April 2015

An Exploration of Female University Professors' Experiences of Negotiating Between Personal and Professional Roles, Stress and Mental Health

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Master of Arts

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AN EXPLORATION OF FEMALE UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS' EXPERIENCES OF

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AND MENTAL HEALTH

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology

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Abstract

 Research has demonstrated that female faculty members face barriers impacting advancement in leadership and satisfaction. With a rise in the number of women occupying higher ranks in the academy, the objective of the study was to gain an updated and deeper understanding of the factors that influence academic women's mental health and the environments that support their wellbeing both personally and professionally. Female professors were interviewed on their definitions and personal experiences with work-life balance, success, stress, mental health, support and satisfaction. This study fills the gap of past literature by exploring their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes about why they assess certain external factors as stressful; how they cope with stressors and attempt to reduce their negative impacts; and their views of effective mentorship in academia. Most significant was women's gratitude for being heard and need for supportive relationships. Feminist and Relational-cultural perspectives identified implications for university administrators and mental health practitioners.

Keywords: relational cultural, feminism, female academic, professor, stress, mental health, connection, work-life balance, support, relationship

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to all the people in my life who have made completion of this thesis possible. I wish to acknowledge the Master of Arts Counselling Psychology Program directions; Dr. Alan Leschied, Dr. Jason Brown and my supervisor Dr. Susan Rodger for providing a conducive environment and rewarding experience throughout the program. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Dr. Susan Rodger for inspiring me to pursue a project that I am passionate about and have a desire to create positive change. Your faith in my ability and encouragement throughout this process has given me the courage to complete a project of which I am extremely proud. I gratefully acknowledge Dr. Anne Cummings for her assistance and support through providing useful remarks and engagement. Furthermore, I would like to thank these women for their guidance and contribution throughout my learning process of qualitative research and enabling me to complete a master's thesis with the utmost dedication.

Thank you also to the female professors interviewed, who have willingly shared their precious time and meaningfully contributed to the research by sharing their stories.

To my loved ones and family who deserve special recognition for their ongoing support and encouragement throughout my academic career. It is with your unconditional love, confidence and belief in me that has enabled me to follow my dreams. Thank you to my loving and exceptional parents, Sina and Tony for always being by my side through good times and bad, sharing in my successes and reminding me throughout my journey of what is most important in life. To Andrew, my partner and best friend, a special thank you for your patience, love and encouragement over the years. I will be forever grateful for all of your love and support.

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Introduction

The success and achievement of women in professoriate positions can have a substantial impact on the inspiration and choice of individuals to pursue leadership roles in future generations (Parrakis & Martinez, 2012). Achievement in the academic workforce poses particular barriers for women; therefore, understanding this phenomenon is significant to the growth and enhancement of women in leadership roles. Research has explored the experience of women employed across levels of authority, most significantly managerial positions, to develop an understanding of the social, contextual, psychological and physiological factors associated with stress in the workforce and familial life choices (Berkman, Buxton, Ertel, & Okechukwu, 2010; Jaschik, 2005). Results from these studies suggest that there are barriers that not only make enhancing women's participation in the workforce challenging, but may also prevent them from entering the workforce in the first place.

Of particular interest in the current proposal is the experience of women who are faculty members at post-secondary institutions, as research has demonstrated that across disciplines, female faculty members express lower levels of job satisfaction in comparison to their male colleagues (Sabharwal & Corley, 2009). With a rise in the number of women entering and occupying higher ranks in the academy, it is imperative for university administrators, education policy makers and practitioners to gain insight into how these educators are being affected by their work experience (Misra et al., 2011; Sabharwal & Corley, 2009). As mental health practitioners, it is important to understand women's personal perspectives on working in this field to develop an understanding of the complex nature of this phenomenon.

The purpose of the current research is to explore the unique stories of those integrating the roles of professor and woman by addressing work-life balance, success, stress, mental health and life-satisfaction. By asking questions directly of women in academia, the goal is to gain an updated and deeper understanding of the factors that influence professional women's mental health and the resources and environments that support their wellbeing.

Literature Review

Women's Wellbeing

In the current proposal, Feminist and Relational-Cultural theoretical perspectives are used to frame the understanding of women's experiences and wellbeing in the workforce and academia. These concepts will be explored more thoroughly once an understanding of the existing literature has been established.

First, it is important to develop an understanding of literature addressing women's wellbeing within the workforce. Research has explored the role of stress in working women and how it impacts their physical and mental health and a variety of work-related factors are found to influence a woman's experience of stress in the workforce including the socio-economic status, the gender-dominated nature, and the working conditions of her job position. Research has explored these factors in relation to gender differences found to impact the wellbeing of women.

Socio-economic Status. It has been found that the socio-economic status of a woman's job position is related to the types of stressors experienced at work and her overall wellbeing. A study by Burke (2002) compared the amount of work stressors with self-report measures of work satisfaction and well-being in a large sample of employed

women. Findings demonstrated that the degree of work stress had a negative relationship with job satisfaction, and a positive relationship with psychosomatic symptoms and days of illness. The study included women working in a variety of fields ranging from low to high socio-economic status jobs, and findings indicated that women in lower occupational status jobs experienced less satisfaction at work and poorer emotional and physical health due to heightened job insecurity and, hostile and hazardous workplace environments. Although results demonstrated women in lower socio-economic status jobs had increased stressors and worse overall health compared to women in higher socio-economic status jobs, gender still appeared to play a substantial role regardless of this financial difference (Burke, 2002). This result is representative of the significant effect of gender disparity on health outcomes, despite the possible moderating effects of privilege.

This research raises questions about how privilege may impact a women's experience of prejudice such that it is experienced, but perhaps through different means; for instance, there may be different types of stressors for women of privilege that nevertheless impact her well-being and her ability to cope or adapt to those stressors in the workplace. A survey of contemporary literature reveals that, at least upon visual inspection, women in high status or managerial positions are the most frequently represented group. These studies suggest that women in managerial positions may experience increased stress, which is associated with gender-related expectations.

Research by Davidson and Cooper (1992) has explored women in managerial roles and stress to identify stressors specific to higher status work positions. Findings reveal that these women tend to exhibit Type A behaviour including traits such as ambitious, organized, proactive, status-conscious, and high-achieving multi-taskers. They

also report feeling isolated at work and much greater strain than men in similar positions. Additional pressures reported by these women were a lack of self-confidence in the workplace and subtle forms of discrimination such as complaints when enforcing policy and minimal shift flexibility. This study also found that working women still tended to carry the major burden of home and family duties which is attributed to increased stress (Hochschild, 1997). There is still a question of whether women who enter leadership roles, such as managerial or professional positions, do so because they possess more stereotypically male leadership qualities or they adapt to accommodate this system to reduce stressors and achieve success. Despite this controversy, women in high status jobs have stressors representative of the high demands of these positions which often result in physical and mental health issues.

      Female or Male-dominated Environments. Research indicates women's physical and mental health is also influenced by the gender-dominated environment of their positions; female or male-dominated industry. A study by Torkelson, Muhonen, and Peiro (2012) compared the self-reported stress among women working in either a female or male-dominated customer service department company. Women fulfilled the same job position as men, yet women in the male-dominated industry reported more stress than those working in the female-dominated industry, due to a reported lack of autonomy and a restricted working situation. Similar results are found in other male-dominated institutions such as policing. Women police officers reported suffering the same stressors as their male colleagues, but were also subjected to additional stressors associated with their minority status, such as negative and sexist attitudes from fellow officers (Bannerman, 2012). These studies reveal that women in male-dominated environments

experience additional stressors compared to men and women in female-dominated environments.

A study by Gardiner and Tiggemann (1999) explored further by addressing differences in mental health based on conditions such as whether women in managerial positions were working in male-dominated or female-dominated environments, and the type of leadership style they used in these environments. No differences in mental health were found across managerial positions for women compared to men, but a difference between the relationship of leadership style and mental health did emerge. In female-dominated environments, it emerged that the leadership style for women was found to be more interpersonally oriented than for men. In comparison, men and women did not differ in their interpersonal orientation in male-dominated industries. Further, it was reported that women in male-dominated environments may face pressures different from those faced by men in the same jobs or by women and men in female-dominated industries. Notably, women in male-dominated industries reported a leadership style more similar to men in those environments, and women utilizing a more interpersonally oriented leadership style were found to experience worse health in male-dominated environments. This research suggests that if a woman conforms to the leadership style of men in a male-dominated environment she is more likely to be buffered from work-related stressors. This finding is replicated in other male-dominated industries such as policing, in which women also reported adopting the masculine interactional style of their male counterparts at work, but this differed from their interactional style at home (Bannerman, 2012). These findings are significant because they reveal the unique pressure women experience in the workforce to conform in male-dominated industries.

Male-dominated fields tend to be vulnerable to masculine stereotypes due to lack of diversity. Therefore, women are at high risk of experiencing pressure and difficulty excelling in these occupations (Catalyst Research and Analysis, 2012). The academy is a male-dominated environment; therefore, pressure leading to increased stress and reduced mental health has implications for the population of study.

Work Conditions. Work-related stress in women has also been attributed to the nature of one's work environment, more specifically working conditions and employer flexibility. A study by Srimathi and Kiran (2010) examined the level of psychological well-being among 325 working women in various professions and organizations including banks, educational institutions, call centres and industries. The researchers posited that conflicting and stressful situations that a working woman faces due to her employment may result in experiencing poorer psychological well-being. This study suggests that career and employment opportunities for women are not the primary stressor affecting psychological wellbeing, but rather it is both the nature of the job and working conditions that are greater contributors. A contributing factor was that working women tended to be more likely than men to carry out a dual role, and therefore are more likely to face stressful life events conflicting with work. Related to the notion of the importance of working conditions, other research has revealed that women reporting reduced support from their employer slept less and were more than twice as likely to have two or more cardiovascular disease risk factors (Berkman, Buxton, Ertel & Okechukwu, 2010). This study indicates that a lack of flexibility and support at an interpersonal level is significant with respect to work-related stress for women, and taken together, these studies highlight the significant impact employers and policy makers have on the health

of women in the workplace. Further, these findings promote the significance of environmental factors on a woman's health in the workplace.

With an understanding of the environmental work-related factors negatively affecting women's stress, researchers were encouraged to explore the environmental factors leading to increased psychological and physical health for women in the workplace. It has been found that an employer's values and flexibility with work-life balance is a significant factor in an individual's overall health (Berkman, et al., 2010). Promoting psychological and physical wellbeing requires the cooperation of persons at the individual, community, government and societal level (Aluja & Blanch, 2012). This research emphasises that working women with family caregiving responsibilities fare better in their physical and psychological health when their organization is supportive, open and creative in regards to work-family needs through behaviours such as accommodating schedules.

Choice and Power

As demonstrated, women's wellbeing is mediated by a variety of factors including the status, values, flexibility and the gender-dominated nature of their work environment which impact one's ability to attain a balance between work and caregiving responsibilities. Based on these factors, each woman's experience is unique which makes prediction of stressors and mental health challenging. Further, identifying the stressors affecting a particular woman becomes even more complex when considering intersectionality, in which multiple forms of systemic oppression, domination or discrimination may be working in unison (Caven, 2006). As acknowledged, female professors are a privileged group but still appear to experience similar stressors and

challenges in the workplace, in some cases to a greater degree due to the patriarchal structure of the academy (Parrakis & Martinez, 2012). A theme presented throughout the literature, regardless of a woman's occupation or socio-economic status, is her freedom to make decisions or choices.

Freedom to choose is assumed in multiple domains including one's decision to marry, have children, to be a caregiver, the career type to pursue and advancement in the workforce. Research has explored this notion of "choice" and the degree to which it is a realistic factor. It has been argued that inequalities are not simply due to individual choices but to structural issues reflecting gendered families and organizations enforcing expectations about caregiving and professional work (Misra, Lundquist, Hickes & Templer, 2012). For instance, a woman's selection of a traditionally female career has been associated with her negative attitude towards future multiple-role planning (McCracken & Weitzman, 1997). Thus, women viewing multiple roles as a potentially positive experience or who have not considered multiple roles are more likely to enter male-dominated careers. In addition, research has established that the mere suggestion of underlying sex differences in ability reduces women's interest and performance in domains traditionally dominated by men resulting in diminished interest and reduced entrance into male-dominated fields, such as academia (Zhang, Schmader & Forbes, 2009). These findings reveal that decision-making may not be a matter of choosing between two equally optimal choices, but rather choosing the path of least resistance since it is more attainable and less distressing for women. Aside from socio-cultural pressures, biological factors such as optimal age for fertility, also limit a woman's decision-making (Armenti, 2004). Therefore, planning for the future and making

decisions earlier in life regarding education, career, marriage and childbearing are stressors unique to females (Misra, Lundquist, Hickes & Templer, 2012).

It is important to note that each individual may place more importance on either attaining a family, a professional career or both. Therefore, the argument is not that women only have a desire to be caregivers and work-related pressures interfere, but rather each woman's personal desire is varied in each domain and regardless of her position she is pressured by society to make a decision. For instance, research has found that work is not always the central interest in the lives of women and with changing social expectations there is increased pressure for women to be both a full-time caregiver and be successful in her work (Wakabayashi & Donato, 2005). This expectation is found most commonly among high-achieving women with professional careers who choose to sacrifice work to stay home with their children (Stone & Lovejoy, 2004). Results suggest that regardless of a woman's decision, a major stress-inducing factor is that she is placed in a position that a choice must be made at all. This is a unique stressor to women not found among men in the literature.

The notion of choice is a concept not acknowledged as a stressor in our society but rather an expectation of women, placing them in a position of powerlessness by the dominant group (Miller, 2003). This view suggests that in academic culture, even though women may be making mindful decisions they are still victims of their gender in a patriarchal system. The existing power differential between men and women is engrained resulting in tremendous losses for women in all realms including economic, social, political and cultural. This power differential is demonstrated in the experience of female professors in the academic system. Acknowledging this power differential is necessary to

change from power-over actions to mutually empowering relationships within society (Miller, 2003; Wylie, 1995). It is important to develop a greater understanding of the nature of choice and power in female professoriate and how the concept of choice as a society impacts future generations of female leaders. The existing power dynamic guides woman's professional and familial choices; therefore, it is a significant factor in understanding the wellbeing of women fulfilling multiple roles.

Women's Multiple Roles

Another significant factor affecting a working woman's wellbeing is her caregiving responsibilities. Research has found that women tend to take on more caregiving responsibilities throughout their lives than men (Wakabayashi & Donato, 2005). There is a range of caregiving responsibilities that women are expected to fulfill throughout their lifetime which is demonstrated to greatly impact a woman's ability to obtain and maintain employment (Misra et al., 2012). Even women successfully achieving employment may be faced with complex factors impacting their ability to balance both roles in a functional and healthy way.

Caregiving. The expectation to take on a caregiving role is associated with the female gender within our society, and even women who remain childless have a high likelihood of being faced with balancing the role of caregiver and paid worker, with women performing most of the unpaid work and bearing the burden of its costs (Kane & Penrod, 1995*)*. The caregiving responsibilities women take on substantially impact their stress levels, but are often unacknowledged by employers, especially care of an ill, elderly or disabled family member. According to Pavalko and Artis (1997), care of an ill or disabled family member or friend is disproportionality done by women and typically is

done in late midlife, which tends to correspond with the peak of their employment participation. The expectation of women to take on these care responsibilities while employed has been found to be a substantial contributor to women's stress levels that is not found among employed men (Aluja & Blanch, 2012).

Some research evidence suggests that women who are in a caregiving role and who are working tend to have reduced work hours and more risk of termination (MacDermid, Williams, Marks & Heilbrun, 1994; Pavalko & Artis, 1997). This is not, however, always the case: research conducted by Bullock and Waugh (2004) found that women in their sample moderated neither their number of work hours nor the quality of care they provided to family members. Explanation for these conflicting findings may be found in the research results reported by MacDermid, Williams, Marks and Heilbrun (1994), who found that the amount of time working women dedicated to care responsibilities had a positive association with the degree of flexibility in the woman's job and the lack of job interference by her employer. These studies suggest that balancing of care and work responsibilities may be experienced with varying degrees of stress based on the flexibility of a woman's workplace. Having a means of stress reduction is critical for these women because unlike childcare, caring for an ill or disabled family member may not be for a limited time period (Moen, Robison and Fields, 1994).

