

International Handbooks of Quality-of-Life

Mary L. Connerley
Jiyun Wu *Editors*

Handbook on Well-Being of Working Women

 Springer

International Handbooks of Quality-of-Life

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Handbook on Well-Being of Working Women

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Part I

Introduction

Uncovering the Complexities of the Relationship Between Women and Well-Being in the Workplace: An Introduction

1

Mary L. Connerley and Jiyun Wu

Part I – Introduction

The well-being of all employees has important implications for individuals, organizations and society. Individuals with a greater sense of well-being have been found to have greater success in life, better health, greater career success and better relationships with others (Robertson and Cooper 2011). Within organizations, increased well-being among employees has been associated with higher customer satisfaction (Moliner et al. 2008), greater productivity, higher profitability, lower employee turnover and decreased absence levels (Harter et al. 2003). Finally, one only needs to consider the positives resulting from increased well-being at the individual and organizational levels to understand the societal benefits from enhanced well-being.

In over 50 years of research on the quality of working life and diversity, an under-researched area deals with the well-being of women in the

workplace. As labor force participation among women continues to rise, the well-being of working women is of increasing concern. The focus on women is warranted because the issues that women face at work and at home often differ from the issues faced by men based on different work and family roles. Many occupations are considered gendered, with the lower status, lower paid positions often being associated with feminine characteristics. Additionally, Employment relationships are increasingly personalized, which may disadvantage members of some demographic groups (Kulik and Olekains 2011).

The well-being of working women is of critical importance. The goal of this handbook is to provide a thorough and comprehensive review and to engage and stimulate scholars as they consider the importance and complexities associated with the well-being of working women. The philosophical underpinnings of well-being date back to ancient Greece (Ryan and Deci 2001) and typically research subscribes to either the “hedonic view” or the “eudaimonic view”. The “hedonic view” focuses on maximizing pleasure as the goal of life and the source of happiness. This view is most closely associated with the modern conceptualization of subjective well-being (Sirgy et al. 2006). The “eudaimonic view” focuses on living a life of virtue (Ryan and Deci 2001) and fulfillment. This view is often concerned with self-realization, personal growth and development and is most closely associated with the term

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“psychological well-being” (Ryff and Keyes 1995). In addition to psychological and subjective well-being, additional components or categorizations have been developed such as physical well-being, social well-being (Robertson and Cooper 2011), career well-being, financial well-being, community well-being (Rath and Harter 2010), family and cultural well-being, economic and work-related well-being, residential well-being, sexual and relationship well-being, health-related well-being, and well-being related factors associated with the feminist movement (Sirgy 2012). While the majority of the chapters utilize some aspect of either the “hedonic view” or the “eudaimonic view” the authors of the chapters were encouraged to conceptualize well-being to best fit the context of their chapter. Thus, the handbook provides broad coverage across many different categorizations of well-being allowing for an enriched and insightful view of this complex topic.

The rest of this handbook is laid out in five parts and an epilogue. The chapters of this handbook were organized to provide a range of perspectives based on multiple, yet related themes. First, chapters focusing on Gender, Social Group Hierarchy, and Well-Being of Working Women are offered. Next, chapters covering Women Leaders and Well-Being are provided followed by chapters highlighting the Professional Context and the Well-Being of Working Women. Then, chapters covering Public Policy, Organizational Policy and Societal Influences on the Well-Being of Working Women are provided and finally, chapters identifying the Cross-Cultural and Country-Specific Context and the Well-Being of Working Women: A Global Perspective are offered. The grouping of chapters within each section of the handbook offers parsimony and although a few chapters could have been included in multiple sections, the dominant focus of the chapter drove the decision of placement.

Each and every woman deserves a high quality life as defined by her. This is true across all organizational contexts, levels within organizations, policy issues and cultural settings. The focus on the well-being of working women provided in this handbook is a step in that direction. And the

good news is that interventions and research aimed at enhancing women’s well-being can ultimately benefit, women, men, organizations and society as a whole.

Part II – Gender, Social Group Hierarchy, and Well-Being of Working Women

In an exploration of the relationship between multiple forms of discrimination and well-being, Combs and Milosevic focus particular attention on the well-being of minority women who face a dual stigmatization on both gender and race/ethnicity. The authors reveal that work disengagement is one of the most common buffers used by minority women to protect themselves from daily discrimination. By focusing on the intersectionality of race and gender, Combs and Milosevic provide insightful prescriptions to help support and fully engage all employees, and in particular, minority women who are especially vulnerable to subtle discrimination in the workplace.

