

# A Global Perspective on Women in Leadership and Work-Family Integration



# A Global Perspective on Women in Leadership and Work-Family Integration:

*Breaking Balance*

Edited by

Margaret J. Weber  
and Kerri Cissna

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Work-Family Integration: Breaking Balance

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### **“Live Like Linda”**

This book is dedicated in loving memory to Dr. Linda Shahisaman who contributed her seminal work in Chapter Four on the women from India. She was a true inspiration to everyone who crossed her path. As a world citizen, she signed up for every global excursion offered by Pepperdine University during her doctoral studies, including India. A long-time admirer of Indian culture, she focused her dissertation on the work-life balance issues that women in finance face. As a leader in the global finance industry, it was her mission both in study and practice, to help find work-life balance strategies and management positions for women. She wanted to help women strive and flourish within these societies. This book is dedicated to her compassionate heart, her life-giving spirit, and her amazing ability to make any one laugh in any situation. Dr. Shahisaman was known for her pranks, spontaneity, kindness, contagious smile, and love for her friends and family. She lived a robust life full of travel, adventure, food, music, laughter, and love. She left this world all too soon, but we take some comfort in knowing her cosmic travels now must be the greatest adventure yet! Although she never got to see this book published, we dedicate this book to her memory and in gratitude to her family for allowing her research to be published. She is greatly missed but her memory and the way she lived life will forever be an inspiration – “Live Like Linda.”



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For the third volume of *Women in Leadership and Work-Family Integration*, the authors would like to acknowledge the women whose voices are committed to empowering other women around the globe. This book is written by a team of researchers who want to give women a forum to share their stories and to be honored for their voices in this world. These brave women agreed to participate in our research and vulnerably shared the realities of being a woman leader in today's world. We want to extend our deepest gratitude to these women referenced in this book. Their strength and courage will reverberate throughout the globe for generations to come.

Although the literature is robust on the topic of work-life "balance," interviewees resisted the term repeatedly. Subjects stated that this was an unrealistic and unrelatable aspiration. Women reported "imbalance" and described discontent with the concept of balance in general, stating that it created false expectations for women. The research team decided to start using the term "work-family integration" to approach issues women in leadership face. Most women are expected to be engaged in family care in addition to their careers. How do we begin to break the concept of balance and share ideas for having an integrated life? The book title, "Breaking Balance" was selected as a way of moving beyond the term balance to recognize that life can be a struggle, especially for women around the world.

*Breaking Balance*, is a term sometimes used in marital arts as a way of throwing your opponent off balance as a way of destabilizing him/her. The noun "Kuzushi" is the Japanese term used to explain the martial arts technique of unbalancing an opponent, which comes from the verb "kuzusu," meaning to pull down, level or destroy (Sacripanti, 2010). In martial arts, it is known that you can take someone down much easier if they feel "off-balance." As our team studied the lives of women in leadership and work-life balance, one thing became clear... the "imbalance" women feel as a result of juggling the multiplicity of roles has become one of the greatest challenges for women around the world. We must offer solutions for women to integrate their work and family life and reclaim a sense of "balance" in their personal lives.

The work-family integration research team, led by Dr. Margaret J Weber, is now in its tenth year of labor. When the team assembled in 2009, we had no idea that we would grow to be more than 25 researchers working with a dataset representing countless age groups, ethnicities, geographic regions, global perspectives, cultural thoughts and professional expertise. The team has evolved and produced a series of books, articles, conference presentations and friendships. It represents the magic that happens when women come together around a purpose to empower, uplift and integrate life.

This book offers a variety of perspectives from around the world. We hope you will find this volume to be enlightening, as it highlights a variety of cultural norms regarding work and family integration from around the globe. With women represented from eight different countries, every reader will be sure to find something new in the pages that follow. Thank you for reading this book and honoring all the women who shared their stories to make this book a reality.

## CHAPTER ONE

# WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: A GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF WORK-FAMILY INTEGRATION

DR. MARGARET J. WEBER

### Overview and Purpose

For the third volume of Women in Leadership and Work-Family Integration Series, researchers share the findings from a variety of qualitative research studies that were conducted to help understand issues surrounding work-life balance around the world. This volume specifically focuses on a global context and how women face unique challenges and opportunities for work-family integration based on cultural norms and contexts in eight different countries around the world. Relationships and culture play an important role in decisions about work and family.