Besides the stressors associated with caregiving that are chronic, research has also identified some acute physical and psychological effects of caregiving. A quantitative study by King, Oka and Young (2010) explored the experiences of women identified as both family caregivers and workers outside of the home in paid employment, compared to women who were solely working outside the home. Results showed that women in

their work setting had blood pressure levels comparable to other participants. However, following the work day, blood pressure levels among caregivers did not show the typical drop shown in non-caregivers and reported in other populations (King, et al, 2010). Researchers detected a significant increase in systolic blood pressure levels for women upon leaving their work setting and these levels were maintained in the presence of a care recipient at home. Similarly, affective responses such as anxiety and sadness during work and post-work settings followed a similar pattern. These results provide support for the notion that family caregiving is a stressor that may have a significant negative impact on psychological wellbeing and acute physiological responses such as blood pressure, which may over time have severe health consequences.

Motherhood. Motherhood has been given significant attention in the literature assessing stress and women in the workforce. A study by Bekker, de Jong, Zijlstra and van Landeghem (2000) explored the impact of balancing multiple roles among male and female individuals working in various positions at the university with children by measuring health through psychological and physiological responses to stress. Results indicate that participants fulfilling multiple roles, in comparison to those without children, reported worse health. Those fulfilling multiple roles reported more psychological, but not physical, complaints. A possible explanation may be that university workers are a relatively healthy group with financial stability, which may moderate any negative effects on physical health. Another significant finding revealed that mothers combining university work and childcare reported more psychological stress than fathers, and multiple roles were associated with more negative mood states in women including anger and depression. These women were also found to have less

energy and reduced cognitive functioning in comparison to their male associates (Bekker, de Jong, Zijlstra & van Landeghem, 2000). This research suggests that women with multiple roles as mother, homemaker and breadwinner experience greater levels of stress and other mental health issues compared to their male colleagues with children, due to the pressure to balance these differing roles (Jaschik, 2005). As demonstrated, differences in stress levels are found amongst working mothers and fathers but research has also explored the difference in stress levels among stay-at-home and working mothers. It is assumed stay-at-home mothers experience less stress than working mothers because of reduced pressure to fulfill dual roles (Shipley & Coats, 1992).

Comparatively, a recent study exploring the psychological wellbeing of employed mothers found that at all income levels they reported less sadness, anger and depression than stay-at-home moms, possibly revealing that formal employment or the income associated with it has emotional benefits for mothers (Mendes, Saad & McGeeney, 2012). This finding supports dual roles as beneficial for women, but also reveals the challenges and psychological toll caregiving takes on an individual. Society does not recognize the difficult job of caregiving and its associated aspects such as isolation which negatively impact women's emotionality (Mendes, Saad & McGeeney, 2012). In addition, this research found that wishing to pursue employment was a major contributor of increased negative emotions in stay-at-home mothers because the expectation to stay at home combined with the cost of childcare were barriers to fulfilling both roles (Mendes, Saad & McGeeney, 2012).

As demonstrated, studies exploring the effects of caregiving on working women's wellbeing are complex, and influenced by a variety of individual and environmental

factors. It appears that across all circumstances women fare worst in their health when they interpret their situation as restricting, whether at work or home. Consistent findings of stress associated with caregiving and paid work positions leads researchers to believe that female professors may be experiencing similarly increased stress levels (Misra et al., 2012; Solomon, 2009). Although women work for the university an equal number of hours a week as their male colleagues, women spend substantially more time on home responsibilities, thus putting additional effort into balancing these roles (Misra et al., 2012).

Academia: Social and Political Context

  To fully understand the experience of female professors, it is important to develop an understanding of the process of securing academic positions including the credentials and accomplishments required as there is a basic sequence of the typical academic career. Following completion of a four-year undergraduate degree and a graduate degree in a specific field of study, a doctorate degree is completed. A doctorate is a professional degree which qualifies an academic to teach at a university level (Noland & Prescott, 2013). Academic careers consist of a succession of ranks within a fairly predictable time frame (Bonetta, 2011). The academic career path consists of a series of promotions from assistant to associate professor to full professor followed by subsequent promotions and honours (Warman, Wooley, & Worswick, 2010). A tenure-track spot is typically filled by an assistant professor who will work approximately five years before a formal decision is made on whether tenure will be granted. If tenure is granted, the assistant professor is promoted to an associate professorship and, at many institutions, will have a guaranteed salary (Schoening, 2009).

Academics work toward promotion by advancing from one rank to the next, and obtaining tenure is dependent on one's involvement in research, teaching and service (Bonetta, 2011; Parks, 1996). Particularly in research-intensive institutions, research is considered the most significant asset (Noland & Prescott, 2013). In most institutions, tenure committees search for publications in peer-reviewed journals, for senior peers to testify to the value of the applicant's research, and grants (Bonetta, 2011; Padilla-Gonzalez, Metcalfe, Galaz-Fontes, Fisher, & Snee, 2011). Tenure decisions are also based on teaching ability and service. Teaching ability is measured based on student evaluations and assessment from other faculty members (Bonetta, 2011). Service is represented as a commitment to bettering the university, the profession and the public at large and often consists of being a part of campus committees, research ethics boards, editorial boards of journals and grant study sections (Bonetta, 2011; Parks, 1996). In addition, many faculty members continue on to become chairs of their departments or deans for a limited time period (Bonetta, 2011). This research demonstrates that an academic career is one in which one must be continually increasing one's efforts to either maintain or advance within academia. Taken together, it appears an academic career trajectory follows a relatively typical and predictable course, with individuals facing similar barriers and experiences toward achievement and promotion.

To the contrary, research has determined that there is a gender regime within universities because they "remain structured largely on the male lifestyle and scholarship course" (Armenti, 2004, p.77) resulting in increased barriers and a unique experience for female academics in comparison to male academics. In addition, the timeframe for career development is based on the prototypical male opportunity to dedicate his efforts to a

lifetime of work in pursuit of knowledge (Acker, 1994; Armenti, 2004). With women becoming a larger part of the academy, the structure of the university has not adapted to accommodate their lifestyle. Instead, women have been assimilated into a pre-exiting structure (Armenti, 2004). Women faculty identify a lack of acknowledgment of the tensions between family life and academic work, and this tension is found to be one of the main reasons that lead women faculty to abandon the academy (Tancred & Czarnocki, 1998). In addition, those who leave tend to seek consolation in friendly, female-dominated workplaces (Armenti, 2004). This raises questions about what social and interpersonal factors are contributing to women faculty leaving these positions. It is assumed by many professionals that since many overt barriers that initially deprived girls and women in the education system have been eliminated, equality and satisfaction should emerge (Caven, 2006).

On the contrary, there is substantial research exploring the hidden barriers still existing within academic institutions contributing to an environment that leads men and women to have differing experiences. This body of research is referred to as the Chilly Climate and consists of an accumulation of literature identifying subtle personal and social barriers operating below the awareness of men and women, and whose pervasiveness is often ignored (The Chilly Collective, 1995). Four main barriers have been identified and supported. The first and most apparent barrier is stereotyping. Specifically, patterns of interaction emerge by which women faculty are systematically devalued and isolated based on stereotypic assumptions about women's capabilities and roles, such as housekeeping and nurturing (Wylie, 1995).Within academia this represents as a "double standard" in which treatment of women differs compared to men of the same

status and occupying the same roles of either student or faculty (Muscarella, 2004).

Another barrier supported in the literature is devaluation of women's successes resulting

in frequently treating them as either exceptions or attributing them to circumstance or

support of a male associate (Monture-Okanee, 1995). Women often find their credibility

and the value of their work questioned more readily than a male faculty member and their

research findings tend to be accepted with greater authority if associated with a male

colleague (Wylie, 1995). Furthermore, projects identified as a "women's issue" are

assumed to be of concern only to women as a separate and minor extension of more

important research (Monture-Okanee, 1995).

Thirdly, women academics report being routinely isolated through standard

mixed-gender conversation and interactional patterns with colleagues, through

behaviours such as interrupting, using sexist humour and ignoring or attributing a

woman's remarks to others (Spender, 1980). Finally, the last barrier emerges when

women challenge the practices and assumptions explored (e.g., exclusion, devaluation,

stereotyping) and they become victimized through the very practices they challenge,

referred to as revictimization (Monture-Okanee, 1995). Research consistently

demonstrates a lack of adequate response and respect with regard to women speaking up,

such as placing blame or brushing off the seriousness of the issue (Wylie, 1995). All of

these barriers have been found to ultimately undermine girls and women in their self-

confidence in their academic ability, lower their academic and occupational aspirations,

inhibit their learning and generally lower their self-esteem (Wylie, 1995). It is the

persistence and reoccurrence of such practices that results in non-trivial consequences

and continues to negatively impact the degree and willingness of women to participate in

academic settings and threatening the institutional programs designed to promote equity (Muscarella, 2004; Wylie, 1995). These findings demonstrate the importance of understanding the experience of female professors from multiple levels and perspectives through exploring the unique individual, cultural and societal impacts on their wellbeing.

Political theorists suggest the way in which the university is structured and the values it conveys to those within the academic community has significant impact on its members, who communicate those values to our society at large (Armenti, 2004; Emmerik, Wendt, & Euwema, 2010; Fiorentino, 1999). Feminist critical theorists suggest institutions such as the academy systemically advance the agenda of white males and oppress the lives of females by using subtle social and personal barriers preventing women from fitting into the university structure (Armenti, 2007). In addition, these theorists incorporate critical policy analysis on political procedures at a micro and macro level to understand current policy and how it can be improved (Armenti, 2007). This theory demonstrates the importance of understanding how social and political contexts are intertwined. For instance, an unchanging social structure within academia reinforces these gendered values, placing women in a position of powerlessness and continues to impact the principles used to guide decisions and policy formation.

 Research has explored existing policy at the university for female professors and areas in which these policies are lacking. Overall, research reveals universities continue to lag behind in resources such as providing adequate child care to accommodate the needs of women faculty. This is demonstrated with long wait lists for on-site child care centres that often lack flexibility in hours, and who charge substantially higher fees than daycare centres outside of universities (Hornosty, 1998).Research has also found that pre-

tenure women, who represent the greater percentage of female faculty, are reluctant to use existing benefits due to lack of job security (Armenti, 2004). In addition, some universities have maternity leave and stop-the-clock policies to ensure female professor's positions are held while fulfilling caregiving responsibilities (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996), but despite this support, women still report that the notion lingers by their colleagues that having children makes them less serious about their careers. This notion, in combination with the uncertainty about the quantity of publications required for tenure, leaves women unaware of expected involvement in research while on leave (Armenti, 2004). These findings reveal that although strides have been made toward improving flexibility and providing equal opportunity for women in academic institutions, they are still lacking in adequately supporting this population. Taken together, these components of the social and political structure of academic institutions construct the environment in which female professors attempt to obtain a balance between professional and familial roles. It is important to develop an understanding of how these systems work toward and against change, at a micro and macro level.

Achievement in Academia

    Women's Representation. Incongruence between the values and context of the academic institution has led researchers to explore the culture of women as minority faculty members in the academic workplace. There is an inconsistency found between positive values toward women employed in the university and actual female representation in these positions representing the reality of the experience of academic women. The number of women faculty employed in colleges and universities is rising, but there is continuing underrepresentation in senior management and the senior levels of

academia for women (Currie et al., 2002). In particular, in Canadian academia, there appears to be a decline of female representation from lower into higher education. From 1993 to 2008 Statistics Canada displayed a slight increase in women's overall attendance in university education, but the trend continues that women are represented to the largest degree in undergraduate programs, 55%, reduces to 50% in Masters Programs and 40% in PhD Programs. These numbers reduce to an even greater degree when academic employment positions within the university are considered, demonstrating rank as a significant factor in this decrease (Warman, Wooley, Worswick, 2010). This is demonstrated with a decrease in women's representation from lower to higher ranking; with women consisting of 48 percent of assistant professors, 42.6 percent of associate professors and 28.5 of full professors from 2008 to 2009 (Statistic Canada, 2009).These statistics support research revealing that women who are employed within the university remain disproportionately less likely than men to earn academic jobs, tenure, and promotion (Currie et al., 2002; Ginther and Hayes, 2003; Ginther and Kahn, 2004;; Hochschild, 1994; Metcalfe and Slaughter, 2008; Misra et al., 2011; Wolfinger et al., 2009). Furthermore, women's representation varies by discipline. According to the 2008-2009 report, women faculty members in Canada have the greatest representation in humanities, social science and education (28.5 percent) and are least represented in physical science, engineering, mathematics and computer sciences (9.0 percent) (Statistics Canada, 2009). Recent research has begun to explore this phenomenon to understand potential barriers contributing to women's underrepresentation in the academic field and what it takes for a woman to work her way through the academic system.

Competition and Achievement. As established, women at the faculty level face a variety of barriers suggesting that these women have had similar experiences throughout their academic trajectory. Therefore, it is important to develop an understanding of how gender impacts achievement and success, specifically within academia. The academy is a competitive environment which encourages individuals, from completion of their undergraduate degree to faculty membership, to present oneself in a competitive way in order to be successful (Fiorentino, 1999). Research has explored gender differences in men and women and the ways in which they maintain motivation and obtain achievement. Firstly, research has found differing psychosocial trajectories characterize men and women with either a need for connection or through a separation from others (Miller, 1986). Thus, women are socialized to learn relationally and therefore, approach achievement related tasks differently from men, who are taught to define themselves independently through separation and autonomy (Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004). This independent nature teaches men to attempt to win using competitive tactics, and men report they are motivated by the desire for mastery and appear to feel rewarded intrinsically upon achievement. Comparatively, women report social approval as a primary motivation for achievement which results in extrinsic rewards (Gilligan, 1982; Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991). In addition, it is perceived that women view competition as anxiety-provoking because of its unnatural nature as they have been socialized to cooperate and enhance the emotional connections with others (Tracy, 1991). It appears women prefer to co-operate with others in comparison to men who prefer to compete for success (Rodger, Murray & Cummings, 2007). Since connection is so fundamentally important to females, competition is threatening to these

bonds considered necessary for survival and growth (Nichols, 1996). Research by Inglehrat, Brown and Vida (1994) found that women tended to focus more on interpersonal aspects of competition in a competitive environment. In addition, the more competitive they perceived the environment the less they achieved. In comparison, men thrived in the competitive environment as they performed better and tended to focus on achievement-related aspects of competition. It is suggested that women are cooperative learners and men are competitive learners which impacts their degree of success in achievement tasks (Rodger, et al., 2007). There is evidence that these differences in men and women, as a result of socialization, are only present in patriarchal societies.

Research has demonstrated that there is no difference in competitiveness of females at any age in matrilineal societies but on the contrary, girls become less competitive around puberty in patriarchal societies (Andersen, Ertac, Gneezy, List, & Maximiano, 2013). These findings suggest that women may not be born less competitive, but the process of socialization encourages this result. The evidence supporting socialization as a key contributor in this gender difference is abundant, but research suggests that individualistic factors may also contribute to females behaving more innately cooperative or more competitive in nature (Nichols, 1996). Academic women may be more innately competitive than the average woman, and therefore, may be better suited and thrive in the competitive patriarchal structure of the academy.

Recent research by Cadsby, Servátka, and Song (2012) assessed the conflicting role identities of women who chose a professional career path, which is highly competitive and ambitious, with a gender/family identity which is warm, supportive and caring. Participants were asked to complete a competitive task, but were primed with

either professional or family stimuli. Priming affected the willingness of female professionals to participate in the competitive task such that professional priming was associated with a greater willingness to compete than family priming. Priming did not have this effect on males from the same population. Therefore, this contrast suggests an identity conflict for the female professionals that was absent for males. Findings suggest that regardless of the cause of this role conflict (i.e., nurture or nature), it does exist in female professionals, thus impacting one's ability, willingness and success in utilizing competitive tactics to gain achievement or success in academia. Furthermore, if the theory that female professors are more competitive than non-academic women is true, this does not dismiss the fact that women possess two conflicting roles that must be negotiated.