Also focusing on dual stigmatization, Bartels examines weight discrimination and gender. In a review of the literature, Bartels finds that overweight females face employment and wage penalties at a higher rate compared to overweight males or normal weight females. Also, women were twice as likely to report height/weight discrimination compared to men and perceived more discrimination at lower weight levels. Given the general lack of legislative protection for overweight employees, Bartels provides several employment strategies for both employers and job candidates to help reduce weight discrimination which will help employers recruit from an applicant pool that has not been artificially limited and will help individuals increase their sense of well-being in the workplace.

Reminding us that not all lesbians share the same pressures and that there is no single notion of lesbian identity, Woodruffe-Burton explores lesbian women’s work experiences focusing on issues of stereotyping and discrimination. She

discusses the complexities of seeking employment and early career development issues and the many considerations that go into the decision of whether to come out at work and face the risk of discrimination or to stay 'in the closet' with the result being that lesbian employees cannot fully be themselves at work. Woodruffe-Burton captures the constant pressures that lesbians face related to identity management in a heteronormative culture and the privileges that often are associated with heterosexuality or assumed heterosexuality.

With the assumption that intergenerational conflict exists in the workplace and that it is particularly salient for women who struggle to find work-life balance, Heath provides a discourse-based discussion on how generational differences may influence the way women (primarily professional) balance work-life issues. Heath provides evidence that suggests that the way women work in the future will be challenged by generational responses to gendered structures within the organization.

Focusing on sexual harassment in the workplace Holland and Cortina provide a thorough review of recent literature (mid 1990s to present) and deliver information on the prevalence and impact of sexual harassment in the lives of working women. The authors provide evidence and discuss how different features of context, such as organizational culture, power, training, and policies influence harassment in the workplace based on sex and gender. As their research shows, although gains have been made, sexual harassment is still a gendered form of abuse that takes place all too often in organizations and until it is stopped, it poses a serious threat to the well-being of working women.

Parks, Lundberg-Love, Luft, Stewart and Peddy focus on understanding how mental illness impacts working women and discuss how mental health professionals can better understand this important issue to limit the negative impact and enhance work-related functioning and well-being. As a large percentage of the workforce and frequently marginalized related to workplace equal treatment, women face unique challenges and deserve more attention since evidence has shown that one size fits all

policies do not lead to women reaching their maximum potential in the workplace. After an in-depth review of the literature, the authors provide a comprehensive list (although as they state, no list could be all-inclusive) of individual and collective interventions that must be offered together for long-term success to even be an option related to mental illness and well-being.

Parks et al. state that stress can be a root cause of mental illness or that it can absolutely exacerbate existing mental illness to a dangerous level. They also state that pinpointing stress can be as difficult as pinpointing mental illness. Fortunately, Richardsen, Traavik, and Burke provide an in-depth review on job stress and how it impacts working women. Their review shows that women face unique stressors and that they respond differently to general stressors compared to men. The authors provide information on primary prevention efforts that focus on the stress that politics, discrimination, work overload, barriers to achievement, sexual harassment and work home conflict (Burke 1996) cause women in the workplace; secondary prevention efforts that highlight what women can do to manage their own responses to stress such as exercise or other ways to release tension; and tertiary prevention efforts that focus on addressing the stress that is associated with executive life. Both organizations and women need to play a role in recognizing stress, the special needs of women and the impact on their well-being.

In the final chapter of this section, Lips discusses the worldwide persistent problem of the gender pay gap. The widening pay gap that exists between women and men in families with at least one child reveals that women are making job-related compromises much more often than men. Lips points out that a key variable in satisfaction and perceived fairness with pay is often related to different factors for women and men. Some women feel a lower level of entitlement compared to men, which means women may be satisfied even when they are paid less. As Lips points out, the well-being of working women is negatively affected by the gender pay gap which also damages society by discouraging women, limiting their ability to express their talents and reducing their overall contributions.

Part III – Women Leaders and Well-Being

Elsesser starts out this section of the Handbook with a review of the literature addressing gender bias against female leaders. Elsesser's review reveals that that bias exhibited against female leaders in the literature is often associated with studies that used hypothetical or laboratory-created leaders. On a positive note, in most studies where actual leaders were evaluated, little or no bias was found. While this is a positive research outcome, Elsesser cautions the reader that considerable bias still exists against female leaders in general, and in situations where little information is known about a female leader, male preference may dominate impressions, seriously compromising a female leader's ability to lead and negatively influencing her well-being.