*Breaking Balance*, the title for this volume, is a term sometimes used in martial arts as a way of throwing your opponent off balance in order to destabilize him/her. The noun “Kuzushi” is the Japanese term used to explain the martial arts technique of unbalancing an opponent, which comes from the verb “kuzusu,” meaning to pull down, level or destroy (Sacripanti, 2010). In martial arts, it is known that it’s easier to take someone down if they feel “off-balance.” A throw will be more effective and require less strength when applied to someone who is in a weakened state of balance, but this takes a special technique of studying the balance of your opponent. Learning to take advantage of the imbalance of your opponent takes a finely tuned sense of timing. Through the qualitative research of women in leadership and work-life balance, one thing became clear... the “imbalance” women feel as a result of juggling the multiplicity of roles has become one of the greatest challenges for women around the world.

If women are not feeling balanced because of the demands of juggling multiple roles, it will be much easier to take them down, level them, destroy them. Interviews from over 600 women from around the world confirm that this has become one of the greatest concerns regarding the advancement of women in society. We must offer solutions for women to integrate their work and family in order for them to reclaim a sense of “balance” in their personal lives. Women shared that strength and empowerment comes from communities of belonging, which must become a staple in all progressive societies. This volume also suggests that women are more concerned about living lives of meaning and purpose in order to reclaim balance. They seek multiple ways to achieve an integrated approach to life through their strengths, which includes their public and private lives.

Each study that is described in this book volume was conducted using data collected by the Digital Women’s Project on Women in Leadership and Work-Life Balance (Weber, 2011). The research team at Pepperdine University has expanded over the past nine years and over 600 women around the world have been interviewed, sharing stories from their lives that inform the popular discourse around this topic. Several studies have explored the stories of women from various countries around the world. This volume will represent cultural settings from Asia, Middle-East, Africa, Central America, Europe and the United States.

## **Background of Women around the Globe**

The resilience of women is amazing. As narratives shared by these women across the world are examined, the reader will be encouraged by life stories and goals for making a difference within families, communities and the world. Generally, the women included in this study have had access to quality education and economic advantages that many around the world are denied. This means that they can easily identify and articulate issues regarding the topic of work-family integration which all women can relate with and are concerned with. It also suggests that our sample group of educated women have access to greater economic resources within their families and countries. By interviewing this demographic of women, we seek to identify solutions for empowering women in all communities.

Kristof and WuDunn (2009) share stories of women and state that women are making some powerful contributions within their communities and countries in their research on *Half the Sky*. Yet, the story can be bleak when policies and practices prescribe roles for women. When we discount the contributions of women who make up half the population on earth, a

devastating effect on economic prosperity is felt (Kristof & WuDunn, 2009). More importantly, it leaves a psychological cloud on the identity development and achievement opportunities for women. This takes thoughtful time and strategy to overcome so that women are reaching their full potential in a world that has a history of suppression.

## **Country Context Matters**

There are many courageous women in this world that are making wonderful strides towards annihilating some of the greatest crimes against women and children. You will hear the voices of some of these women in this book. The statistics affecting women around the globe are hard to conceive – yet hearing the stories of women that are working within their families, communities and countries to address these issues of inequality is encouraging.

“I am convinced that the most serious and unaddressed worldwide challenge is the deprivation and abuse of women and girls.”

-President Jimmy Carter (2015)

Carter attributes this to both a false interpretation of carefully selected religious texts and the growing tolerance of violence and warfare (2015). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was passed by the United Nations in 1981. In its preamble, the Convention explicitly acknowledges that “extensive discrimination against women continues to exist,” and emphasizes that such discrimination “violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity” (UN Global Data, UN Women). Yet, the reality is that women still face discrimination in multiple ways. Education is the basis for many of the other issues. If a young girl has access to education through at least the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, she will have more opportunities for participation in society and contributing to her family and community (UN Global Data, UN Women).

## **Education**

An assumed right in all countries is an education for all children through 5<sup>th</sup> grade and ideally the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. However, in many countries “the girl child” is denied this most basic of rights. The following statistics presents the picture of education for our girls.

- 57% of the over 115 million children who do not attend primary school are girls.
- 62 million girls around the world are not in school.
- Of the almost 1 billion illiterate adults, 2/3 are women.
- Increases in women's education contribute to reducing the rate of child malnutrition by almost 50% (UN Global Data, UN Women).