With an awareness of these differing roles, questions are raised concerning how women approach competitive tasks and succeed in academia in comparison with men. If women are more successful in cooperative environments, how do they achieve success in the competitive world of academia? A study by Nichols (1996) explored the ways women and men achieve and compete in an academic environment. The main finding of this study was that there were many individual factors impacting one's competitive nature, with gender only accounting for one domain, and with both men and women possessing and utilizing cooperative and competitive strategies to obtain achievement when necessary. Gender differences were observed, with men and women possessing differing expectations on achievement and the process of achieving in the working world. Results indicated that women's expectations differed such that they interpret competition with other women as more difficult than with men, in comparison to men who viewed both

genders as equally threatening for competition (Nichols, 1996).This finding suggests

women are more comfortable with cooperative interactions with other women. Lastly,

although both men and women reported the goal of achieving a family and careers in the

future, women displayed expectations to have to choose between when, or if, these two

goals could co-exist while men did not report this concern (Nichols, 1996). So what does

this mean for women who are expected to succeed in academia, but are held to an

unrealistic standard of obtaining achievement that is contrary to their innate and socially

constructed understanding of achievement? Comparatively, some women may have a

desire to achieve in a competitive nature based on individual characteristics, but are

expected to uphold this standard consistently regardless of dual academic and familial

roles. Therefore, it is shown throughout the literature that female academics experience a

great deal of pressure to conform to the gendered hierarchal structure of the university

(Bekker, de Jong, Zijlstra & van Landeghem, 2000).

Exploring the experience and various pressures young females face to attain

achievement and success throughout their academic careers provides a deeper

understanding of women's representation within the academy and provides a basis for

understanding the perpetuating barriers affecting those pursuing the academic path.

Barriers. A combination of the values of the academy and personal familial

responsibility is suggested to be a major component in women's withdrawal from

obtaining careers within academia (Currie et al., 2002). Furthermore, a potential reason

for women to be making less progress entering the academy is due to long work hours

expected of full-time employees (Jacobs & Winslow, 2004). Historically, a lack of a clear

boundary in the academy between work and family has meant that work has been at the

forefront, often to the detriment of family (Misra, Lundquist, Hickes & Templer, 2012). This may force women academics to attempt a work-life balance between these two large and contradictory responsibilities. It has been argued that the classic profile of an academic career is an expectation representing the classic profile of the traditional man with his traditional wife (Hochschild, 1994). By positioning men's lives as normative, women's lives become marginalized because caregiving responsibilities are not acknowledged which leads to unrealistic expectations and reduced opportunity (Currie et al., 2002). These differences in values encourage some women to leave academia and continue to create subsequent barriers for women who remain on the academic path. For the proportion of women who do enter or advance within the academic profession, many social and cultural barriers are faced. As a result, academic women seem to have a cumulative disadvantage in this profession (Zuckerman, 2001).

One manifestation of this disadvantage is a wage gap between male and female professors obtaining the same status position. According to the Canadian Association of University Teachers Equity Review (CAUT) pay disparities between male and female professors have narrowed in Canada significantly between 1986, in which the gap was nearly 19 percent, to 2006 (2011). Although this gap has narrowed, research has showed across all ranks female academic staff salaries are 89.2 percent of male academic staff salaries. In addition, pay disparities increase with rank. For instance in 2006, female assistant professors were earning 96.2 per cent of male assistant professors wages compared to full female professors earning 94.8 per cent of male full professors (CAUT, 2011).

Research productivity is another manifestation of cumulative disadvantage

women face in academia, with women faculty members publishing less than their male colleagues (Bentley, 2009). In Canada, overall academic rank is highly associated with research productivity. In a study by Zuckerman (2001) gender rank was considered a low predictor of female faculty publication rates, but a strong predictor in the publication rate of male faculty. A study by Padilla- Gonzalez, Metcalfe, Galaz-Fontes, Fisher and Snee (2011) found that gender gaps concerning research productivity are associated with individuals having a PhD, one's research preference, academic rank and indirect factors such as family-related variables, including marital status and having children. In addition, academic institutions measure performance for faculty members and are found to value publication productivity over teaching ratings and service to the academic community (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996). Research demonstrates that male and female academics participate in these domains to different degrees creating a gendered division of labour (Park, 1996).

It appears the responsibilities and roles in which women thrive within the university, such as teaching, advising, and university and community service, are analogous to stereotypical, undervalued work completed by women including childrearing, housekeeping and volunteer work. It is suggested this rank ordering of faculty responsibilities provides a foundation for institutionalized sexism by established gender roles and gender hierarchies (Park, 1996; Armenti, 2004). Female academics report feeling their contributions in these roles are unappreciated by other faculty, thus, placing them in an uncomfortable position in which receiving equal respect and acknowledgement appears unattainable (Armenti, 2004).

Researchers have suggested that women have been blamed for their

uncomfortable place in the academy and have been advised to focus on research and reduce the time they spend on teaching and service (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996). The gendered division of labour supports the current structure of universities and assumes the work that women do is not valued. These studies demonstrate the pressure placed on female faculty to conform to the patriarchal structure of the university by staying dedicated to certain job responsibilities under particular conditions, such as reducing interference of conflicting responsibilities such as caregiving. Furthermore, the increasingly competitive nature of the Canadian academy has been noted to have a negative impact on intellectual engagement (Menzies & Newson, 2008), which offers little opportunity for achieving work-life balance and is sustaining inequities in regards to women's retention, mobility, promotion and compensation (Padilla-Gonzalez et al., 2011).

In addition, authors have explored the smaller scale mutual factors that discouraged women from advancing in academia such as gender-biased performance evaluations, hidden and non-flexible workloads, lack of adequate mentoring or role modeling, reduced networking opportunities, competitive rather than collaborative styles, inequality in leadership, and devaluation of certain disciplines and types of research (Hartley & Dobele, 2009; De Wet, 2010; Padilla-Gonzalez et al., 2011; Schoening, 2009). In addition, a commonly reported factor is hostility in the workplace towards pregnancies and families (Padilla-Gonzalez et al., 2011). Researchers have suggested these attitudes result in women academics being less likely to marry and have children, or these women tend to delay having children compared to their male colleagues (Drago & Colbeck, 2003; Jacobs, 2004; Jacobs & Winslow, 2004).

A substantial body of research has developed supporting women's withdrawal from attaining academic positions because of motherhood, described as another significant cumulative disadvantage. Research on female academics and motherhood has found that because the timing of fertility often directly conflicts with the pressure of tenure-track, faculty mothers tend to have lower tenure rates (Hochschild, 1994; Jacobs, 2004; Jacobs & Winslow, 2004; Wolfinger et al., 2009). In addition, it was found that these women have higher levels of part-time or non-tenure positions in comparison to childless women and men faculty (Drago & Colbeck, 2003; Ginther & Kahn, 2004; Hochschild, 1994; Jacobs & Winslow, 2004; Wolfinger et al., 2009).

Research by Parrakis and Martinez explores the experiences of women obtaining tenured positions while raising young children (2012). This research is significant because it more deeply explores the personal barriers and experiences of women negotiating between professional and personal roles, specifically the responsibilities of rearing children. The phenomenological study consisted of lengthy interviews in which participants were asked a sequence of demographic and narrative questions. Narrative questions were asked to develop an understanding of how these women identified and balanced their roles as department chair and mother. The women reported conflict between professional and personal roles regardless of the strategy used to balance them because women felt unable to give 100% at home or work. A flexible schedule was the most prevalent way to seek balance, while work-life balance was a constant goal to work toward and balance was described as an illusion and impossible to attain. More specifically, one of the interviewees expressed how identifying work-life balance puts the onus on the individual to better plan and balance one's time. Instead, she discussed her

primary goal of sustainability in which she hoped to feel less divided by her responsibilities and an integration of roles, expectations and support. This notion emphasizes the importance of focusing on what is possible for long term health, happiness and satisfaction of working mothers, which has yet to be explored. In addition, research on motherhood only explores the caregiving responsibilities of female professors with children while excluding women who may be caregiving other populations such as elders or disabled individuals. Therefore, research is needed to explore the broad arena of caregiving as a role expectation for female professors.

These studies support findings assessing the challenging balance between employment and caregiving which negatively affects a woman's stress levels. Further, women in high status positions, such as academia, tend to have a greater expectation placed on them to thrive in all areas of their life including caregiving, homemaking and breadwinning. The majority of past research discussed has quantifiably described the current inequality that still exists between men and women in the workforce, in particular academic positions, and has found support from potential factors contributing to this trend. This provides researchers with a basic understanding of the current barriers these women encounter, but lacks a deep knowledge of these difficulties and how they impact women's lives both collectively and uniquely. There has been recent movement toward exploration of women's experience within academia to fill this gap in the literature.

Theoretical Framework: Feminist and Relational Cultural Theory

The proposed research will employ Feminist and Relational Cultural frameworks to develop an understanding of women's experience negotiating between professional and personal roles, and how to best use this understanding for implications in the work of

mental health professionals. Feminist research tends to be carried out by women who identify as feminists and distinctly draws on women's experience of living in a world in which women are subordinate to men (Armenti, 2004; Stanley & Wise, 1983). The knowledge gained through feminist research is explicitly dedicated to bringing about change and improvement in the situation of women. There is a substantial body of literature on feminism with feminists situating themselves in various positions along a wide spectrum based on movements of feminist ideology over the years. It is important to acknowledge that the feminist perspective of the current research is not limited to satisfaction of equal opportunity and representation of men and women but insists on analysis of the structural and systemic causes of inequality, oppression and discrimination. According to feminist theory, unfair treatment stems from the common acceptance of women's oppression (Stanley & Wise, 1983). The goal of this type of research is to try and understand the experiences of women in a culture within society and academia that is patriarchal, and to develop as researchers from the personal experience of discrepancy between the way things present in society and the way women might prefer them to be, in their personal lives at home or publicly at work (Armenti, 2004). In addition, feminist research is devoted to hearing women speak, in their own words, about their own such experiences. By providing women with the flexibility to explore and discuss aspects unique to their experience, a clearer picture can be developed contributing to understanding how women learn to navigate a system that is established for men (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Furthermore, feminists can encompass the critical process of examining the structural matters which surround and shape women, so that they can begin to form ideas about alternative ways of behaving and engaging.

Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) is based on the principle that throughout the lifespan humans grow through and toward connection (Jordan, 2010). Further, it identifies isolation as a major source of suffering at a personal and cultural level; thus, connections are needed to thrive. RCT challenges other theories that posit independence as necessary for mature development, which is prevalent in the culture through individual encouragement of autonomy, competition and strength in isolation (Jordan, 2010; Miller, 2003). Thus, it challenges the efficacy and degree of equality of the system for which the academy was built and continues to enforce. RCT explores the ways in which disconnections are created and maintained by stratified social organization and marginalization which contributes to the experience of isolation and immobilization of individuals. Racism, homophobia, class prejudice and sexism can all lead to chronic disconnections that create pain and drain energy in individuals and society (Jordan & Walker, 2004). Understanding dominance and subordination in groups and individuals, including women, is a goal of maintaining social justice in RCT (Jordan, 2010). Existing societal power arrangements are seen to contribute to society's conception of women, leading to psychological issues in women. Specifically, for a woman to express herself fully, she must feel sufficiently safe to be vulnerable, which is directly related to how much mutuality exists in a relationship. The dominant male culture existing within society and academia distorts images of self, others and relational possibilities in ways that impede mutuality and prevent women from making necessary connections for growth, satisfaction and happiness (Walker & Miller, 2000). Feminist and Relational Cultural frameworks will inform the current research and the interview questions asked to identify a distinction in structural, contextual and personal factors contributing to a

female professor's experience at work and at home. The eventual goal is to move beyond conversations about theory by moving into action and practice (Armenti, 2004). Using the knowledge obtained will help bring a new generation of women leaders forward within academia by expressing the clear message that their needs matter and they should be addressed.

Research Question

The purpose of the current study is to gain an understanding of the experience of female professors, both personally and professionally including definitions and personal experiences with work-life balance, achievement and success, stress, mental health and life-satisfaction within academia. By asking these questions directly to women in the field, we can gain a greater understanding of the ways academic institutions support women in their mental health and functionality as educators. From an extensive search of the research literature, no other studies were found that included self-report of female academics' thoughts, feelings, and attitudes about why they assess certain external factors as stressful; how they cope with stressors and attempt to reduce their negative impacts; and their views of effective mentorship in academia. The current study was designed to fill this gap in the research literature.

Method

A phenomenological approach to research was used to explore and understand how women negotiate personal and professional roles as university professors. The qualitative method is narrative and will tell the stories and recount the lived experiences of women in their roles from their perspective.

Narrative. Accessing an individual's description of the world narratively is central to researchers and clinicians as a means for gaining insight into human experience (Stuhlmiller & Thorsen, 1997). Narrative inquiry in qualitative research focuses specifically on the stories told by individuals and can be both a method and the phenomenon of the study. As a method it begins with the experiences and events of individuals as expressed in lived and told stories, used as a basic medium for understanding and creating meaning of experience (Brody, 1987). This qualitative design is understood as a spoken text giving an account of a series of events chronologically connected (Czarniawska, 2004). By gathering data through the collection of women's stories, reporting individual experiences and chronologically ordering the meaning of those experiences, an understanding of how women negotiate between their personal and professional roles was established (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). Narrative studies are useful when exploring a specific contextual focus and when guided by a theoretical lens. Thus, it advocates through a "feminist lens used to report the stories of women, a lens that shows how women's voices are muted, multiple and contradictory" (Creswell, 2007, p.55).

Participants. Participants for this study consisted of 10 female faculty members currently employed as university professors. The number of participants was selected

based on evidence-based recommendations to reach saturation (Creswell, 1998; Boyd's, 2001). Purposeful sampling was used to select participants meeting the described criteria. Participants were recruited through email. A time and place to conduct the interview was arranged in advance and based on accommodating the participant's needs.

Procedure. Participants were first shown two images; one of a woman wearing professional clothing while working at her desk holding a baby and one of a woman with an elder woman leaning toward her (to signify dual roles). Research on narrative inquiry has found linking images to narrative expression can provide ample information to researchers (Stuhlmiller & Thorsen, 1997) and can ease a participant into the process of revealing intimate details about one's experiences (Hagedorn, 1994). The woman was shown the images and asked for her interpretation of the woman's story in either one or both of the images. Participants were then asked a series of demographic and narrative questions. Demographic questions included age, marital status, sexual orientation, total family income, number of children and their ages, terminal degree, and field of study (Appendix B). This information helped the researcher to conceptualize the context impacting each of these women's responses and provided information for how the interview data would be assessed. Thus, the purpose of the narrative questions was to learn how these women perceived and balanced their roles. It was then systematically organized to discuss a variety of topic areas, including personal and professional roles, one's personal measures of success, experience of stress, work-life balance, support and future aspirations (Appendix C), in order to provide a greater depth of knowledge to the existing body of research in this area. These questions were used as a foundation for each woman to explore her story. The narrative, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were

approximately one hour in length and were audio recorded using a recording device. The in-depth interview was meant to be a personal and intimate encounter in which direct, open, verbal questions were used to elicit detailed narratives or stories. The traditional structure dictates the interviewer remain in control over the interaction (Briggs, 1986). In contrast, a feminist interview process attempts to remove this power dynamic seen as oppressive and instead encourages reflexivity on the part of the researcher (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtee, 2006). Therefore, throughout the process, one's own social role and the interviewee are acknowledged to integrate reciprocity while attaining knowledge.

