.0022-4537.2004.00381.x
- Cunningham, J., & Macan, T. (2007). Effects of applicant pregnancy on hiring decisions and interview ratings. *Sex Roles, 57*(7–8), 497–508. doi:10.1007/s11199-007-9279-0
- Department of Labor. (2014). Women of working age. Retrieved from <http://www.dol.gov/wb/stats/recentfacts.htm>
- Fair Works Ombudsman. (2011). Discrimination complaints up 46 percent. November 10th. <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/2011/11/pages/20111110-fwo-discrimination-complaints>
- Ford, M. T., Heinen, B. A., & Langkamer, K. L. (2007). Work and family satisfaction and conflict: A meta-analysis of cross-domain relations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*, 57–80. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.57
- Greenberg, D., Ladge, J., & Clair, J. (2009). Negotiating pregnancy at work: Public and private conflicts. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research, 2*(1), 42–56. doi:10.1111/j.1750-4716.2008.00027.x
- Halpert, J. A., Wilson, M. L., & Hickman, J. L. (1993). Pregnancy as a source of bias in performance appraisals. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 14*(7), 649–663.

- Hebl, M. R., King, E. B., Glick, P., Singletary, S. L., & Kazama, S. (2007). Hostile and benevolent reactions toward pregnant women: Complementary interpersonal punishments and rewards that maintain traditional roles. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*(6), 1499. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.92.6.1499
- Heilman, M. E. (1983). Sex bias in work settings: The Lack of Fit model. *Research in organizational behavior, 5*, 269–298.
- Jamison, P. H., Franzini, L. R., & Kaplan, R. M. (1979). Some assumed characteristics of voluntarily childfree women and men. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 4*(2), 266–273. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.1979.tb00714.x
- Keene, J. R., & Quadagno, J. (2004). Predictors of perceived work-family balance: Gender difference or gender similarity? *Sociological Perspectives, 47*(1), 1–23.
- King, E. B., & Botsford, W. E. (2009). Managing pregnancy disclosures: Understanding and overcoming the challenges of expectant motherhood at work. *Human Resource Management Review, 19*, 314–323. doi:10.1016/j.hrmr.2009.03.003
- Ladge, J. J., Clair, J. A., & Greenberg, D. (2012). Cross-domain identity transition during liminal periods: Constructing multiple selves as professional and mother during pregnancy. *Academy of Management Journal, 55*(6), 1449–1471.
- Lisle, L. (1999). *Without child: Challenging the stigma of childlessness*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge.
- Livingston, G., & Cohn, D. (2010). Childlessness up among all women; Down among women with advanced degrees. *Pew Research Center: A Social and Demographic Trends Report*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center.
- Lombino, E. (2011). One and done: Reducing the stigma of having an only child: Updated. Downloaded March 6, 2014, from <http://elizabethlombino.com/2011/01/26/one-and-done-reducing-the-stigma-of-having-an-only-child-updated/>
- Mäkelä, Liisa. (2012). A narrative approach to pregnancy-related discrimination and leader-follower relationships. *Gender, Work and Organization, 19*(6), 677–698.
- Martell, R. F., Lane, D. M., & Emrich, C. (1996). Male-female differences: A computer simulation. 157. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.51.2.157
- Martin, J. A., Hamilton, B. E., Osterman, M. J. K., Curtin, S. C., & Matthews, T. J. (2013). Births: Final data for 2012. *National Vital Statistics Reports, 62*(9).
- Masser, B., Grass, K., & Nesic, M. (2007). ‘We like you, but we don’t want you’—The impact of pregnancy in the workplace. *Sex Roles, 57*(9–10), 703–712. doi:10.1007/s11199-007-9305-2
- Morgan, W. B., Walker, S., Hebl, M., & King, E. B. (2014). Pregnant job applicants who individuate: A field study investigation of reducing interpersonal discrimination. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. In press.
- Mueller, K. A., & Yoder, J. D. (1997). Gendered norms for family size, employment, and occupation: Are there personal costs for violating them? *Sex Roles, 36*(3–4), 207–220. doi:10.1007/BF02766268
- O’Brien, K. R., & Hebl, M. R. (2014). Great expectations in academia: Realistic job previews on jobs and work-family balance. *Gender in Management: An International Journal, 30* (6), 457–478..
- Prentice, D. A., & Carranza, E. (2002). What women and men should be, shouldn’t be, are allowed to be, and don’t have to be: The contents of prescriptive gender stereotypes. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 26*(1), 269–281. doi:10.1111/1471-6402.t01-1-00066
- Ragins, B. R. (2008). Disclosure disconnects: Antecedents and consequences of disclosing invisible stigmas across life domains. *Academy of Management Review, 33*(1), 194–215.
- Reitmanova, S., & Gustafson, D. L. (2008). “They can’t understand it”: Maternity health and care needs of immigrant Muslim women in St. John’s, Newfoundland. *Maternal and Child Health Journal, 12*(1), 101–111. doi:10.1007/s10995-007-0213-4
- Riley, L. (2013). New report advocates for working pregnant women and workplace equality: Report shows that discrimination continues despite legal regulations. Uploaded March 6, 2014, from <http://www.chicagoparent.com/magazines/web-only/2013-june/working-pregnant-women>

- Robinson, G., & Dechant, K. (1997). Building a business case for diversity. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 11(3), 21–31.
- Safire, W. (1986). *San Francisco Chronicle*, This World section (Nov. 16th), p. 19.
- Sandler, L. (2013). Having it all without having children. *Time*. August 12. Downloaded March 6, 2014, from <http://time.com/241/having-it-all-without-having-children/>
- Shockley, K. M., & Singla, N. (2011). Reconsidering work—family interactions and satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Management*, 37(3), 861–886. doi:10.1177/0149206310394864
- Sirgy, M. J., Reilly, N. P., Wu, J., & Efraty, D. (2012). Review of research related to quality of work life (QWL) programs. In *Handbook of social indicators and quality of life research* (pp. 297–311). The Netherlands: Springer.
- Tannenbaum, A. (2012). Five fast facts about pregnancy in the workplace. National Women’s Law Center: Exploring the Possibilities. Uploaded March 6, 2014, from <http://www.nwlc.org/our-blog/five-fast-facts-about-pregnancy-workplace>
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (2013a). Pregnancy discrimination charges FY2010 – FY 2013. Downloaded March 6, 2014, from http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/pregnancy_new.cfm
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (2013b). Pregnancy discrimination. Downloaded August 6, 2014, from <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/pregnancy.cfm>
- Valian, V. (1999). *Why so slow? The advancement of women*. MIT press.
- Vinson, C., Mollen, D., & Smith, N. G. (2010). Perceptions of childfree women: The role of perceivers’ and targets’ ethnicity. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 20(5), 426–432. doi:10.1002/casp.1049
- Zamora, W. (2012). Only child syndrome: Let’s put this stigma to rest. Downloaded January 6, 2014, from <http://www.xojane.com/family/only-child-syndrome>