There are many issues that affect a girl child receiving an education. You will note in the Nigerian chapter that quality education is a major issue, along with the choice to educate a girl child. Some of the issues affecting education include lack of funding, having no access to a teacher (or a qualified teacher), no/inadequate classrooms and resources, country in conflict, hunger and the expense of education to the family. There is robust research that demonstrates how valuable it is to educate a girl/woman. "When you educate a girl, there is a ripple effect that goes beyond what you would get from a normal investment... When you educate a girl, you educate a village" (Kristoff & WuDunn, 2009). Lack of quality education contributes to the economic status of women, their employment opportunities, and their ability to provide for themselves and their families.

## **Economic Status**

A considerable number of women struggle daily to provide for their most basic of needs. Gandhi made the statement that "Poverty is the worst form of violence." We typically think of violence as it implies physical assault on the person, yet Gandhi suggests it applies to the whole person. The economic status of women impacts their situation in every way one can imagine. It impacts their health, their propensity to experience violence, their ability to participate in the political structure of their country, and their understanding of the roles within their religious faith. A few statistics:

- Less than 2% of the world's assets are in the name of women.
- Over \$7 trillion worth of women's work goes unpaid.
- 2.1 billion women live on less than \$2/day.
- More than 1 billion people live on less than \$1.25/day which is considered extreme poverty.
- Almost a billion people worldwide will go to bed hungry tonight.
- Women work 70% of the world's working hours, yet earn only 10% of the world's income.

- In the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, only 40 women/100 men are economically active in the formal economy (UN Global Data, UN Women).

Women and girls are critical to the economic prosperity of their families, communities and countries. In every part of the world, women often work longer hours, are paid less and are at risk for unemployment, thus forcing them to live in poverty. The list from the United Nations provides a glimpse of comparative earnings by men and women.

Women that have a feeling of security, which may include rights to land ownership, education and employment, are usually less likely to have health issues. They are also more capable of placing their children in school. Secure women are also less likely to be victims of domestic violence. In other words, as the world places a higher priority on keeping women safe and secure, the cases of poor health, illiteracy, and violence go down.

## **Violence against Women and Girls**

The cost of violence in the world is over \$14 trillion and is rising especially for women and children (UN Global Data, UN Women). Violence in many areas of the world goes unreported. A fear of retribution, shame, stigma, lack of economic resources, ineffective legal systems and concern for one's children contributes to the lack of reporting. Some statistics:

- Over last 30 years, 30 million women and children have been trafficked for sexual exploitation.
- An estimated 130 million women worldwide have undergone Female Genital Mutilation and 2 million more are mutilated every year.
- About half the women report their first sexual intercourse was forced.
- 1 out of every 3 women around the globe have been beaten, or abused during her lifetime and this is often at the hands of a family member (UN Global Data, UN Women).

The norms surrounding sexualized violence often penalize the woman and leave the perpetrator free and unpunished to continue their violent activities. The prevention of violence requires social norms to change with an explicit message to all that violence is not normal and unacceptable in a

society. Men and boys receive mixed messages in society about power and privilege which is carried into domestic life. Men and boys also have greater access to resources and are in positions of influence within the social structures and institutions of each of the countries.

Atrocities of war often include brutal rape of the women and children. It is a way of establishing power and revenge against the most vulnerable, as well, as perpetrating the most valuable of relationships – one's family. The UN Security Council adopted a resolution that classifies rape as a war tactic describing sexual violence as a deliberate weapon that humiliates, dominates, instills fear and worsens conflict situations by forcible dispersing or relocating communities.

The Declaration of the Elimination of Violence Against Women, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, defines violence against women as:

“any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”

Former Secretary of State for the United States, Hillary Clinton, has stated that much of the brutality against girls and women is rooted in deep cultural stereotypes about the worth of women. Issues arising from the violence against women and children lead to many physical and mental health challenges among the powerless people of this world. Societies that devalue women and girls have created a deep wound in the human psyche that can be felt on a physical, emotional, and psychological level.

## **Health Status**

In many situations around the world, the fundamental rights to life and health for women are being violated. Almost 100% of the maternal deaths occurring in the developing world speak to the lack of an adequate health care system. Kristoff (2009) says “The reason for the gap is not that we don't know how to save lives of women in poor countries. It's simply that poor, uneducated women in Africa and Asia have never been a priority either in their own countries or to donor nations.”

- Every year, half a million women die from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth. Every 90 seconds, a woman dies during pregnancy or childbirth.



- Of the estimated 40 million living with HIV, about 2/3 live in Saharan Africa and almost half of them are women. Young women are 2.5 times as likely to be infected as their male counterparts (UN Global Data, UN Women).