Huffman focuses his chapter on women's differential access to managerial jobs as a key factor in generating and sustaining inequality in the workplace since managers play a critical role in decisions about hiring, compensation and other important organizational policies and procedures that affect inequality. Huffman provides an examination of trends reflecting women's status in management positions and he uses EEO-1 data to address the difficult question of whether female managers really matter. Although a complicated empirical matter, evidence suggests that women's increased access to managerial positions leads to weaker gender inequality at lower levels throughout an organization, suggesting that as women move up the hierarchical ranks, women at lower levels also benefit.

In an examination of how women's well-being in the workplace is both enhanced and diminished by other women, Kulik, Metz, and Gould review several different literatures to provide a better understanding of how both social and structural factors influence this interesting outcome. A review of relational demography literature focused on sex effects in groups and sex effects in dyads suggests that women experience positive psychological outcomes as a result of working for other women. However, psychologi-

cal well-being may not be accompanied by economic well-being, forcing women to choose between the two. Reviewing relational demography literature focused on sex effects across levels, the authors found, similar to Huffman, that women in top management positions positively influenced subsequent female representation in middle management positions.

All leaders are expected to express appropriate emotions in the workplace, but as Smith, Brescoll and Thomas point out, women have a narrower range of emotions that they can display in the workplace without penalty. The authors discuss the consequences of this double standard for women's well-being in the workplace. Finally the authors discuss the interesting intersection of gender, emotion expression and race since group memberships related to race or ethnicity, in addition to gender, may influence expectations for emotional expressions and subsequent evaluations.

Ehrich and Kimber review the literature on mentoring and the influence that it can have on women in management positions. After providing evidence of the lack of women in management positions world-wide, the authors provide both theoretical and empirical research related to mentoring before delivering illustrations of current mentoring programs for women. The contribution of different types of mentoring is discussed including the relatively new e-mentoring. The authors conclude that women have much to gain from different types of mentoring and also state that ongoing research is needed to strengthen our knowledge and understanding of the antecedents and outcomes of mentoring.

In a qualitative study based on an analysis of discourse, Chasserio, Poroli and Redien-Collot interviewed six entrepreneurial women leaders in France representing high growth industry and service sectors. By focusing on entrepreneurial women, the traditional gender norms that women often have to comply with to be successful are not necessarily part of the organizational context, in fact, the entrepreneurial women leaders can establish their own norms and traditions. In addition to a review of recent theoretical developments, the authors share what was learned

from the women entrepreneurs and suggest a possible redesign of leadership with regards to well-being at work.

Part IV – Professional Context and the Well-Being of Working Women

In the first chapter related to Professional Context, LaPierre, Hill and Jones focus on the well-being of women in the field of medicine, particularly related to women who choose to become physicians. Despite a rise in the number of female physicians in the United States, gender equity has not been met since women generally concentrate in lower status health occupations and are under-represented in leadership and management positions. Research suggests that women still experience a great deal of discrimination in medical school and in practicing medicine due to existing cultural norms. The chapter includes examination of continued gender disparities in medical specialties, career advancement and compensation as well as highlighting some of the experiences of female physicians, barriers that still exist and efforts that have been made to increase the well-being of female physicians.

Complementing the previous chapter by providing an empirical study within the healthcare industry, Wang, Wagner, Boyar, Corman and McKinley examine emotional and instrumental organizational family support, core self evaluations and burnout for 364 nurses (all female). Results from this study found that both types of organizational family support and core self evaluations were negatively related to burnout. Since women are facing escalating commitment to multiple life roles and an increasing need to balance work and family life, the results of this study have important implications for the well-being of women in the workplace. The personal characteristics of female employees in the healthcare industry should be considered in the design of organizational stress-intervention policies and a one-size-fits all strategy should be avoided for optimal results.

Changing the organizational context to traditionally male-dominated information technology (IT) firms, Drury examines factors related to the under-representation of women in IT. After sharing statistics that show that even with recent programs targeted to girls and women, the percentage of females in high tech occupations remains dismally low, Drury discusses interconnected factors that influence these numbers. These factors include misperceptions related to IT jobs, a lack of role models, mentors and sponsors, occupational jurisdiction in IT, and the gendered elements inherent in organizations. Finally, acknowledging that the mental, physical and financial well-being of women is complex, Drury states that women in IT must identify their personal and professional goals and take action, understanding that sacrifices are often made. But in the end, if change occurs and established patterns, beliefs and values are reconfigured, everyone's well-being could be enhanced.

Highlighting another professional context that has been traditionally male-dominated, Okpechi and Belmasrou developed a conceptual framework and provide an analysis of the results of a questionnaire that was returned by 38 female accountants from five states in the United States. In general, the women respondents rate positively their status within an accounting firm and the investments they made and returns they receive from being practicing accountants. However, the authors also note that promotion into strategic positions within accounting firms is constrained by the firm, family and gender inequality issues and long standing traditions in the accounting field with serious implications for female accountants' well-being.