Data Analysis

The process of data analysis involved making sense out of the text interview content. Therefore, analysis was a continuing process of ongoing reflection about the data, asking critical questions and writing notes throughout the study. The data was open-ended such that an analysis was developed from the information supplied through asking general questions. Therefore, the process was not strictly divided, but an overlap existed between collecting data, developing research questions and analysis. Using a narrative approach research employs "restorying the participant's stories using structural devices such as plot, setting, activities, climax and denouement" (Creswell, 2003, p.19).From a phenomenological approach, analysis also included identifying significant statements, the generation meaning of units and the development of an "essence" description (Creswell, 2007). Regardless of the analytic designs used there was a general process of research design steps to be followed (Creswell, 2003).

First the data was organized and prepared for analysis which involved transcribing the interviews, optically scanning the material and typing up field notes.

Then, all of the transcripts were read through to establish a general sense of the

information to reflect on its meaning. This involved writing notes in the margins and

recording general thoughts about the data. Next a detailed analysis began with coding, in

which the material was organized into chunks as either sentence or paragraph statements.

These chunks were labelled with relevant terms based on language used by the

participants. In the fourth step, the coding process generated detailed information about

the women and their life events, referred to as descriptions, to form categories or themes

for analysis. These themes were used to represent the major findings of the qualitative

study and displayed the multiple perspectives of women supported by diverse quotations

and specific evidence. At this point, exploration was shaped into a general description of

this phenomenon and themes were interconnected into a developing storyline. Step five

consisted of advancing how the themes were represented in the qualitative narrative. For

this study a narrative-passage was used to convey the findings of the analysis which

contained a detailed discussion of several themes. The final step of data analysis was to

make meaning or an interpretation of the data. Depending on the findings, the

interpretation had a different focus, by either finding new meaning unique to past

findings, confirming past findings or by raising new questions for future inquiry.

Trustworthiness

Evidence-based procedures proposed by Shenton (2004) were used to ensure

trustworthy research is conducted. Firstly, an extensive literature review was conducted

and the adopted research methods were well established in past qualitative investigations.

The data gathering sessions, including the questions asked and methods of data analysis

were derived from previously comparable projects and provisions were used to ensure

honesty in participants and accuracy of data obtained, such as iterative questioning, negative case analysis, frequent debriefing, member checks and peer scrutiny of the research project (Shenton, 2004).

In addition to outside scrutiny, I partook in a "reflective commentary" to document personal experiences and interpretations to track any biases that may have impacted data collection and analysis. This is essential because of personally developed biases and expectations, such as believing that female professors who are negotiating personal and professional roles will experience increased stress and have difficulty attaining balance, based on findings from the literature review. Documentation was completed in the form of a journal after each interview. Additional bias brought to this research project is that I am a young female academic currently completing a Masters degree. Completing an undergraduate degree from Brescia University College, the only all-female University in Canada, my experiences and values inform the Feminist and Relational-Cultural frameworks used to understand the researched phenomenon. Therefore, awareness of my own perspective as a female student in academia is important to note. Lastly, triangulation was addressed by investigating existing documentation including existing policy and procedures for female professors in the workplace.

The experience of interviewing female professors was varied. Some women interviewed expressed that this was an opportunity to share a hidden story and perspective. It was informative and provided a deeper understanding of the multitude of differing lifestyles existing within the academic realm. The women interviewed welcomed questions openly and expressed gratitude for being involved in a project to discuss aspects of their lives and careers. Each woman presented their own unique

experiences with an undertone of what they hoped to emphasize from their personal experiences to the researcher and academic community. There were mixed feelings presented throughout the interviews including, warning the researcher about the struggles of the academic pathway, and encouraging messages of achievement, raising awareness of unexpected barriers and negotiation, a passion to share realism, shock and disappointment, and a plea or hope for change. These undertones differed in relation to the women's personal experiences and history within academia. A commonality among each experience, regardless of these factors, was that all women feel privileged and valued their position within the academy.

Results

The ten women in the study reported their personal experiences on their academic

trajectory and working within academia, providing further understanding of these

educators, how they are being affected by their work experience and insight into literature

depicting lower job satisfaction in female professors compared to their male counterparts.

Women in professoriate positions describe the impact of success, stress and mental health

issues, balance and support as a resource for the next generation of women. The women's

shared perspectives provide valuable feedback for enhancing the experience of women

currently pursuing an academic path, and growth and advancement of future female

academics and leaders.

The findings outlined below were organized into major themes as follows:

identity, measures of success, stress and mental health and supportive relationships. To

protect participants' identities given the sensitive nature of the topic, a general

description of the women's demographic information is provided.

Demographic Information

Participants in the study consisted of ten women who were current professors at a

large research-intensive university or smaller affiliate university in Ontario, Canada.

Seven of the women were employed at the research-intensive university and three at an

affiliate university. Five of the women were Full Professors, four were Associate

Professors and one was an Assistant Professor. Most women had at one point filled an

additional leadership position within academia; three of the participants were currently

acting in these positions. Efforts were made to draw a sample from various disciplines

and consisted of women in Arts and Humanities, Business, Social Science and Education Faculties. Years employed as a professor ranged from under a year to 26 years.

Participant's ages ranged from 39-62 years old with an average of 50.1 years. Eight participants identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual, one as homosexual and one as queer. Seven were married, one was single, one was divorced and one was widowed. Of the married women, five identified their spouse as also being an academic or faculty member.

Nine participants had at one point taken on a caregiving role. Seven women were mothers and had between one and three children. Three of these women had children eight years old and under; one described herself as a single-mother, and four of these women had adult children. Five women had cared for an ill or elder relative including a parent, parent-in-law, spouse or child.

THEME 1: Identity – "Who am I"

Each of the 10 women interviewed identified uniquely with their role as an academic and/or caregiver. The degree to which each woman identified with these roles was a representation of her sense of self, which provided context for the women's expectations and satisfaction in fulfilling these roles separately and through integration. Thus, the three subthemes for Theme 1 are academic, caregiver, and integrated sense of self.

Academic. All women expressed that being an academic was a significant component of their identity. Women referred to their role as an academic as encompassing a variety of interconnected responsibilities including professor, researcher, teacher, leader and mentor. Each woman identified with these responsibilities differently. Evidence

suggested that time devoted to a particular responsibility was not indicative of participant's identification with that responsibility, but rather with the institutional expectation. Some participants reported that they identified most with their role as researcher and others as a teacher or mentor.

Several women spoke about the formation of their academic identity beginning in graduate school, with increasing dedication of their time and contributions to the academic institution. Women reported loving the work of an academic but feeling pressured to fit into an *academic mold*. One woman talked about her *academic identity shift* and the pressure she experienced to fit this mold in becoming a graduate student and professor:

> Also there is a huge identity shift… It's more than identity. It's your whole being that shifts when you're a grad student, especially since I had a really successful career. I know I was a good teacher …So, to then all of a sudden be writing a paper… It's harder than I thought it would be… It really is. I just have to say that. I think probably because you as a person start to change too…And part of that happens in becoming a professor, and maybe you can't feel the identity shift when it's happening to you, but it's later when you look back and you think, "wow, that was a huge moment of change for me."

Women reported that although they were greatly enmeshed with the university as a significant part of their being, they recognized selflessness in their contributions to a growing academic institution in which their efforts might go unrecognized and unacknowledged long-term. Almost every woman expressed intentions of staying somewhat connected to the academy even after they retired. More experienced professors expressed that being an academic had been such a large contributor to their self-concept that disconnecting would lead to feelings of lack of direction or a loss of part of themselves.

Some people who retire still continue to take on new students, so it's interesting to see how people kind of extract themselves from it without totally losing that piece of their identity.

On the contrary, a few women expressed a sense of freedom associated with exiting their

academic role:

But I got to say when we were having our budget discussion and talking about faculty retirements in the course of the next few years and long-term planning and we talked about what happens now that people can retire at 55 and I thought, "oh, I could actually retire at 55?" That is something that had never occurred to me, so when I have bad days I think, "so maybe I'll just quit and be an artist or something"

Others expressed both a desire to stay connected and to utilize their new found freedom

to distance themselves from the academy on their own terms:

Well, I'll never give up my research. I was doing it since I was a small child, I just didn't use that term because it's just a parcel of my life so… when I do retire, I will go for the Emeritus status and we are moving into new building. We do have one shared office. So I will always keep that up. They know you are academic coming back…It's a very nice place to be in my career because I have never been freer and I've probably never been better at what I'm doing in terms of the teaching and the research, but I'm free and because I don't have any of those obligations or ambitions or…. restrictions.

In comparison, faculty at the beginning or the middle of their career expressed a

less clear direction; rather, uncertainty and worry about the security of their positions and

where their academic future would lead was reported. These women expressed a greater

focus on the present:

I actually have no clue. I really don't and it's not because I'm completely content now and I can't imagine myself doing anything else. I suppose it's just figuring out what I'm doing now and do it well and feeling good about it…that's kind of my future.

Caregiver. The majority of participants identified taking on caregiving responsibilities at

some point in their lifetime. The primary caregiving responsibilities participants reported

were motherhood and/or eldercare. Caregiving was perceived by some women as a

choice while others viewed caregiving as an inevitable responsibility due to gendered

expectations. Several women expressed that although they have supportive husbands and male siblings, the majority of the burden to care for aging or ill family member's fell on the females of the family, regardless of their work responsibilities:

It's extremely common and interestingly it's usually women that are dealing with the issues. One of the people that is in our group (eldercare support) is a guy and he is a gay man so that's interesting. Another thing is the last time I was with my mom at the hospital for her check-up she said "hmmm this is interesting. It looks like mother and daughter day in here" and I'm like "yah it is!" Because guess what?! The daughters are the people who take their family members to medical appointments and there's the flexibility or a presumed flexibility for women to be able to attend to that even though they may have the same jobs as men. So it's kind of interesting.

Some of the participants reported being in the *sandwich generation,* caregiving for their children and their elders simultaneously. One woman was caring for her children, her aging parents and her husband's aging parents while maintaining her full-time position at the university. Another woman had a similar experience but cared for her ill husband while her child was still young. Participants who have yet to have this experience were fearful of it. In response to the caregiving images, one woman expressed the realistic fear of caring for her aging mother while her children were still young:

I'm still here (pointing at mother image), but I see this coming very quickly (pointing at eldercare image). Because I have a mother who is already 81 and I am 41, she had me when she was older and she lives like seven hours away, so how that is exactly going to go down is unclear to me. She really wants to stay at her house and all that but at the same time because I have this picture happening and it's not this extreme for me anymore, because my kids are getting a little bit older and you figure out how to carve the time out. So, this is mostly what's happening and I kind of try to ignore this part as much as I can because my mom is very independent and that's great, but ages are ages...so I kind of have to suppress a little bit of this or else … it's too overwhelming…It just sounds extremely hard and very, very stressful so… That scares me still.

Integrated Sense of Self. Participants were asked for their definitions of work-life balance and how they would recognize satisfaction in negotiating their roles. Participants could not talk about work-life balance without expressing their personal expectations of

integrating their academic and caregiving roles. One woman talked about how she

conceptualizes these roles as one:

> I don't think of it for myself as a push and pull between the two worlds because to me it's the same world. It's my world and in this I see that it is a multifaceted world I guess. But I do identify with this particular picture (pointing at eldercare image) because my mother is aging and people talk about people of my age and older generation and the other generation ahead of me, for example, being kind of sandwiched in the middle dealing with the pressures of children and elderly parents at the same time and having to give care to both of these groups of people… And in some senses neither this elderly woman nor this child in my life know what I do as a job

All participants spoke about their ongoing struggle to balance personal and

professional roles. Most women found their roles were constantly conflicting with one

another. Participants talked about the different ways they negotiate these roles. Some

women reported actively separating their roles; for instance, one woman observed that

negotiating between mother and academic is possible if proper structure and planning is

put in place both at home and at work so overlap is avoided.

> I try not to let them bleed into each other, okay?. I just try to be present and whatever time of day it is. So during the day it's work time and then at home it's on time. But then it's not… the difference more often than not if one is going to bleed into the other, it's the work that's going to bleed into home, right? But I also tried to make sure that if that happens, my kids go to bed by eight so the latest time the lights are out by 8:30. So there is time for me to do things after that. So I tried to make it so that it's not openly interfering with them… That's keeping stress levels as low as possible in both places.

In contrast, another woman reported an active integration of her role as mother and

academic in an attempt to simultaneously fulfill these roles by taking work home and her

children to work:

> I'm pretty much an integrator. Although once I kind of got told that I couldn't bring my kids to work, the integration happened much more in the work is infiltrating the home rather than home is infiltrating the work side. And once I starting being in a faculty position and having to take on… more regular work place hours… it was more that work was encroaching on home than home was encroaching on work. And

certainly when you are in an administrative role, there is much more of an expectation that you will be there 8:30-4:30.

Regardless of a woman's attitude toward negotiating these roles, adjusting personal expectations appeared to be a common thread in each woman's story. For instance, all participants with children expressed that at one point they believed being a full-time mother and academic was a realistic expectation. Participants reported shifting this expectation to avoid feelings of failure. For instance, one woman concluded that being a full-time caregiver and full-time academic was an unmanageable task. Therefore, instead of balancing she values gaining support from outside resources as a reasonable solution:

> I just think…how can you make your life manageable given the choices you have made? Manageable in terms of making time for self-care, your children and if you have them, or if you don't have children I think that you should be, or I would hope that you would do something other than work…So given the choices you've made about the things that you want to include in your life, whether that be children, or other things in your life, community work, how are you going to manage that? And a balance to me says, I'm always going to make sure I'm only working so many hours. Manageable means I have support that allows me to do the things that I need to do or else my life becomes mad. And I see that when I see people who do things like, I'm not going to have a nanny, I'm just going to work around the baby and that's crazy! That is unmanageable. So I feel like you know you've got to know what is kind of doable and what's really…going to make you insane

Each woman adjusted her sense of self to integrate her personal and professional identity in a way that was meaningful, which in turn shifted her conceptualization of what it means to be both mother and academic. All women negotiating caregiving and academic responsibilities identified compromise in decision-making to be an unavoidable experience. One woman reported that as a graduate student her freedoms of decision-making were solely her own and were in the best interest of her academic career. This shifted when she found a partner and began to have children:

The barriers are (in) the way… You get jobs in academia and just the nature of the life because you don't get to choose. You have to go where the job is and once there, someone else involved, all of a sudden … You just don't have the freedom that you need to be able to make optimal choices for yourself and that's true for him, too…So that needing to compromise when like with your partner and finding jobs and where you can find jobs. It's really just not conducive to anybody who had any kind of personal life going on. It's really set up for people who can move anywhere at any time

Several women shared similar frustration that the structure of the university is not conducive to female academics with families. This was demonstrated in two women's stories of eldercare and childcare responsibilities:

He died fairly rapidly thereafter and that meant that once my mother was alone, she had to have a whole lot more time. And I said, "it's funny. It's two years later and I still haven't managed to balance that in." I'm up there probably about every five weeks and she's coming down next week and I'm going to miss a couple of things that I would normally not even think of missing. But I don't really have a choice.

So my sabbatical, which was last year, was primarily looking after my partner's elderly parents and my mother who had two knee replacement surgeries. So I did not get very much done on my sabbatical and both my partner and I were doing this together. But it was there trying to deal with a broken hip, two replacement surgeries, increasing dementia, two cases of heart failure, moving people from a long term family home into London into another house. It was huge.

One woman was unable to complete her PhD after having twins and left the university to care for her children for six years before returning. She expressed the challenging identity shift from being an academic to a stay-at-home mom:

It was really interesting because something I remember a lot from when my kids were little was we lived in student housing because I did my PhD here. (It) was…full of students and student partners and there was one woman who her kids and my kids were playing together and she was saying "Oh well, my husband is doing his PhD in this discipline", which was my discipline, and I had never heard of him! And that was sort of a defining moment because before that moment I was a PhD student on leave and I was planning to go back and then to sort of realize there are all these things happening on campus that I am not aware of. I am actually a stay-a-home mom now and that was…sort of an identity shifting kind of moment.