Maternal mortality is a global crisis and probably the greatest health inequity. For women in developing countries, giving birth can be the biggest threat to her life. In poor countries, pregnancy and childbirth are among the leading causes of death while maternal deaths are far less common in the industrialized countries. For example, in Nigeria, one out of 18 women die from pregnancy related causes. In comparison, the mortality rate in Italy (the lowest in the world) is 12 in 20,000. Within the United States, the rate is relatively high for an industrialized country at one in 4,100.

Although pregnancy and related issues are a major crisis, the lack of access to health services is another major problem in the developing world. Women have little-to-no-access to screening tests that could prevent cancer. They may have little access to information about family planning which helps to break the cycle of poverty.

Child marriage is also a major issue in receiving access to health services. Adolescent girls are twice as likely to die during pregnancy or childbirth as those over age 20, and five times more likely to die if under the age of 15. Cultural practices such as allowing or forcing a young girl into marriage is a major factor affecting the health status of women in many countries around the globe.

The factors supporting improved health status to women are obvious. The improvement of availability of medical services greatly improves access and information. Girls that receive a secondary education have shown a significant increase in mothers having healthier pregnancies and the survival rate of newborn children. Education for the entire community helps women make informed decisions about health and the health of family members.

## **Political Power**

Gender discrimination often starts in the household, the social arena where the girl and boy child begin defining her or his identity. The cultural, social and religious attitudes and perceptions are ingrained at an early age and accepted by both women and men. Ideas of equity and rights are often foreign concepts that are viewed as a threat to the established social order in place.

- Many countries have discriminatory laws against women.
- Some countries still do not have universal suffrage.
- Women hold very few seats in Parliaments around the globe, including the Americas.
- Rwanda has the highest number of women parliamentarians worldwide with 63.8% of the seats.
- Women are seldom included in formal peace processes (UN Global Data, UN Women).

Law and justice within a country, a village, and/or a family are very important to gender equity. The political structure provides the framework for organizing and fulfilling the laws of the lands. Typically, this structure has been organized by men and has provided them with the power and privilege for upholding the laws. Any abuse of this structure may affect and have detrimental impact on the lives of women and children, especially the girl child.

The right to vote and hold office is considered a cornerstone to equitable rights. Yet, this right to vote is still denied in many parts of the world. For example, Saudi Arabia just gave women the right to vote in 2011. Although women have had the right to vote in the United States since 1920, that has only been within the last 100 years. New Zealand was the first country to give women the right to vote in 1893. In Norway, there is a direct causal relationship between the presence of women in municipal councils and childcare coverage. In India, where female-led councils were higher than those with male-led councils, the number of drinking water projects was 62% higher.

Along with the right to vote, is the right to hold office. Forty-two nations have elected a woman as their head of state in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Research suggests that when women hold office, they are more concerned about issues that directly impact the family and community such as: education, health care, etc. Men more typically care about roads, commerce, business, etc. With both men and women participating in political leadership roles, a balance can provide for both the private and public systems of life.

Gender is at the intersection of the systems that recognize and fulfill the multiple laws and practices within the country. Everyday transactions, such as, marriage, inheritance and land holdings fall into multiple jurisdictions, ranging from the state to customary and religious authorities applying a variety of rules: state law, customary law, religious law and local norms.

## Religion

The role of religion in gender equity issues can be a major factor that is influenced by the social and cultural norms of the family, community and country. The Pew Research Center (2018), has found that over 77% of the population within the world live with restrictions based on religion. Religion is the basis for our belief system about human nature and the divine. Religious freedom is the right to practice our beliefs without limitation or intervention. For women, religious faith is and has been a conundrum.

- Religion is often seen as barrier to gender parity.
- Considerable gender-based violence is done in the name of religion.
- Denial of religious freedom contributes to gender inequality throughout the world. Corporations and economies suffer if they miss out on the contributions of women (UN Global Data, UN Women).

Studies indicate that women hold their faith throughout their lifetime and over 85% of women are believers in God or the Divine. However, in many instances, religion is the limiting factor for their lives. It may influence whether they pursue an education, when they can marry and to whom, along with their roles within their religious faith. Religion can also impact their participation roles personally and professionally. Religion and cultural values define the ways in which people live together within families, communities and countries.

The role of religion is a major influence today for both positive and negative outcomes. The culture has a set of beliefs that explain the reasons for human existence and guides personal relationships and behavior. Religious beliefs tend to provide the moral codes by which one lives their life. It provides the beliefs about human worth and how one relates and interacts with other people. Religious institutions are deeply complex and often difficult for those outside of the “faith” to understand.