Using a theoretical framework of professional careers in general, Tremblay focuses on lawyers in particular to address the important and timely question: to what extent is one's relationship to work and family shaped by his or her profession? From a sample of 115 lawyers, 46 (17 men and 29 women) were chosen to represent a variety of law practices. Interviews averaging 1.25 h in length were conducted. The analysis confirms the great difficulty in balancing work and family for all lawyers, but especially for female lawyers. Much is gained in the excerpts included from the

interviews. For example, the strategies and/or coping mechanisms developed over time and shaped by continued subjugation of the lawyers' experience and values offers valuable insight. Tremblay concludes that it is very difficult to be both a parent and a lawyer at the same time, causing many lawyers, especially women, to opt for other career paths.

Presenting another type of professional context, Eikhof examines constraints and hidden obstacles related to two relatively recent workplace developments, namely knowledge work and flexible work arrangements. Both of these developments appear to be supportive of women's workforce participation and advancement, but as Eikhof discusses, knowledge work can require a strong professional network and geographic and temporal mobility in an often precarious employment situation. Additionally, flexible working can create the expectation of 24/7 availability and often blurs the line between work and non-work resulting in conflict in both places. Women must also guard against problematic gender implications including invisibility and undervaluation of work since both can provide serious problems for both work-life balance and professional advancement.

Providing women-owned firms as another professional context, Coleman finds that women-owned firms perform similarly to firms owned by men when factors such as industry, firm size, firm age and growth are controlled. Firm size and growth are two primary areas where performance differences persist and the majority of women launch small, lifestyle firms, unlike the high growth entrepreneurial firms highlighted by Chasserio et al. in the previous section. Coleman finds that women face a barrier to entry in high growth industries due to differential access to resources such as human, social and financial capital and factors such as possible lower levels of entrepreneurial self efficacy and higher levels of risk aversion, different goals, and life/family situations. Finally, Coleman discusses areas where gains are being made by women which will lead to a broader array of options available to suit everyone's entrepreneurial desires.

Shortland provides the oil and gas exploration industry as the final professional context. She reveals survey results from 71 female assignees working in 17 host countries and provides excerpts and analysis of interviews from 12 women expatriates to uncover the factors related to their decision to work in highly gendered geographies, far from family in remote locations that are climatically harsh and can be dangerous. Results showed that some women expatriates thrive on adventure, the challenge and self discovery that comes with working in the oil and gas exploration industry, however, the same female expats also often found the blurring of work and non-work boundaries and often had to conform with local behavioral norms for their own safety. Support systems provided by organizations were highly valued by the women and could make a big difference in their well-being at work.

Part V – Public Policy, Organizational Policy and Societal Influences on the Well-Being of Working Women

In the first chapter in this section, Sabattini and Crosby examine policies, programs, and practices that can result in more gender-inclusive work environments and help both men and women better manage work-life responsibilities. Specifically, the authors provide an examination of national and state laws related to work-family and work-life concerns. Next they detail organizational programs and practices such as access to leave policies, work-life programs and an emphasis on flexibility. Finally, suggestions are offered that could result in increased effectiveness of programs offered and they highlight the potential for broader cultural change within organizations which would benefit the well-being of working women.

Another important gap that negatively affects working women's well-being is the gender-career estimation gap. Kaiser provides a theoretical framework to help understand the self-underestimated career prospects of women and he provides examples of statistical discrimi-

nation in the labor market. Both of these realities are assessed as a self-fulfilling prophecy-phenomenon which work to women's disadvantage in the labor market. Next, Kaiser, presents the results from an empirical study that provides evidence of a gender-career estimation gap for German public sector workers that likely underestimates the career prospects of women worldwide.

Camp, Trzcinski and Resko explore the historical and cultural context of working women in Germany and discuss the reasons for recent labor market policy changes and how these changes could affect women from various socioeconomic groups differently. Next, the authors use data to explore women's satisfaction with life, work, child care and health, all which influence the well-being of working women. Finally, the well-being of women at different education levels, vulnerable women, women with disabilities and women with children is examined along with implications for part time work.

Cram, Alkadry and Tower address two inter-related questions facing women who want to achieve both a successful career and a fulfilling family life: Are there career costs for family life? Are there social costs to career success? To address these important questions, the authors explore the tradeoff between family and career for women in both public and private US companies. Then the authors trace the roots of the problem. Finally, the authors recommend organizational, policy and societal remedies to improve the employer-employee mismatch related to work-life balance or satisfaction. A key take away from this chapter is that neither women nor men can truly 'have it all' but that a balance must be found where career success is not defined by complete devotion to work, and family success is not dependent on unfair distribution of family duties.