Regardless of the participants' varied experiences, integrating the role of academic and caregiver was reported as a conflict and struggle that required adaptation in order for integration to exist. All participants were adamant in stating that the structure of the university is ideally suitable for single individuals without other attachments or responsibilities. One woman summarized the opinions of several participants, reflecting on female professors shying away from leadership positions and deeming them as unsuitable for women with families. She expressed the need for societal and personal perspectives on caregiving to change for female academics to thrive:

> I don't believe any females applied internally for Dean the last time it came up. So there is no one here even though there is lots of interest and it's for full-time tenure women. Not one of them was interested and I don't doubt that part of it is because it doesn't help home life balance at all…

> There are so many different paths that women take compared to men and… graduate school is not conducive to having children. Yet women in their prime years are in there 20's and that has to change. The power structure has to become more sympathetic, more understanding of children. The world does in general. We need children to be born…children are going to help us survive in our old age, by paying taxes that pay our pensions. We live in a profoundly child unfriendly society. It's basically like 'you want to have children, fine, but don't expect us to help you'... Don't expect the work place to make it any easier. Children benefit everyone in society yet we tend to pretend that children benefit the parents and we have to get rid of that mindset. We will benefit from having young women going to graduate school and being able to have children and being able to have the full lives that they should expect to have. No one should decide, 'I can be a professor or I can have children, but I can't do both'. And people do both, but it's really hard! I did both by having the babies early. Would I have been able to survive in grad school with little babies? I doubt it. I really doubt it. Some people have, but they've really struggled and it's been really hard and they've had to fight in many cases and that's wrong.

Findings demonstrated that women in both the larger research-intensive university and the smaller affiliate universities considered an integration of their academic and personal life as contributing to the formation of their self–concept. Women at the affiliate universities reported identifying less with certain external measures of success within the

university, such as publications and were more willing to sacrifice academic

advancement or "stardom" compared to those employed at the research-intensive

institution. Regardless of participants' initial reasoning for working at a smaller

university, women employed in these institutions expressed gratefulness to have less

strenuous research expectations because it provided time allocation to attend to their

family life.

> No one would ever consider someone from here to be an expert in the field, even if you were potentially one. But there is a trade-off and that's why you don't find more female academics at the top of the heap, especially ones with children because that is going to interfere with your…life/family balance, so one of the advantages of being at this particular university is that. So I mean in the end, I've chosen for myself a position where I am quite happy with the balance. But I think many women have perhaps sacrificed success in order to have the balance by choosing places that aren't going to have the same rigorous expectations.

THEME 2: Measures of Success

All participants used both external (subtheme) and personal measures (subtheme)

to define success within academia and their personal lives, and the degree to which each

of these areas was emphasised was specific to each woman. It appears that participants

who felt more pressure from their Faculty to meet institutional indicators of success, such

as performance evaluations and publications, weighed this measurement as more

significant than personal measures. In contrast, women from affiliate colleges

experiencing less institutional pressure to produce more institutional indicators, such as

research, reported measuring their success by personal measures, such as teaching a

successful and effective class. A third subtheme was interpreting success as a process

rather than an end goal.

External measures. External measures that women deemed as significant in their

academic success were performance evaluations, publications, attracting doctoral

students and winning teaching awards and research grants. Some women reported that reaching a milestone within their academic trajectory was a success such as graduation or tenure:

> Success was getting the tenure track job and, and making tenure and actually having, forging an academic career when, you know in a lot of ways, I have a very unusual trajectory…and success is partly getting, having both my partner and I have jobs at the same institution.

Another significant external measure of success for participants was adequately fulfilling each responsibility associated with their academic identity, i.e., as a teacher, researcher, leader and mentor. Some women demonstrated that failing in one of these domains (e.g., bad performance evaluation) negatively impacted their feelings of worth and success as an academic overall. One woman reported that fulfilling her obligations at work daily was a reminder that she was successfully completing her academic role in each domain:

> But for myself, I have success in terms of, have I met my obligations at work? Am I fulfilling my contractual obligations to the university, am I getting good teaching reports, am I bringing my research into the classroom in an active way? And now I'm thinking more about am I able to make connections with people outside of the university to learn about what we are doing in the university?

Personal measures. Several women expressed that success within the workplace is a feeling and a purpose. Although all women agreed that external measures of success were rewarding to some degree, more important to most women was a passion to make a difference in the lives of their students through teaching, to demonstrate important and meaningful messages through their research, to contribute to change through service work and to play a unique role in supporting students through their own graduate careers. One woman reported deriving personal meaning through her research:

Having realized, okay nobody else recognizes me as an academic. …the two roles have been very much intertwined. So in fact that's where a lot of my research has been in understanding how people navigate their home life and their work life and how they navigate that and the work of doing home life and where the conflicts are. So, I guess what's good about it is that I have been able to bring that experience into my research. It's been really rewarding and I think in some ways my research is trying to understand my everyday life.

Some other women linked their success to inspiring their students and being an effective mentor:

My definitions of success has a lot more to do with teaching and inspiring students and you know when students come up and say, "oh you know, I really liked that class, oh, I decided to go into psych because I took your intro psych," because they found it really interesting. That is success for me, inspiring women with my love of my discipline. That's the part of the job that I see as success.

One woman identified the most rewarding aspect of her work as being her role as a support and a mentor for young female academics on experiences of work-life balance and the barriers academic women encounter. She linked this feeling of success to coping with these stressors personally in her own academic path:

So part of the coping is... simply being an advocate for that and helping people to join me in those practices of work-life balance. That's one of the reasons people talk about being an academic is that freedom… it's something I'm now really enjoying. I can now say no to people when I get asked to join a research project.

Process versus an end goal. Success was interpreted by most participants as either a constant process or as marked by an achievement in their academic career trajectory. Several women quantified their success through specific milestones such as securing tenure:

When you get tenure it's like a burden lifts. I didn't realize what a big a difference it would be. It's not that I wanted to stop doing research. I'm not that kind of person… I love to write! It's just that pressure. You know that worrisome anxiety is gone. And once I began full professor, people started talking to me that wouldn't talk to me before and you don't realize you are being excluded until you are being included.

Other women said that regardless of reaching milestones they feel continual pressure to maintain or compound their successes, e.g., continue to write new books or publish. One woman reported that success is a constant task she tries to work toward but through experience believes it is not attainable:

> I often never feel that I am successful because, and usually I'm a fairly positive person, but I'm the kind of person who tends to see what I could be doing better. So, there will be time where…and I think one of the problems is that you tend to pick different comparative people, or I tend to pick different comparative people, and there is always somebody doing better than me at something.

Most participants resonated with the concept that success is a constant process. At the beginning of their careers, participants had expectations that feelings of success would result from reaching academic milestones, but instead small successes have provided a glimpse of one day feeling permanently successful:

> I don't think that success is something that is ever really a steady state. You sort of go... "I'm there!" At least I don't think so. I've had moments where I've thought "wow, that's great!" I won a big teaching award two years ago and that was really great and one of my articles won a little prize and those are like moments of success. In fact I think that… success in some ways is surviving.

THEME 3: Stress and Mental health

All participants spoke about the ongoing stressors they have encountered throughout their academic journey and the impacts this stress has had on their physical and mental health. This theme is a reflection of what the women deemed as most stressful in balancing between personal and professional roles and their experience of that stress. For the purpose of organizing and making meaning of participants' responses, this section has been divided into four subthemes: external causes of stress, internal causes of stress, impacts of stress and coping strategies.

External causes of stress. All participants reported significant stressors being present outside of themselves and their control, either within the academic institution or in their personal lives. External stressors within academia were performance pressure, performance evaluations, heavy workload, time restrictions, interpersonal conflict and the financial burden of education. Participants who fulfilled additional leadership roles in the past or present reported that the dual responsibility of faculty and administrator was extremely stressful. Some women found it challenging to allocate their time between the two positions, not to mention at home. In addition, some women reported a challenging role adjustment with colleagues and feeling like they were not taken seriously or well-respected when taking on a leadership position.

Time periods that participants reported as being most stressful were during transitional periods such as finishing a degree, achieving tenure, searching for employment, having a child, getting married, moving locations, dealing with aging parents and illness within the family. One woman found it difficult to label specific periods of stress because she viewed an academic life as a continual process of stressors:

> At moments of transition and that's the problem is that it's all transition. There is so much transition….

Further, some women demonstrated experiencing multiple stressors and transitions simultaneously. For instance, one woman reported the cumulative stressors of a large course load, completing her degree and an ill parent all at one time:

> I think one of the challenges for me was because I started out doing a lot of limited duties teaching. By the time I was hired in 2007, I had prepared 12 new courses in between 2004 and 2007… that is a lot of work! I was still finishing my PhD…and my dad was dying.

Several women made similar statements demonstrating that circumstances beyond their control were considered immensely stressful because they felt helpless to find solutions or manage:

> I'm not sure what life without stress looks like. And I'm not sure, but maybe I don't really respond to stress. I don't find stress incapacitating…I know that I can feel stress but it's something that I sort of deal with. It's not something I'm going to say "Oh I'm so stressed" because that's not how I approach things, understand things or conceptualize things. So…I talk about pressure and a degree of anxiety and I think institutions like this run off of people's anxiety…It's how they get people to produce and to do stuff and we are always worried that we aren't meeting the requirements…So in that sense, I think most of the stress actually is related to dealing with intractable situations.

A major stressor across all participants' experiences was developing an ability to balance time and energy between their personal and professional roles. This finding was not specific to women with children, but rather negotiation of time with any meaningful activity, such as time with their spouses, other family members and even personal time with themselves to engage in non-academic activities. Several participants who had young children while in graduate school reported that time period as their most stressful:

> In graduate school, I was very stressed out! Because I realized (1) that it was extremely competitive and (2) I had children and other people didn't, and I really thought that was going to make it impossible for me to succeed because there was nothing that was going to accommodate me at all and my children were still young enough that I couldn't just write them off.

Internal causes of stress. Less frequent in the participant's responses, but arguably more significant, was their experience of internal stressors. Internal stress comes from within and determines our body's ability to cope with the external stressors. This type of stress refers to the participant's thoughts, feelings and attitudes. Several participants spoke about the internalized pressure and personal expectations to be an *academic star*. Women reported the competitive nature of the academy as being physically and emotionally

taxing. One woman discussed the internalization of institutional expectations and the stress she experienced as a result of personal pressure, self-esteem and reduced belief in her capabilities as a professional:

> You have to be an academic star and that achieving stardom is not a one-time thing . . . If you get a research grant this year, then maybe you are an academic star this year, but you've got to do more next year to maintain it. So, the status of stardom is a myth. Someone else is always the star and you are always comparing yourself to someone else …you can never achieve it… you've got to keep striving toward it…faculty internalized that rhetoric and whether they decide they are going to try to achieve stardom or push against it like "no, my kids are more important for me than being the academic star". They still speak in terms of that academic rhetoric, that it is a demand that they have to meet. I am totally subject to that. Recognising that… I work hard at my teaching and at my research and trying to get publication and though demoralizing if you don't get the research grant that you've worked really hard

Some participants report uncertainty and doubt in their capabilities as a caregiver and academic. Even after many years of hard work and dedication, women report questioning their worthiness and potential as an academic:

> The imposter syndrome doesn't go away. The sense that, "did they really mean to promote me?" "Did they really mean to give me tenure?"

The majority of participants spoke about gendered stereotypes and the gendered nature of the academy. Not all women directly reported their gender as a barrier toward their success within the academy, but the language some participants used was reflective of internalized oppression or personal blame for not fitting into the institutional structure. For example, one woman spoke repeatedly of being a "trouble maker" and another spoke of her "personality flaws" as a barrier in her academic role:

> My personality defect…I think if I would have been more polished I might have had more opportunity there.

A few other participants expressed their personal disadvantage because they experienced a *complicated* or *non-linear* academic trajectory. In fact, a non-linear career

path was most common among female academics interviewed, in particular those with children. Only some participants attributed this pathway to their gender.

Impacts of Stress. Participants reported struggling with physiological and psychological impacts of stress throughout their academic journey. Many women expressed that these impacts exist simultaneously. Psychological impacts of stress were feelings of anger, depression and anxiety.

> I would find that the end of my teaching cycle for the year or when I was pre-tenure I would have to spend like the month afterwards just curled up. I could remember spending after my fall term of teaching spending the Christmas holiday just kind of under the blanket by the fire and not having any energy to do anything and I can remember feeling completely incompetent and just sort of burnt out.

> I was just a nut bag… was very angry, just all the signs of stress; angry, reactive, not able to listen… finding it very hard to cope on a day to day basis…I think that's when a lot of things can go really seriously wrong and people can end up wrecking their marriages and getting into addiction problems. It's just a really terrible time…I don't know if there is some way to do a intervention year 4 to year 7 to help keep them sane through that process…because you are also being judged by your peers and your work is sent out. There is just a lot going on and I knew by the time I went for tenure that it was going to be okay because my position was secured and I didn't have any reason to be fearful of the university, but it was just that time leading up to it was so awful.

A few women expressed that an impact of mental health issues related to stress was a strain on their interpersonal relationships.

> I think I'm a person that often when I'm really stressed, well I've had people say that they don't know that I'm stressed. My close friends and my partner certainly know that I'm stressed. I snap at people, I have very little tolerance for things… I end up doing things that cause more trouble later on like a snap of someone or say something nasty that ends up coming back later on… But I sometimes I can hide it, but I definitely internalize it and I know that that's not good.

Participants reported a low immune system during highly stressful time periods which impacted their frequency of minor illnesses such as colds. Other physiological impacts participants reported as stress-related were exhaustion, eczema, migraines, back pain, hip pain, stomach aches and diabetes:

I started getting the bad headaches when I was 16 but it would only happen once in a blue moon. A couple times a year. It was only once I started having the stress from a job that it started coming every day or several times a week... Well the worst times were when I would have a headache and it would last for 4-5 days and then you have to go teach during the headache. It was really hard…I can tell that it's all about my health. If I'm not getting headaches, having sleeplessness, I'm not getting sick, that's sort of the indicator because stress-related illness has dogged me all my life. That's been the fight.

Coping Strategies. All women spoke about the various ways they coped with stress throughout their academic trajectory. Whether women used maladaptive or adaptive coping strategies, all women made attempts to manage the impacts of stress on their wellbeing. Ineffective coping strategies reported were isolation and alcohol consumption:

I was drinking a lot that was one, I suppose… contributed to the depression because I know alcohol contributes to depression. That was kind of from grad school. You kind of drink a lot. It is just what you do to relax, so I was still drinking a lot then… and probably exacerbating my own depression.

Adaptive coping strategies reported were indulging in academic passions, alone time, travel, and valued time with family, and exercise:

Exercise. So every time I come back from maternity leave or near the end of my return the month after, this is a major luxury, but I've gotten a personal trainer. That goes a long way. It helps the sleep…the endorphins that helps everything be better and so I think that's crucial.

All women admitted that being committed and consistently making time for self-care is a challenge, but a necessity. Some women expressed frustration at the lack of time to care for even their basic needs.

I would like to be able to exercise. And…I find that really frustrating that I've not been able to. And I know some of my colleagues are able to kind of prioritize that and I see that that is really important. But I have yet to be able to do that just but wanting to…And just having some sort of quiet time, so some sort of self-care. In terms of you know making food and…relaxing and looking after myself. Going to the doctor! (laughs) You know, when does that happen?

In addition women discussed the barriers that make it challenging to engage in such care:

I think… A lot of us, particularly doing childcare or eldercare, tend to neglect self-care and it's an easy thing to put lower on the list of priorities. I've got these work priorities… I've got the things that have to be done. This kid has to do this and then the self-care gets put to the bottom.

Findings demonstrated that managing time and identifying the appropriate coping for each woman is a challenge and a process. Setting a routine, creating a structure and prioritizing were elements considered important to ensure self-care. One woman discussed her schedule that took several years to establish and maintain:

I have a system. I walk my dogs 2 times a day, before dinner and before bed. So we end up going about 3 ½ kilometres a day. I go swimming 3 times a week. I only swim ½ km and I'm the slowest one in the pool, but I have really built up my endurance over the last 3 years. I am really much better than when I started...I do my physiotherapy exercise every evening. I do my yoga every morning.