Acceptable behavior among women and men is shaped by religion through the social norms, political and economic systems. These systems often disadvantage women. In nearly all major global religious traditions, formal interpretive authority has been vested in men. They have generally written and interpreted the foundational texts of the faith which maintain gender norms that privilege male authority and power. This generally reflects the cultural practices at the time the religious texts were shaped and much of society has not reinterpreted texts within the current cultural

practices and norms. This raises an interesting question given this domination by men, yet the practices of women suggest that they are more likely to attend and participate in religious worship and ritual, to believe in God/Divine, and to pray on a daily basis and they self-identify as religious in great numbers.

UNESCO (2015) suggests that in the west, Christian and Jewish congregations have been increasingly ordaining women. More gender-inclusive language is reflected in the hymns, liturgies and scripture. There are movements within Islam to educate women and support their active practice in Islamic public life with scholars looking to early examples of women leaders. For instance, one of Mohammad's wives was considered to be a Priestess. Within Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism and other faiths, women are seeking to reclaim their traditions to affirm their dignity and authority, celebrating their agency within the religious communities and practices. This volume will also explore the religious implications that intersect with cultural settings from Asia, Middle-East, Africa, Central America, Europe and the United States.

## **Theoretical Framework**

As with the first two volumes of *Women in Leadership and Work-Family Integration* (Weber & Cissna-Heath, 2015; Weber & Cissna-Heath, 2016), the studies summarized in this book utilize a narrative and life story approach to understanding the lives of female leaders. The life course framework used as the model for this project, explores an entire lifespan of a person to gather a significant amount of information that can be dissected and analyzed (Elder, 1994; Giele, 2002). Giele modified this framework to specifically address "life balance" issues for women (2008). The life course framework has been an excellent guide for collecting a broad range of information that can be witnessed by the variety of studies summarized in this book volume. The opportunities for exploring different topics using this dataset are endless, in large part due to the framework that was selected for this data collection. The framework is multi-faceted and provides a way to collect information that is relevant to women regardless of their context.

## **Methodology**

A qualitative methodology was utilized for the data collection described in this book. As in the first volume, interviews were conducted, transcribed and analyzed for a variety of studies on work-family

integration (Giele, 2002; Weber and Cissna-Heath, 2015). Themes surfaced across the subjects who were interviewed and have been described in each chapter of this volume. The life course framework was employed to study four periods of each woman's life: childhood and adolescence, early adulthood, her current life and future goals. The analysis also allows for exploration of four life course dimensions: identity, relational style, level and type of motivation, and adaptive style.

Each interview was conducted in person, online, or by phone and lasted approximately one hour. The interviews were transcribed and uploaded into a secure online cloud. Researchers would access the transcriptions and code the data using a computer software program called NVivo. Themes which emerged from each of the global studies are shared within the chapter dedicated to their culture and country.

## **Outline of the Book**

Each chapter will summarize the findings from one of eight studies focusing on issues that women face regarding work-family integration. The studies include Costa Rica, Iran, India, Nigeria, Norway, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and the U.S. Each chapter will include the following information:

- Overview: First, a brief history of the country, history, and the women and include an overview of the research.
- Challenges: Second, describe the major challenges that the women face.
- Opportunities: Third, what are the opportunities available to the women?
- Work-Life Balance: Fourth, what are the work-life balance issues in the country?
- Highlights: Fifth, any special reflections or highlights to share about the findings?
- Conclusion: Sixth, list any implications or recommendations for future research.

Previous volumes of the Women in Leadership and Work-Family Integration series focused on various demographics of women and the challenges faced regarding work life balance. However, the phenomenon of work-family integration is a global concept. The chapters in this book are summaries of each study that was conducted in eight different countries. Here is an overview of what you will find in this volume:

**Chapter One****A Global Overview of Work-Family Integration**

By Margaret J. Weber

In chapter one, Weber compares and contrasts some of the issues facing women around the globe. In some countries, women are making great progress and in other countries women and “the girl child” are still prohibited from attending school, driving and owning their own land. These contrasts have implications for identity, education, violence, health, economic status, religious status, and political participation. The Digital Women’s Project has interviewed over 600 women leaders on the topic of work-family integration using a life-course framework in order to further understand these issues (Elder, 1994 and Giele, 2008).