Another woman reported that adaptability is also a significant factor in maintaining effective coping strategies overtime:

It feels like I'm still learning new ways of making it work and what worked for me last year isn't working for me this year and I need to figure out a new way to do it. So it's never dull. I'm always learning something new.

Despite the use of healthy coping strategies, the discussion around coping brought awareness to an area many women admitted they were not attending well. Several women discussed strategies that were helpful in the past and their hope to find time to reintegrate them into their schedules. Following the interview, one woman wrote an email which expressed that the discussion itself had motivated her to attend to this care:

I've been pondering our discussion on Friday and I've decided that I must have sounded like a demented workaholic. Most years, I schedule myself a holiday during which I ponder my life and make decisions about whether to keep on with certain projects and commitments, or whether to extricate myself gracefully. The last time I did that was on the freighter around the world four years ago, and it's clear to me that I need to take some time for that again… I want to thank you for making me think about that.

Several women spoke to the importance of adjusting their expectations for themselves in order to reduce the pressure of internal stressors, e.g., self-doubt, disappointment, failure. Almost every participant, both new and experienced faculty, discussed the paradigm of setting boundaries such as only working a 50-hour week, and learning when and how to say no to certain tasks to prevent overworking themselves. A new faculty member expressed her fear and anxiety around saying *no* to unreasonable tasks or projects. Experienced faculty identified that saying no to unreasonable requests is a necessity for "sanity". According to participants, power to say *no* does come with privilege of obtaining years of experience within academia, but learning to stand your ground early is essential to balance and coping:

> There are very few things that I will say, yes, to doing. I will say to myself "is this something that is going to be meaningful for me?" Otherwise I say, no. The academy now is more the way I had imagined it… but I still think that the more junior people…I use that term because people do come in at different stages in their life...but the more junior people starting out, I think are running even faster than I was running. The work- life balance in the academy…it's just crazy.

One woman spoke about acknowledging the unrealistic expectation within society to solely manage both her professional and personal responsibilities on her own. In doing so, she gave herself permission to be free from those expectations and feelings of guilt. Further, support and guidance from outside sources was no longer perceived as a weakness**:**

> For the kind of things I see women getting caught up in, and this is again I'm not blaming them, but just the kind of expectations, like I must make my child's Halloween costume or I must be able to knit or something, and you really don't! And that's going to be the thing that tips you over and makes you crazy. So don't do that. Leave the dirty dishes in the sink because right now that's not manageable. My supervision supervisor was always saying these things to me. She was saying, "get a teenager to come in. You know, pay your neighbours kid to get your laundry going for you…but stop thinking that you should be doing it all and feeling great about that".

THEME 4: Supportive Relationships

Across all participants' stories, female professors reported supportive relationships as the most significant factor in helping with their feelings of dissatisfaction in their roles as academics and caregivers. The types of support participants reported were divided into subthemes; support within academia, mentorship and support outside of academia.

Within the academy. Participants spoke about their experiences of isolation and connection within the academic institution, which on a smaller scale, consisted of support from colleagues, and on a larger scale, consisted of recognition from the institution. Isolation reported by participants was due to discrimination for being a woman or a mother or for speaking about feminist or women's issues**.** Further, these women described experiences of fear, rejection and further isolation when reaching out to colleagues about their experiences of discrimination. Presence of barriers and reaching out to colleagues for emotional support was just as challenging for women who had not reported discrimination. Participants discussed other barriers to creating connection with their colleagues, for example, physical isolation in offices, limited opportunity for group interaction, and time:

> I had no time to reach out for support! That stuff wasn't promoted as much back then… Look, I need time, just clone me. I needed two of me, I needed three of me! So I never did, but I really appreciate having those resources around and I know people have used them and used them well. They are entirely confidential. That stuff works really well.

Several women reported having unpleasant, neglectful and unsupportive interactions with their colleagues which served as a barrier to reaching out for the support they desired. One woman said:

> Yes, it's very isolating at times and then when it's not, you are not isolated with the right people…So, you shut the door because you'd rather just not have that interaction.

Participants who felt connected and supported in their relationships within academia reported opportunities to reflect on shared experiences with colleagues, such as the barriers of being a female within academia. Some women reported learning to become proactive in building these relationships which was deemed important to establish and maintain support. Several participants report their colleagues forming support groups. One woman reported an eldercare support group to share their struggles of being an academic while caring for a parent:

> There are a ton of us in this faculty that are dealing with aging parents that have dementia issues. So, we have actually formed a support group to talk about those issues because so many of us are in that position.

Several participants linked these supportive relationships to a sense of belonging, increased competence and work productivity, as evidenced in the words of three participants:

> I've build relationships with that cohort so I feel like a very respected part of the community and that helps a lot. As opposed to feeling humiliated and walking through the hallways ashamed of myself.

> But there is that excitement about each other's work that I think is really, really important because you know that can deteriorate if pressure is put on time.

> Supportive colleagues...That's key. And finding and establishing friendship in the workplace and having those people. Those who have your back and they want you to succeed. So I think… I was really too busy for socializing but I think that's important. You need to feel supported within your department and you need to feel like your department is rooting for you

Whether or not participants had positive or negative experiences of supportive relationships, they expressed the necessity for a positive connection to feel comfortable, safe and supported.

Recognition within the institution was also deemed as supportive by participants. These symbols of recognition included the Employee Assistance Plan, teaching awards, verbal or written recognition at meetings and constructive performance evaluations. Women reported feeling appreciated for their work and more motivated to continue to work productively when validated. Similarly, a lack of recognition in these areas contributed to women feeling unnoticed. Many participants expressed that there is *invisible* work that female faculty engage in that are unacknowledged, e.g., supervising more students than their male colleagues:

> When we get our annual performance evaluation, it's always kind of demoralizing to me thinking about, okay well, I worked really hard at this, but that doesn't reflect what I think I have been doing…and I think a lot of success, I've been thinking about this with a colleague, a lot of the work that women academics get asked to take on is the invisible work that doesn't get validated. So…you may not be the official supervisor of a student, but you're the one because you're nice or because their supervisor is scary, you are the one they go to for advice.

> Some women, who are in academic roles end up taking on a nurturing role within that…So the example of you, the sort of disproportionate number of women in this faculty that actually take on graduate students and mentor graduate students is an example of that.

Mentorship. All participants spoke about the need for mentoring to support female professors. Newer faculty members reported a desperate need and desire for a female mentor to help as a resource and guide through the unknown and anxiety-provoking experiences of entering the academic world:

> Oh my God… I think we should have a mentor and I think other people have mentors and I don't have one and I think why don't I have one? I need a mentor. Your colleagues should not be your mentors… People that are closest institutionally should not be your mentor because you see them all the time… I think the mentorship program is really important and I think that I would advocate for that in a really, really important way especially in this kind of institution is important…

Experienced professors reflected on their journey as either having very helpful mentorship or a lack of mentorship in the earlier stages of their careers. In both circumstances participants insisted on the need of this relational support for junior faculty:

> Yeah, and making sure that all the junior, I mean the junior men, too, but I think the junior women in particular because of where they are usually in their life span. It's a particularly vulnerable time, so making sure that they have regular meetings to provide support, exchange stories, check-in….always with a very positive attitude toward the whole process.
> That's actually what's been successful in my life is that I've had very good female mentors at the University. They haven't gone through what I've gone through when I've gone through it and come into the Academy later in their lives… But they've been very supportive and they don't protect you from those experiences. But they help you to deconstruct them and to be able to deal with them.

Outside academia. Some participants expressed the need for supportive relationships outside of the academic realm to feel a sense of balance and purpose outside of their work. Women discussed their involvement and connection to religious communities, mental health agencies, community counsellors, and spousal, familial relationships as substantial sources of support.

> I've been really fortunate. My partner and I are very supportive of one another and we have two excellent friends. One of them was hired the same year that I was. So, we actually are a support for one another and here there are other folk that are supportive as well.

Overall, participants demonstrate identifying in their roles as academic and caregivers differently which impacts their integrated sense of self. Participants used external and personal measures to define success with some women perceiving success as a process and others as an end goal. Participants' experiences of stress and mental health differed, but all identified external and internal causes of stress and report negative impacts of this stress on their physical and psychological wellbeing. All participants

reported attempting to cope with these stressors. Lastly, all participants reported support within relationships, both within and outside of academia, as a significant factor toward increasing overall wellbeing.

Advice for the next generation of female academics

Women were given the opportunity to share any additional thoughts about negotiating between professional and personal roles and women responded with observations, possible solutions and in particular advice for the next generation of female academic leaders to thrive personally as well as to facilitate positive change for the situation of women within academia. Suggestions that women reported as significant in providing female academics a greater voice and position within academia to make a difference were varied. One woman suggested that more women fill administrative and leadership type positions if it is suitable to their personality. It was also suggested that women be kind to one another and to be allies to face systemic sexism.

> They (female colleagues) need to be your allies and there are going to be times where we face systemic sexism and we need to combat that as a unit and that's when we have to have the alliances rather than just to each defensively working it out on our own… so that would be my only advice for women; put your personal feelings aside and foster good relations among women regardless of any kind of affect. Just get on board because that's good for us as a group. And that is going to be the only way that we get over what's left of sexism that we face and I know it's much worse for women in sciences and engineering then it is for women in the Arts but it's everywhere. It's institutional. And we tend to blame ourselves and that's exactly when you shouldn't. Whenever we blame ourselves, it's just then if I could knock on your door, and talk about that with you, that's great! Label it, call it what it is.

Several women used this as an opportunity to remind women to care for themselves and the importance of being genuine to their values through their academic journey. For instance, one woman expressed that if work can co-exist with home then home time can co-exist with work. She emphasised the importance of feeling proud in

yourself for being authentic and encouraged other female academics to not feel self-conscious that you have family responsibilities but instead to be proud that it is your reality.

Several women spoke passionately about their role in helping the next generation of junior faculty to continue to fill the gap of what they felt they did not receive, but needed in the form of support and guidance. Several women reported the importance of advocating for important services within the university and community that will support their colleagues and future generations such as encouraging and promoting counselling services for financial and psychological support. Several women reported doubt that the structure of the university will change in years to come, therefore emphasised the importance for woman to continue to make personal changes within the system that will be in the best interest of their mental health. For instance, one woman expressed that the university is still a non-friendly work-environment for children. Therefore, she suggested actively seeking out colleagues with children to share experiences for support.

Another woman stressed the importance of talking to young female academics about challenging transitions and realistic expectations for employment such as, providing guidance in their decision to pursue a professional or academic program, and the job prospects for adjunct versus full-time professorship positions. It was emphasized that this will increase chances of job security and to protect women from future stresses, disappointments and mental health issues. Similarly, another woman suggested planning in advance for your academic career and child-rearing to best prepare for potential barriers. In addition, another woman expressed the importance of establishing a strong

foundation and network earlier on in your academic career to reduce the intensity of work and stressors later on in their careers.

One woman spoke about the bureaucracy of the university and the need for professors to contribute to the growth and sustainability of the university to support their needs. She expressed that future generations must realize that engagement with their employer and with the university as faculty members is important to avoid becoming an institution in which you no longer have a voice. She emphasised the importance of all academics to step up and realize the significance of their role in facilitating greater changes within the university. She encourages current faculty members and the next generation to think about their place within the university and how you hope to help your university develop for the better.

One woman expressed resentment toward success stories presented by female academics within the university because she viewed them as biased and unrepresentative of the diverse and complex trajectories many women experience within academia. Therefore, she emphasized the importance of women being told realistic and varied stories to acknowledge the struggles that are personal, institutional and generational. Several other women emphasized the importance of honest, supportive conversations with female academics and once again, reemphasized the need for good mentorship as necessary for the next generation.

Overall, the women's final statements were very powerful and represented what was deemed most important to vocalize and be heard. Being a young female academic myself, the women's messages were interpreted as direct guidance and suggestion to a

potential woman of the next generation. With this in mind, these conversations felt like a

possible first step in the direction of movement toward connection.

Discussion

The objective of the current study was to gain an updated and deeper

understanding of the factors that influence academic women's mental health and the

resources and environments that support their wellbeing. Feminist and Relational

Cultural frameworks were used to develop an understanding of participants' experience

as they negotiated competing demands between professional and personal roles, and to

identify personal, contextual and structural factors that contributed to their experiences of

work and home life.

As outlined in the literature review past research, and in particular, the Chilly

Climate research (The Chilly Collective, 1995) has demonstrated that both overt and

subtle personal and social barriers operating below the awareness of men and women

contribute to the experiences and dissatisfaction of female faculty members. The Chilly

Climate studies were written from the feminist position that female academics face

barriers because they do not fit into the male-dominated structure of the university, which

values independence as necessary for mature development, and encourages autonomy,

competition and strength in isolation (Jordan, 2010; Miller, 2003, The Chilly Collective,

1995).

Working from this position, the response by the academy has been that reducing

discrimination and inequalities will allow them to better thrive within this structure.

Efforts have been made within universities to address these issues by developing policies

on equity (The Chilly Collective, 1995), but current research suggests that despite these

changes, women continue to experience similar challenges, critically challenging the past

conclusion that conscious and unconscious discrimination is the major contributing factor

and may only be part of the larger picture of women experiences (Monture-OKanee, 1995). Indeed, the current research challenges the notion of equality of the system for which the academy was built by conceptualizing healthy human development differently. The dissatisfaction of women academics may not be due to solely having a more challenging experience from men, but may also be due to needing a different experience which encourages connection to thrive and grow. Viewing women's experiences through a RCT lens in the current study fills a significant gap in the literature by studying female academics' experiences from an updated perspective, which provides insight into how the structure of the academy is conceptualized and the types of changes that will be beneficial to this population.

Identity

The lived experiences of the women in this study indicate similarities with those who have participated in past research. Firstly, it was demonstrated that even women who remain childless have a high likelihood of balancing between work and caregiving responsibilities (Kane & Penrod, 1995), with most childless participants caring for an elder parent or relative. A few participants reported caring for ill or elderly family members more than their male family members, contributing to their stress levels, which was consistent with past findings as well (Pavalko & Artis, 1997; Aluja & Blanch, 2012). Also, consistent with past research (Parrakis & Martinez, 2012), participants with children reported constantly working toward attaining balance between their work and home life. For instance, participants demonstrated choosing a path of least resistance in order to accommodate their professional and personal roles by working at less research intensive universities and turning down leadership positions. Although all women's

participation in leadership positions varied, women taking on these positions were fulfilling both leadership and faculty positions full-time with only a minimal stipend. Although financially this experience may be similar for male academics, unique to females is the fact that women report extra responsibilities both at work, through mentoring junior students and faculty, and at home through caregiving responsibilities. Indeed, a few women even reported recognizing this beforehand and chose not to take on a leadership position. These findings are evidence of the ways in which the institutions fail to account for differences in women's decision-making such that, although it may appear women are actively making informed choices, they are doing so merely to reduce consequences (e.g. the restrictions between work and home). Further support for the lack of choice female academics have is provided in The Capability Approach (Sen, 1992), which states that freedom is the opportunity to make choices and to have the capability to choose between two alternatives without being punished for having made either choice.

Taken together, findings from the current study suggest that participants made choices in response to their lived experiences, but that does not mean that they had freedom because they felt their needs were overlooked by a patriarchal system. As demonstrated in the literature review (Wakabayashi & Donato, 2005) each woman's personal desire to be a professional or caregiver varies. In support of this finding in the present study each participant placed a differing degree of importance on either attaining a family, a professional career or both, based on her identity or sense of self. Regardless of each woman's position, she expressed feeling pressure to make a decision about this conflict between career and family which suggests, in concordance with past findings

(Cadsby, Servatka, & Song, 2012), that having to make a decision at all creates a stress that is unique to women; simply put, men do not report having to make such choices.

In the current study, some women reported experiencing an academic shift in their identity, and having to adapt their expectations, and therefore their sense of self, to fit into the academic structure, which represented a lack of genuineness in one's sense of self. This finding suggests that for these women a sense of who she "should be" was influenced by the wider society, which resulted in a role conflict. According to RCT, when an individual is faced with repeated microaggressions, she feels unsafe to be authentic in who she is and may protect herself through withdrawal (Jordan, 2010). This can result in internalized oppression and desiring to become what is valued structurally, even though it may be disingenuous. Finally, the RCT concept of the relational paradox, in which people are both drawn to be in relationships, but are fearful of them (and what bad relationships can do to them) is seen as evident in the women's accounts of being both compelled to engage in the academy as it exists, and repelled by the prospect.

Past research identified a role conflict in female professionals' nurturing nature in caregiving and competitive nature to achieve success in academia, thus impacting one's ability, willingness and success in utilizing competitive tactics (Cadsby, Servatka, & Song, 2012).This role conflict has been viewed as a barrier for women to be able to succeed in the existing academic structure. In the current study, adjusting personal expectations appeared to be a common thread in each woman's story in order to reduce role conflict and to reduce feeling of failure in either role. In addition, although each woman integrated her personal and professional roles differently, similar to all of them was the experience of conflict and adaptation to appropriately adjust one's sense of self.

For instance, participants reported having difficulty setting boundaries and saying no to projects and responsibilities they did not want to partake in due to expectations. Although they may adjust the expression of their identity to what is favourable within the academic structure, this results in inauthenticity potentially impacting their ability to perform and desire to achieve success in the workplace. Once more, it appears that these women felt they had to "choose" between two negative alternatives: to feel like a failure or to feel inauthentic, which both can lead to disconnection and isolation. With this understanding we can begin to make sense of women's reported desire for integration of work and family life. This desire was demonstrated by a female professor expressing hope for integration of roles, expectations and support (Parrakis & Martinez, 2012), which was similar to a participant in the current study and her perception of work and home life as one world. She expressed a desire for the institution to share this view to feel understood and to be seen for who she was. This notion suggests the importance of authenticity, and connection for female professors, and emphasizes the need for understanding what is possible for creating this connection for long term health and satisfaction of female professors fulfilling multiple roles.

Measures of Success

Findings from the present study were consistent with past research demonstrating that an academic career is one in which one must be continually increasing one's efforts to either maintain success or advance within academia (Bonetta, 2011). In the current study, all women reported this expectation.

As found in past research there is an increased pressure for women to be successful in multiple domains within academia which impacted their stress levels

(Wakabayashi & Donato, 2005). The current study has expanded on existing literature by developing a deeper understanding of what participants conceptualized as success and how it relates to their sense of self and satisfaction within the university. The current findings suggest that personal measures, compared to external measures, of success were considered more important and rewarding to most women. In addition, external measures were deemed significant to most women as well, but appeared to be in relation to a fulfillment of only their academic, but not their personal, identity. These findings suggest that it is possible that personal measures of success are in line with each woman's authentic sense of self and therefore, provides a sense of safety and genuineness in her accomplishments. Further, it is possible that since external measures of success are structural expectations, they imply what is expected of women to "fit in" to the academic mold of success and what "should be" deemed as success within the academy.

Although external measures of success were still deemed important to participants, they were also what they considered most stressful. This suggests that they may have internalized these as part of their identity as an academic (and important in the eyes of the institution), while at the same time experiencing fear of not "measuring up". Several women expressed fear of standing out from their colleagues through poor performance evaluations, which may be interpreted as a form of isolation. Furthermore, participants expressed that in attaining certain measures of external success such as getting tenure they "should" feel successful but instead they continued to feel as though they did not measure up. Finally, the women who reported external measures of success as most important appeared to express anxieties about their performance, which seemed less evident for the women who placed more value on internal measures of success.

Through this observation, it is possible that these women's definitions of success and experience of stress may have been influenced by how much they valued being accepted by the university structure.

In the current study, women varied in their assessment of whether success was an end goal or constant process within balancing their personal and professional lives. Interestingly, women who reported feeling successful at particular milestones, such as getting tenure, still demonstrated anxiety and pressure over the next milestone. None of the women expressed feeling rid of high expectations to achieve, even if they did feel accomplished due to past success. The rigorous standard to reach success was deemed as an extremely uncomfortable and challenging experience for most of them. Even women who said they had "made it" reported being unsure how they made it to that point. Facing such hatred in order to have reached a point of success was deemed as unnecessary.

These findings suggest that how the participants' conceptualized success may have played a substantial role in their degree of satisfaction within academia. One woman expressed that "success in some ways is surviving" which highlights the structure of the academy in setting unrealistic expectations for female academics (Currie et al., 2002). Through women's stories, it appeared that success may become a stressful task once it is perceived as unattainable. These findings provide further insight into the possible internal struggle of female academics, in which they may continue to seek approval, recognition and enhanced opportunity for connection through working toward success which feels impossible to attain.

Women in the current study appeared conflicted between feeling worthy and grateful for their job positions and feeling unsatisfied. A genuine concern would often be

followed by a blanket statement of appreciation for their position and having the best job in the world. These findings suggest that women felt grateful for their academic achievements. It is interesting that despite the barriers, challenges and difficulties female academics reported throughout their academic trajectory that they reported feeling grateful rather than deserving to be where they were today. According to a feminist perspective (Armenti, 2004), this evaluation by participants may be a result of systemic and internalized oppression such that women may not feel deserving and therefore express gratitude for being accepted into an institution in which they do not naturally fit the academic mold. Therefore, this reaction may be a response to feeling unworthy. Another possible explanation for this behaviour may be the concept that the struggle does not feel worthy if the desired end result is not achieved. For instance, as demonstrated, being an academic is ingrained in one's identity due to the investment of time and energy toward becoming a professor. Therefore, feeling unsatisfied within this position may lead to feelings of loss and confusion of "who am I if I don't love being an academic?" From an RCT perspective (Jordan, 2010) loss of identity could contribute to further feelings of isolation and disconnection. Therefore, women may be doing the best they can to feel connected within a system that stifles this connection.

Stress and Mental Health

The current study provided some support for past findings (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996; Jacobs & Winslow, 2004; Bentley, 2009) by identifying some external causes of stress deemed most significant to these female professors. Consistent with past literature (Parrakis & Martinez, 2012) women reported a lack of interest in taking on leadership roles due to the stress of balancing work and home. This finding suggests that although

supports and policy have been put in place for female academics, the stress associated with these dual responsibilities continues to be a deterrent to pursuing these positions for some women.

Women's experiences of internal stressors, which exist in relation to their experiences of external stressors, were also explored. For these participants, it appeared that external causes of stress were accompanied by an internal judgment that they were in fact stressful and by how they conceptualized their sense of self in relation to the stressor. For instance, performance evaluations, research publications and the lack of clear boundary between work and family life which resulted in heavy workloads and time restrictions have been quantitatively deemed as barriers for female academics in past literature (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996; Jacobs & Winslow, 2004; Bentley, 2009) and qualitatively deemed as external stressors for women in the current study. Consistent with previous quantitative research (Bekker, de Jong, Zijlstra & van Landeghem, 2000; Srimathi & Kiran, 2010) women with multiple roles reported both acute and long-term psychological and physiologically impacts of stress such as negative mood states and health concerns.

Unique to the current study is participants' self-report of their thoughts, feelings and attitudes, which provides a deeper understanding of why women academics assess certain external factors as stressful, why they negatively impact psychological and physiological health and their ability to cope. According to Relational Cultural Theory (Jordan, 2010), systemic power differentials disrupt connection at both the individual and societal levels in which experiences of disconnection disrupt our inherent relational nature, and contribute to human suffering and psychological problems. It is possible that

participants' expressions of low self-esteem and self-doubt in their capabilities, worthiness and potential as mothers and academics were a result of disconnection through oppression.

Consistent with the Chilly Climate report (Backhouse, Harris, Michell, &Wylie, 1989), several women discussed stories of discrimination, revictimization, stereotyping, and devaluation of their successes throughout their academic trajectory. In describing these stories women expressed the pain and suffering they experienced in coping with these situations. Regardless of the time that had passed since the incident, retelling these stories appeared frustrating, angering, and saddening to participants. All women that shared these stories expressed that they continued to revisit the scenario and question what happened, whether it was their fault and if they could have done something differently.

These stories are significant because they suggest the deep and long-lasting psychological effects of instances of oppression and disconnection. From a feminist perspective, these stressors may also be viewed as internalized oppression in which systemic oppression leads to acceptance of inaccurate stereotypes (Park, 1996). Thus, the academy does not have to continually exert power-over because female academics may be reinforcing these messages within themselves.

Consistent with past research (Misra et al., 2012) women reported stress and faring worst in their health when they interpreted their situation as restricting, whether at work or home. Further, it appeared a women's sense of congruence with her identity influenced how stressful a circumstance was, such that those assuming the responsibility of "needing" to be able to be a successful full-time caregiver and professor expressed

frequent stress and anxiety. For example, women who felt obligated or guilty at having their children in childcare reported feeling distress about this decision. Another demonstration of restriction was women's expectations for stress levels to decrease after achieving success, but women reported that when experiences of stress were continual they felt helpless and unsatisfied. For instance, women expected stress would lessen after reaching tenure and when it did not, this felt inconsistent with their belief. Together, feminist and RCT theories (Armenti, 2004, Jordan, 2010) suggest that external and internal stressors may negatively impact female academics' psychological and physiological wellbeing because expectations of worth are ingrained by a system of oppression which restricts formation of fulfilling connections within the academic structure. The dominant male culture existing within society and academia can distort images of self, others and relational possibilities in ways that impede mutuality and restricts the ability to make connections for growth, satisfaction and happiness.

Highlighted in the current study was beginning to develop an understanding of how female academics cope with stressors and attempt to reduce their negative impacts. Most women demonstrated knowledge of at least one or two strategies that they knew to be helpful for coping with stress. Despite this knowledge, not all of these women practiced these strategies due to barriers such as time to engage. Other women expressed lack of direction, understanding and awareness of useful coping strategies. Important to note was that regardless of how knowledgeable participants were about helpful coping strategies, that did not appear to be indicative of the frequency in which they engaged in these healthy behaviours. According to these women's experiences, strategies for encouraging these behaviours were helpful such as developing a structured routine,

prioritizing, and willingness to adapt overtime based on need. This suggests that perhaps more emphasis should be placed on possible benefits of coping strategies such as reduction of stress and mental health issues, impacting overall wellbeing in encouraging women and the academy to prioritize self-care. It could also be helpful for structural barriers to be addressed, to not only create more time and space for professors to care for themselves and their health, but to encourage connection through conversation and awareness for these needs. Perhaps the most novel finding, and the one that has the strongest potential for understanding and encouraging self-care of female academics, is the notion that simply conducting interviews and having a conversation about stress, mental health and coping may have reminded and encouraged women of its importance and use. In discussing this topic, several women reported feeling motivated after their interview to begin to engage in self-care that they had left to the side and, in particular, one woman's email expressing gratitude for having that conversation. This evidence suggests that conversations and connections between women may help increase their awareness of this need and potentially increase making self-care a priority.

Supportive Relationships

In support of past research, connection has been found to be fundamentally important to females, in comparison to competition which is perceived as threatening bonds considered necessary for survival and growth (Nichols, 1996). Women in the current study reported interpersonal conflict to be stress-inducing which complements past research (Inglehrat, Brown & Vida, 1994), which concluded that the more competitive women perceived the environment to be, the less they strived to achieve. In the current study, several women expressed that isolation and discrimination was not

limited to male colleagues, but that conflict between same-sex colleagues was common and in some cases more challenging. Past research (Nichols, 1996) has found that women were more comfortable with cooperative interactions with other women. Therefore, it is possible that participants felt anxious and fearful of these interpersonal interactions because they were isolating, unnatural and conflicted with their innate desire toward connection. Several women expressed that they felt that women got caught up in the competitive nature of the academy. This suggests that their competitive behaviour may not be genuine in nature, but due more to a fear of being considered unacceptable by colleagues and administration.

In the current study, regardless of a woman's past experiences with supportive relationships, awareness that relationships were important was expressed. Women that had experienced supportive relationships reported valuing these relationships as a safe space to share their concerns, worries and accomplishments authentically, and expressed desiring further connection. Some women lacking supportive relationships still demonstrated an awareness of its absence, a fear of rejection of reaching out for connection, and appeared to express a sense of loss and yearning for this connection even though relationships were not valued within the academy. On the contrary, one woman expressed being unaware of her dissatisfaction until she began to feel included and appreciated by her colleagues. For this particular woman, she was unaware of the depths of her isolation until she began to build connection. This finding reveals that some women may not speak of their experiences of isolation because they are unaware other experiences exist, thus facilitating further isolation. According to RCT (Jordan, 2010), these findings suggest that needing connection is part of healthy human development and

it is possible that a sense of safety is lacking within women's experiences in the academic structure in order to be vulnerable and be open to this connection. For a woman to express herself fully she must feel sufficiently safe to be vulnerable, which is directly related to how much mutuality exists in a relationship, and suggests the need for connections to thrive. Furthermore, participants expressed that supportive relationships led to feelings of comfort, safety and support suggesting the benefits of a structure that would allow them to be vulnerable and open to connection.

It is important to recognize that women reported experiencing isolation in several forms within and outside of the academy. The most apparent forms of isolation were reports of discrimination and sexism. Women reported feeling isolated due to a lack of support in various realms, which were demonstrated in the form of physical and emotional support, e.g., lack of recognition, or help from others with work-life balance. In fact, only a small portion of their isolation was about feeling physically separated from people. Instead, an emotional barrier of feeling misunderstood and unheard were powerful forces in encouraging further withdrawal from colleagues and family members (e.g., a woman considered her work and home life to be one world, but felt that no one in either realm understood what she did as an academic and caregiver).

Consistent with past research (Park, 1996; Armenti, 2004), most participants reported that the majority of their work consistent with teaching, advising and community service was invisible in the eyes of the institution and devalued. In the current sample most women identified this type of work as consistent with their internal measures of success therefore this finding may be another factor which contributed to women feeling isolated and unheard. Circumstances that facilitated integration of women's personal and

professional roles were deemed as positive environments by the women, when there was genuine support and understanding. For example, faculty support groups and connecting with colleagues on a one-to-one basis to provide advice and share similar experiences were deemed to be helpful.

In past research female academics reported reduced networking opportunities and a lack of adequate mentoring and role modeling to be factors which discouraged them from advancing within academia (Hartley & Dobele, 2009, Padilla-Gonzalez, et al., 2011). In the current study mentorship was also valued by female professors. All participants spoke about the need for mentoring to support female academics and junior faculty. Newer faculty members reported a desperate need and desire for female mentors to help as a resource and guide through unknown and anxiety-provoking experiences of entering the academic world. Some women revealed feeling unsafe to ask other female colleagues questions or guidance because of fear of repercussions or judgment. More experienced faculty members also valued mentorship and guidance because they either experienced the benefits of mentorship at the beginning of their careers or believe that women should be provided with the support that they never received. These findings are substantial because they reveal similar experiences of isolation individually and generationally. In addition, it demonstrates the importance of facilitating discussion among women academics to develop awareness that they are not alone in their experience of loneliness. It is a shared experience which will provide a foundation for developing growth-fostering relationships.

A novel finding to the current study is an understanding of women's depiction of effective mentorship within academia. For instance, participants spoke of the desired

traits of a supportive mentor as being open, compassionate, understanding, and informal, yet honest and straight forward about the barriers and experiences of female academics. In addition, some women recommended guidelines for a mentoring program, e.g., that mentors should be from a different Faculty than their mentee; the relationship should be encouraged and easily accessible. Importance placed on mentorship may indicate the need for structural acceptance of mentoring within the academy as a means of providing women with necessary connection within a competitive environment. Currently without this need being met in a system which values independence, seeking mentorship may feel like a weakness because several women expressed the belief that they should be able to cope and manage on their own. Further, this suggests that an easily accessible and structured mentorship program may reduce thoughts of pathology or failures associated with experiencing personal struggles and barriers. As well, it may normalize the support needed by female academics as a natural progression through their academic trajectory and encourage them to feel authentic, safe and supported. According to RCT (Jordan, 2010), this would influence the overarching structures that shape wider relational patterns contributing to healthy coexistence.