**Chapter Two****An Exploration of Costa Rican Career Women and Work Life Balance**

By Dr. Elena Einstein

In chapter two, Dr. Elena Einstein examines the lives of Costa Rican women and issues they face surrounding work-family integration. Of the research on work-life balance and the challenges facing women in the workplace, few studies have focused on career outcomes and the development of work-life balance strategies with a Latina population. This chapter explores the life experiences of Latinas in Costa Rica to understand the challenges they encounter in their careers and in their aspirations for career advancement. The study sought to obtain insight into how Costa Rican women form relationships that create support systems and strategies for managing careers, families and the demands of their communities. The participants (10) were selected from career Latinas who are currently employed or self-employed and living in Costa Rica. The findings indicate that Latinas have identities that are strongly connected with their family and culture. They rely heavily on their family support, mentors and networks for learning how to navigate their career choices, beginning in their college years. Career goals are driven by their family socio-economic situation, cultural emphasis on education, family feelings about education, and a strong desire to be successful. Active engagement in leadership roles in the workplace is attributed to providing opportunities for growth, mentorship, and career advancement. Lastly, the women shared several strategies such as exercise, earning trust in the workplace,

family, support circles, and setting priorities for coping with work-life balance.

### **Chapter Three**

#### **The Motivational Factors of Higher Educated Iranian Immigrant Women and Influences on Academic Achievement and Work-Life Integration**

By Dr. Maryam Rostami

This qualitative study provides information on the experiences and perceptions of women who immigrated to the U.S. after the 1979 Iran Islamic Revolution to pursue higher education and professional careers. The study offers new understandings of strategies used to overcome obstacles in completing academic goals in the U.S., pursuing professional careers, and negotiating balance between home-life and career.

The data were provided by 21 women who met the selection criteria of the study and agreed to participate in face-to-face interviews. The findings centered on the participants' need to find a meaningful balance between work- and home life. Family was a key priority of all of the respondents, an influence that mirrored Iranian society values. The women who made the choice to immigrate felt pressure to succeed in all of their endeavors. Additional findings highlighted the importance of the participants' self-efficacy and expectations of high achievement instilled in their early years, along with their strong aspirations to excel in professional careers in a free environment with plenty of choices. Having one or more mentors and accommodations made by immediate and extended family members supported the participants in meeting their work-life balance goals. The findings can be useful to other women immigrants to the U.S. who seek work-life balance as they adhere to the traditional female roles of their home countries and adapt to the demands of professional careers in the U.S.

### **Chapter Four**

#### **The Colors of India: A Study of the Women in India Striving to Achieve Work-Life Balance in Finance**

By Dr. Linda Shahisaman

Women's empowerment can be viewed as women gaining control or power over their lives. The researcher conducted 20 interviews with women from Indian that were administered and completed online from a wide array of women in the field of finance that were between the ages of

28-54. The subjects were Hindu (15), Muslim (2), Buddhist (2), and Jainist (1). A majority of them were married with at least one child. The researcher discusses the frustration from interviewees regarding how difficult it was to create a work-life balance because of their identity and cultural dynamics and some strategies for creating communities that empower and support women in leadership.

## **Chapter Five**

### **“Keeping It All Together”**

#### **A Study of the Work-Life Balance of Nigerian Women in Leadership**

By Dr. Vernonica Ufoegbune

This study examines the work-life balance of Nigerian women leaders who are instrumental in visioning and shaping the future of Nigeria’s public education. The research delves into the past, present, and future of Nigerian public education based on the perception and life course of key female educational leaders located in Nigeria and in the diaspora. Further, the study explores the work-life balance of these women leaders and their vision for public education in Nigeria. The study was prompted by the perceived change in the state of the Nigerian public educational system from pre-independence to post-independence.

The insights realized from this study offer solutions and contributions to the Ministry of Education and the Presidential Education Commissions in the development of policies, procedures, roadmaps, and for women in their daily struggle to balance work, life, responsibilities, and their families. The existing literature on work-life balance and the life course of women is growing; however, it is limited, and there is a void in the research that has explored specifically the work-life balance of Nigerian women and their life course.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Nordic Intelligence: Leading the Way for Work-Family Life Integration**

By Dr. Lene Martin

Dr. Martin was particularly interested in this population as it is both the land of her mother’s family and is one of the world’s leading countries in gender equality and work-life balance. Work-life balance issues are viewed in unique ways given this context and serves as an exceptional model to improve gender equality and work-life balance around the world (Strømland, 2009). Norway continues to rank among the top three in the Global Gender Gap Index in addition to being named the happiest country,



best country to live, leading country in gender equality and work-life balance, best country for motherhood, and one of the top three countries for business. Data collected from the interviews of 22 Norwegian women are used to understand the relationship between gender equality and work-life balance which enables more women to work and be leaders, and that gender equality leads to financially successful organizations (Martin, 2016). Findings from this study suggest that support systems and autonomy are major contributors to Norway's success in gender equality and work-life balance. Furthermore, work-life balance strategies were revealed, in addition to a new leadership framework, *Nordic Intelligence* (NQ). The findings from this study may help others around the world to understand the path towards happier people, more satisfied employees, better and effective leaders, successful organizations, and stronger nations and economies worldwide.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Women of Sri Lanka: Family First**

By Dr. Amanda Wickramasinghe

Floating in the heart of the Indian Ocean is the beautiful island of Sri Lanka. The country is rich in heritage, culture, and deeply rooted traditions that date back to the ancient times. Family, education and history are the forefront of nearly all Sri Lankan people, which is why it is possible for women to pursue their goals. The development of women has remained at the center of Sri Lankan culture. With the resources the country provides, Sri Lankan women are in a much better place than most developing countries. From a young age, girls are encouraged to pursue their education while still remaining culturally grounded. Women are given ample opportunities to become leaders, entrepreneurs, doctors, lawyers, and educators.

The researcher interviewed a sample of 20 Sri Lankan women based in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, Australia and the United States of America. This research was undertaken using a qualitative research methodology. Sri Lankan women have progressed in unique ways and have subsequently overcome many obstacles. The researcher has been studying Sri Lankan women and their work life balance for the past five years. The researcher's goal was to contribute to the current body of literature and bring awareness to the positive and negative attributes shared by Sri Lankan women. Furthermore, Sri Lankan women's rise to the top and history of overcoming obstacles must be acknowledged by current and future generations. These women paved the way in order for

other women to accomplish their goals and dreams. Sri Lankan women's drive to succeed and dedication to their families were the inspiration for the researcher to conduct this study.

The best product of this ideology within Sri Lankan culture is Sri Lanka's first female Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranike and her daughter who was the nation's first female president. The country has a developed economy and with modern technological advancements, women are presented more opportunities to maintain a proper work-life balance. This chapter will provide the history and journey that Sri Lankan women followed to pursue their ambitions and dreams.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **Women of Uganda: An Era of Gender Disruption and Economic Advancement**

By Dr. Bernice Ledbetter

Uganda has been called the pearl of Africa and it is easy to see why this is so; it is beautiful on the inside, in the determination of its people and outside in the lush and diverse topography. Within the great Pearl of Africa lies a wonderful new world to emerge and women will play a very significant role as Uganda emerges as a developed country. Uganda has elevated women into significant leadership roles and is leading the way by being among the top 30 countries worldwide with more than 30% women in a single or lower house of parliament (Bauer, 2012). Even still, the full economic benefit of women's participation in the labor force remains underdeveloped. Uganda is an emerging economy and has experienced a *threefold increase* in per capita GDP over the past generation. The country has reduced extreme poverty to one-third of the population. This makes Uganda one of the countries that has more than achieved the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of cutting poverty in half by 2015. (Lagarde, 2017).

The results of this study point to the ways in which women in Uganda are contributing to the progress of their country economically, socially, and morally. From these interviews there is a sense that change is under way and that progress wants to emerge in Uganda to reach the goal of middle-income status. Overall, this study found that while women face certain obstacles, if she can attend school and graduate from college, her chances of creating a stable economic future for herself greatly increase. This study also revealed that at this particular time in history, Uganda is poised to advance significantly, and women will play a significant part in helping their country progress.

## **Chapter Nine**

### **Self-realization: An American Dream**

By Dr. Kerri Cissna

The United States presents a unique phenomenon of women in leadership and their approach to work-life balance. This chapter offers a look at work-life balance through the lens of American history and the current state of affairs regarding women in the American workforce. This chapter gives a close examination to the roles of women and how they impact society at different stages of the evolution of American progress. A summary is given regarding the economic disparities between genders and the exploration of other types of gaps (confidence gap, ambition gap, wage gap, etc.). A summary shares the findings from 22 American female leaders and the strategies they use to remain balanced as they juggle the duplicity of roles in the workplace, at home and in the community.