Some women expressed that developing an awareness of the academic structure, barriers and inequalities that still exist within the academy, is empowering, while others expressed frustration with this awareness. In the current study, women felt frustrated because issues were apparent, but they expressed feeling helpless and unaware of how to facilitate change and improve the situation for themselves and future generations of female academics. Several women demonstrated feeling "stuck" and alone, and feared that movement in any direction would further complicate their situation. According to

RCT (Jordan, 2010), by encouraging movement toward connection by all people, mutual development will occur. It is suggested that through growth fostering relationships more women may begin to perceive awareness of barriers and equalities as mutually empowering, rather than encouraging further disconnection.

A dramatic observation from this study that suggested an important strategy for moving forward was the gratitude and appreciation women expressed for being given the opportunity to have a voice and tell their story. This finding is evidence against the assumption that inequalities have been eliminated and women are no longer silenced (Caven, 2006). Furthermore, those women's stories of isolation provide evidence for the silent suffering that many female academics continue to experience. These findings suggest that connection in the form of simply asking female academics to speak and acknowledging that their experiences matter may serve as an intervention in itself. In particular, the participants' advice for the next generation identified areas women felt most passionately about in improving the situation of female academics. When given the opportunity to be heard, they were not lacking in thoughts and suggestions. Throughout the women's stories, a sense of unity, belonging and meaning through connection was present within each theme, which suggests that regardless of a female academic's integrated sense of self, definition of success, experience of stress, or relationships, what may be most important is her valuing of connectedness within each of these realms in her life.

Implications

The body of literature focused on female academics is growing. At present, it emphasizes the inequity existing within the academy and is beginning to more deeply

explore the experiences of these women (e.g., Parrakis & Martinez, 2012). This study offers a different glimpse into the lives of women who are negotiating between personal and professional roles at various stages in their academic trajectory and their experiences of stress and mental health. It uncovered a set of realities that must be addressed if more women are to pursue academic pathways and to change the experience and situation of these women. Given that the success and achievement of women in professoriate positions has been shown to impact the choice of females to pursue leadership roles in future generations (Parrakis & Martinez, 2012), understanding this phenomenon is significant to the growth and enhancement of women in these positions. Viewing this research through a feminist and RCT perspective and focusing on the qualitative experience of stress and mental health it is possible to conceptualize women's experiences through a lens that provides helpful implications for satisfaction and overall wellbeing of female professors. In particular, through an integration of feminist and RCT perspectives, it is proposed that rather than suggesting sameness or equality among people for positive change, perhaps creating a space in which mutuality and a shared participatory process of relationships, can lead to feelings of worthiness, appreciation and growth. By encouraging growth-fostering relationships, all parties involved, including men and women, may benefit through the five "good things" as identified by Jordan (2010) to move away from isolation and toward connection, including: 1) a desire to move into more relationships; 2) an increased sense of energy; 3) knowledge of oneself and others; 4) a desire to take action within and outside of the relationships; and 5) an increased sense of worth.

Understanding these implications and findings from the current study may help to identify and facilitate practical changes to encourage experiences for female academics that could help with connection and reduction of conflict. Most significant is speaking with women and giving them the opportunity to speak about topics deemed important yet "off limits". In addition, using advice from current professors to guide future academics can serve as a support for these women through honest conversations about women's experiences and realistic expectations, mentoring throughout professorship and as a graduate student and increasing opportunity for support among colleagues. More specifically, creating workshops or support groups incorporating these topics with a safe and welcoming environment within the university, could provide an opportunity for women to authentically build connection, gain support and share in experiences of oppression. For instance, providing workshops specific to the needs of female faculty at various points in their careers, e.g., to prepare for sabbatical or the process of tenure. Services such as these acknowledge the reality of diversity and the inevitable power differentials that exist within academia, while facilitating a path that may lead to not only healthy coexistence of professors, but of mutual empowerment. Using the knowledge obtained from the current study we can bring a generation of women leaders forward with the message that their needs matter and should be addressed. From highlighting female academics' personal experiences, a discrepancy between the way things are within academy and how women might prefer them to be has been identified. Hearing women speak in their own words and developing a deeper understanding of the structural matters which surround and shape female academics has provided suggestions for alternative

ways for women to behave and engage within this structure that could be beneficial to their mental health.

The current study also provides implications for mental health professionals to best provide female professors will the support that they want and need through personal or career counselling. Firstly, this research demonstrates that although there are similarities in the experience of this population, each woman's story is unique and complex. Furthermore, the study demonstrates the interconnection of personal and professional roles which provides insight into the complex nature of interrelated concerns of work-life balance, stress and mental health. This understanding is important for mental health professionals to provide support that is non-judgmental, and tailored to each individual's needs in a career or personal counselling setting. From a RCT perspective, shame, withdrawal and a movement out of genuine growth-producing relationships may be the experience of female academics. This understanding can to be used to acknowledge disconnection and to facilitate validation and reconnection with one's authentic self toward reconnection in therapy and in relationships outside of therapy. In addition, this research has implications for the strength and importance of developing a strong therapeutic relationship in counselling which provides a safe space for vulnerability and to build a relationship that does not replicate the isolation and pain of earlier relationships. Results from the current study provide insights for counsellors into existing strategies to address disconnection that may be familiar to these women, and the existing barriers to be worked through to regain authenticity within themselves and authentic connection with others. It is possible that therapy may be the initial first contact for women to receive support through the university's EAP program, or within the

community. Therefore, it is essential that mental health professionals understand the significance of their role in providing service that meets the needs of each woman in this population and initiates growth toward connection within the academy and greater community.

Limitations

As with any research project, the present study has a number of limitations that are important to recognize. First, this is a qualitative study with a small sample consisting of women from only one Research-intensive and one Affiliate University in Ontario. Therefore findings are not generalizable and participants do not represent all female professors from all types of universities across Canada. Second, the study consisted of white women. Therefore, the study was lacking in representation of women of colour and exploration of women's experiences dealing with racism or classism. Therefore, female academics experiences of intersectionality were not addressed.

Strengths

The current study also had a number of strengths. First, a varied demographic was represented among the women interviewed, i.e., single, widowed, single-mother, married to academic, married to non-academic, heterosexual and homosexual women. Second, the sample consisted of four main Faculties including Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Education and Business. Although women from all Faculties were contacted to participate in the current study, there was no participation from Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics fields. This observation is a strength in the current study because it provides information on which Faculties women were forthcoming in telling their story and facilitates questions about why and what this might mean for more

isolated and male-dominated faculties. With the knowledge that female academics are least represented in these Faculties (Statistics Canada, 2009), and assessing from a feminist perspective, it is possible that women in more male-dominated faculties have more deeply internalized the structure of the university and do not recognize or are less aware of existing inequalities and systemic oppression. Further, from an RCT perspective, this may be a result of severe isolation, fear and immobility in making connection. Another strength of the current study is examining the experience of female academics through a Canadian context, which is unique from American literature. Most significantly the current study provides an update, and re-examines the present day experience of female academics with awareness of historical perspectives and a new understanding of current applicability. Viewing women's experience through a feminist and RCT lens has practical implications for making a difference in the experience of female academics.

Future Research

Although the current study has provided a deeper understanding of the experience of female academics in the context of stress and mental health, further research is needed to replicate and more deeply explore current findings. For instance, future research is needed to explore the experiences of female professors facing multiple forms of systemic oppression, domination or discrimination to fill the gap in the current study. To demonstrate and understand the experience of oppression of women today intersection of gender with race, class and disability must be explored to fully grasp the vulnerabilities of these individuals. In addition, further qualitative research investigating more specifically what women interpret as supportive within relationships and elements of

good mentorship will help to create a better understanding of practical knowledge to create support programs for women that are deemed as appropriate and effective in meeting their needs. In addition, throughout this research it was evident that women may have different mental health needs based on where they are in their academic trajectory. Therefore, the type of support and the way in which connection is incorporated into women's experiences may be different. Further research exploring a deeper understanding of the experience of stress, mental health and support for women at various points in their academic trajectory would provide more insight into helpful interventions. Also, it would be beneficial to compare the current research with the experience of male academics from a RCT perspective to develop an understanding of the need for connection within the academic realm. For instance, it would be beneficial to explore whether men demonstrate the same gratitude for their positions within academia as female academics. Overall, further research is needed to develop a deeper understanding of how female professors negotiate between personal and professional roles, and how their experiences influence stress, mental health and overall satisfaction to best support the next generation of female academics, professors and leaders.

Summary

Although further research is needed to develop a deeper understanding of female academics experiences of negotiating between personal and professional roles, stress and mental health, the current study has expanded on existing literature and begun to provide insight into the types of changes that will be beneficial in supporting this population. The current study has provided further support for past findings in quantitative research on stressors associated with balancing multiple roles and impacts of stress, and more deeply

explored these concepts. Novel to the current study was an exploration of female academics' thoughts, feelings, and attitudes about why they assess certain external factors as stressful; how they cope with stressors and attempt to reduce their negative impacts; and their views of effective support and mentorship in academia. The most significant contribution of this research to the existing literature is conceptualizing female professor's experiences from an updated Relational-cultural perspective. This revealed implications for increasing satisfaction and supporting female professors personally and holistically, by creating opportunities for enhancing authenticity in one's sense of self through connection with others.

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Appendix A

Western Education

An Exploration of How Female University Professors Negotiate Personal and Professional Roles
LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Introduction
My name is Lauren Giugno and I am a graduate student at the Faculty of Education at Western University. I am conducting research into the experiences of female professors and would like to invite you to participate in this study. Professor Susan Rodger in the Faculty of Education is my supervisor.

Purpose of the Study
In this study we aim to explore the experience of female professors by asking questions directly of women in academia to gain an updated and deeper understanding of the factors that influence professional women's mental health and the resources and environments that support their wellbeing. With a rise in the number of women entering and occupying higher ranks in the academy, we seek to understand into how these educators are being affected by their work experience and hope to aid university administrators, education policy makers and mental health practitioners. Finally, as mental health practitioners, it is important to understand women's personal perspectives on working in this field.

If you agree to participate
If you agree to participate in the study you will be asked to take part in a one-to-one interview. It is anticipated that this task will take approximately 1 hour and will entail answering open-ended questions in a semi-structured interview format. These meetings will occur at a place and time convenient to you. If it is your preference, interviews may be conducted via teleconference. Prior to this event, you will be provided with the study areas of focus, to allow you time for reflection. This interview will be audio recorded. You may still participate in the study if you do not wish to be audio-recorded. If you wish to participate but do not wish to be audio-recorded, the researcher will take detailed notes about your answers; if you wish, we will give you the questions in written form, and you can participate by providing your answers to the questions in written form if you wish. A request will be made for you to provide any key documents and resources your organization uses in youth mental health promotion to supplement the identification of our grey literature sources.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw your consent from the study at any time with no effect on your employment. If you choose to withdraw from the study, any data collected from you will not be used or published.

Confidentiality

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. Researchers, Dr. Susan Rodger and Lauren Giugno, will be the only individuals who have access to the information collected. Otherwise, all information collected for the study will be kept confidential. Your permission to use direct quotes is requested. Representatives of the University of Western Ontario Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may contact you or require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of the research.

Risks & Benefits

While there are no known risks to participating in this study, you might find that talking about your experience with professional and personal success, work-life balance, and health is upsetting. We have provided you with a list of local mental health resources, which you may find useful.

Ethics and Privacy Considerations

The data you provide will be kept confidential. No names or identifying information will be attached to the data or included in the final study report. Transcribed data will be destroyed after a period of 5 years (electronic data will be deleted and hard copies will be shredded).The electronic transcript data will be kept on a password-protected computer. Hard copies of transcripts from interviews and field notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office for five years.

Publication

The results of this study are intended for publication. Your name will not be used. If you wish to receive a summary of the research, and access to the entire thesis once completed, please provide your email address and grant permission to be contacted.

Contact Information for Inquiries or Consent to Participate

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact Dr. Susan Rodger or the Office of Research Ethics, Western University.

Thank you,

Susan Rodger, PhD., C. Psych
Susan Rodger, PhD., C. Psych.
Associate Professor, Faculty of Education
Western University,
1137 Western Road, London ON N6G 1G7

Lauren Giugno, MA (Candidate)
Masters Student- Counselling Psychology , Education
Western University

Appendix B

Demographic Survey

Age:

Marital Status:

Sexual Orientation:

Total Annual Family Income: $20,000 or below $20,000- $50,000

                          $50,000- $70, 000 $70,000-$100, 000 $100, 000 or more

Number of Children:

Age(s) of Child(ren):

Terminal Degree:

Employment Position (i.e. associate/full etc.):

Field of Study:

Appendix C

Interview Questions:

1) When looking at this image what comes to mind? What experiences or feelings do you attribute to the woman in this image? What is her story?

2) Tell me about your journey/personal experience through academia. How did you get to the place you are today? Do you feel you experienced barriers and if so tell me about them.

3) How do you define success…in your work, at home, in life overall?

4) How would you describe a balanced life? What is the role of balance in your day to day life? How do you balance your personal and professional roles?

5) What is your experience of stress throughout your time in academia? From a student and now to a faculty member.

6) What institutional support have you received within the Academy?

7) What are your future aspirations, both in your career (advancement) and your personal/familial life?

8) Do you have any other comments about how you have negotiated between personal and professional roles as a female professor?

Appendix D

Western Research

Western University Health Science Research Ethics Board
NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Susan Rodger
Department & Institution: Education\Faculty of Education, Western University

NMREB File Number: 105585
Study Title: An Exploration of How Female University Professors Negotiate Personal and Professional Roles
Sponsor:

NMREB Initial Approval Date: August 18, 2014
NMREB Expiry Date: February 28, 2015

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Recruitment Items	Email Recruitment message	2014/07/18
Recruitment Items	Email Recruitment reminder	2014/07/18
Recruitment Items	Telephone Recruitment Script	2014/07/18
Instruments	Demographic Survey and Interview Guide	2014/07/18
Other	Resource List- to be provided to potential participants at the same time as the Letter of Information and Informed Consent form	2014/07/21
Letter of Information & Consent		2014/07/30
Recruitment Items	In-person recruitment script	2014/07/30
Western University Protocol		2014/07/30
Other	image of working mother (to be used in interview)-Received July 30, 2014	
Other	image of caregiving woman)-Received July 30, 2014(to be used in interview)	

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the HSREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of HSREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Ethics Officer, on behalf of Riley Hinson, NMREB Chair

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information

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Lauren Giugno

EDUCATION

Masters of Arts (MA) Counselling Psychology   June 2015
Western University, London ON

Bachelor of Arts (BA) Honours Specialization Psychology   June 2013
Brescia University College, London ON
Honours Thesis: *Influence of Stereotype Threat and Counter-Stereotype Threat on Math Performance of Female University Students*

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

Psychotherapy Intern
Psychological Services, Western University   Sept. 2014 -Present

Career Counsellor Intern
Western University, Student Success Centre   Dec. 2014- Present

Group Co-facilitator
*The Trauma Service, London Health Science Centr*e   Oct. 2014- Present

Group Co-facilitator, *Changing Ways, London, ON*   June- Nov 2014

Volunteer Counsellor, *Canadian Mental Health Association*   2011-2014

Research Assistant, *Brescia University College*   2010

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Giugno, L. & Janes, L. (2014, February). *Influence of Stereotype Threat and Counter-stereotype Threat on Math Performance of Female University Students.* Poster presentation presented at the Society of Personality and Social Psychology Conference, Austin, Texas

Giugno, L. & Janes, L. (2013, May) *Influence of Stereotype Threat and Counter-stereotype Threat on Math Performance of Female University Students*. Oral presentation of paper presented at the 43rd Annual Ontario Psychology Undergraduate Thesis Conference, Toronto, Ontario

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HONOURS AND AWARDS

Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)	2013-2014
Western Graduate Research Scholarship (WGRS)	2013-2014
Brescia Faculty Entrance Scholarship	2009-2013
Pepsico Foundation ExCEL Awards Undergraduate Scholarship	2010- 2012
Awarded Member of the Brescia Honor Society	2013
Honours Deans List, Brescia University	2009-2013