## **Chapter Ten**

### **Conclusions and recommendations for Future Studies**

By Drs. Kerri Cissna and Margaret J. Weber

This final chapter reviews the entire volume with a synopsis of what themes arose from the studies of women from around the globe. A look at all eight countries is shared in order to draw comparisons and contrasts across cultures. A framework was developed from the women participating in this study from around the world. The components of the framework provide a perspective of the major themes. A final section is included that recommends studies to be conducted in the future to further examine the phenomenon of women in leadership and work-family integration issues. A roadmap is also given for how to create communities of women that empower, support and inspire progress.

## **Summary**

This chapter provides an overview of the book with each chapter abstracted. Although we acknowledge that most of the women interviewed by the authors of each chapter are individuals that have positions of privilege and power, the findings are replicable to the extent possible for women within their country context. The chapter also includes an overview of the issues that many women face throughout the world in regard to education, economics, violence, health care, political participation and religious freedom. As we continue this journey and read the stories of women around

the globe, let us heed the words of Malala Yousafzai, the youngest person (at 15 years of age) to ever be a Nobel Peace recipient:

“I speak not for myself but for those without voice... those who have fought for their rights... their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated.” Malala Yousafzai (2013)

## CHAPTER TWO

# AN EXPLORATION OF COSTA RICAN CAREER WOMEN AND WORK LIFE BALANCE

DR. ELENA EINSTEIN

The challenges Costa Rican women encounter in the workforce are numerous, yet there is much progress to celebrate. According to the Gender Gap Report of 2013, Costa Rica scored well in education, political empowerment, and in overall health. It has also managed to completely close the educational gender gap, along with 25 other countries. However, despite having higher ratings of gender equality in education compared to other Latin American countries, and a unique political gender quota system, these facts have not translated to increased leadership roles for women in the private sector. Additionally, even though the number of women in the public sector has increased due to the gender quota system, Costa Rican women still face challenges associated with being the primary caregiver and with prevailing social perceptions about women in leadership roles. By developing networks and creating support systems, women could see positive effects on career advancement while also providing strategies for balancing the demands of family and work.

In this chapter, a brief history of Costa Rica is presented with a brief description of the women who were selected for this study. The second section focuses on the challenges women face in the workplace and in career advancement, while the third section discusses the opportunities available to women. The fourth section of this chapter depicts the work-life balance issues in Costa Rica and also describes the strategies women employ in creating work-life balance. The fifth section shares highlights and reflections about the research. Lastly, in the sixth section, the researcher summarizes the results and provides an interpretation of the findings with practical implications in addition to opportunities for further research to assist women seeking career advancement and work-life balance strategies.

## **Background of Costa Rica**

Costa Rica is located in Central America, bordering both the Caribbean Sea and the North Pacific Ocean, between Nicaragua and Panama, in a land area of 51,060 square kilometers or 19,714 square miles. It is comparable to the states of South Carolina or Kentucky in territory and population size (Rosero-Bixby & Dow, 2016). The population of Costa Rica is approximately 4.9 million, with over 300,000 living in the capital and largest city, San José. Costa Rica is a democratic nation. The Costa Rican Constitution of 1949 provides for a unicameral legislature that includes a fair judicial system and an independent electoral body. Today, its economy, which was once heavily dependent on agriculture, has diversified to include sectors such as finance, corporate services for foreign companies, pharmaceuticals, and ecotourism.

The government invests substantially in social programs, due, in part, to the fact that it abolished the army in the 1949 Constitution. Specifically, Costa Rica invests a significant amount of money in public education beginning early in the 19th century. As a result, Costa Rica can boast that it has one of the highest literacy rates—97%— in Latin America. In 2012, approximately 6.9 percent of government spending went to education, compared to a global average of 4.4 percent (Gonzalez, 2017). Today, English is taught in most schools and is widely spoken, along with other languages, such as Portuguese, German, and French. With respect to religious affiliations, Costa Rica is predominately Roman Catholic at 76.3%; Evangelical 13.7%; Jehovah's Witness 1.3%; other (Protestant) 0.7%; other 4.8%; and none 3.2% (Gonzalez, 2017).

Historically, according to the Central Intelligence Agency website, initial Spanish attempts to colonize Costa Rica were unsuccessful due to a combination of factors, including disease from mosquitoes, extreme heat, and resistance by the native people. In 1563 a permanent settlement of Cartago was established in the cooler, fertile central highlands. The area remained a colony for nearly two hundred and fifty years. In 1821, several Central American provinces, including Costa Rica, jointly declared their independence from Spain. Two years later, Costa Rica joined the United Provinces of Central America. The federation did not last and disbanded in 1838. At that time Costa Rica declared its independence. In 1949, Costa Rica abolished its armed forces.