Lyonette, Baldauf and Behle examine part-time work in the European Union and other developed countries followed by a review of qualitative data gathered from the United Kingdom government-funded Quality Part-Time Work Fund initiative which was implemented to increase the availability of better part-time job

opportunities. The costs and benefits of increasing quality part-time work are discussed along with how quality part-time jobs improve the balance between work and family roles for mothers. The authors conclude with a discussion of the implications of this research on women's work-life balance and overall well-being.

In a twist to the more common decision of opting out of professional careers to become mothers, Biese and McKie present four case studies drawn from the narratives of 16 professional women living and working in the United States and Finland who have chosen to opt in. The choice of these two countries offers an interesting cultural context since the two countries are both similar and different in important ways. The authors explore how organizational culture influences individuals' identities and how they make sense of themselves and their careers, which influences the choices that they make. Next, the idea of reinvention related to opting in is discussed along with an analysis of the relevant issues affecting the decision to opt in and the implications for well-being.

Peterson provides a broad overview of the impact that the longest economic downturn since World War II (labeled the Great Recession dated 2007–2009) had on the well-being of women working in the United States. Peterson provides a feminist economist framework which offers insights for examining how women's positions changed during the recovery period. The literature review highlights the importance of recognizing the complex relationships between the well-being of working women, macroeconomic factors, labor market, family structures and gender belief systems.

Utilizing a longitudinal case study methodology, Vázquez-Carrasco, López-Pérez and Centeno interviewed six women in management positions in Spain at two different periods of their professional lives. The timing of the interviews (2008–2013) is important due to changes the women faced in both work and family settings, but another important variable is the change in economic and labor conditions in Spain due to the same global economic downfall discussed in the previous chapter. The analysis revealed five compelling themes

associated with possible gender-related discrimination, attitudes towards labor risk and financial problems, reasons why women may decide on a new business, work-family conflict and women in foreign business. The results suggest that in a short time frame, the job environment changed considerably and employment relationships took a severe downturn not experienced before, negatively impacting the well-being of working women.

Saunders provides the final chapter in this section by reviewing ways a feminist perspective can help women in the workplace by challenging traditional gender-roles, providing a context for discrimination and offering an increased sense of competency managing, which could lead to an increase in well-being. Saunders discusses the link between feminism and specific outcomes such as mental health, improved working conditions, career fulfillment, adversity in the workplace, work/life balance and inequality in the workplace. Finally, she links Feminist Identity Development with well-being in the workplace and provides recommendations for a more equitable work place.

Part VI – Cross-Cultural and Country-Specific Context and the Well-Being of Working Women: A Global Perspective

While some of the previous chapters may have included a sample from a specific country, if the focal point of the chapter was not about the geographic location, then the chapter was not included in this section. This section focusing on providing a global vision is reserved for chapters where the global context of the chapter or location of the sample provided a primary focal point of the chapter.

Punnett provides a true global perspective as she focuses on how women are faring in the workforce around the world. The evidence presented reveals that women are improving their status in the workplace, but that major challenges are still faced in all countries. Punnett reports the findings from a Gallup poll that suggest that, worldwide, men are twice as likely to

have “good jobs” compared to women which obviously could have detrimental impacts on the well-being of working women everywhere. Interestingly, Punnett’s review of the literature suggests that the challenges facing women globally differ in degree, but not kind—stereotypes are common around the world and women’s primary role is often seen as a caretaker for the family.

Utilizing the World Values Survey with a sample of nearly 70,000 individuals from around 50 countries, M. Salinas-Jiménez, Artés and J. Salinas-Jiménez’s chapter examines the role that educational attainment and different patterns of work play in influencing the life satisfaction of men and women while also examining the social context related to gender inequality across countries. Their results suggest social roles matter in shaping perceptions of well-being for both men and women. Specifically, for many variables, such as income, health, age, religiosity, men and women’s subjective well-being is affected in similar ways, but for other variables, such as education, professional status, and the role of the main wage earner in the household, well-being impacts in significantly different ways depending on gender, especially in countries where gender inequality is higher compared to countries with low gender inequality.

Bericat’s chapter provides a comparative analysis of European women’s socioemotional well-being across different employment situations. Data were drawn from a module of the Socioemotional Well-Being Index which is a composite indicator of subjective well-being based on sociological theories of emotion. Results reveal that European women score 12 and a half points lower than men on socioemotional well-being suggesting that there is gender inequality throughout Europe on this important measure. Bericat also discusses outcomes on the measure related to working status for women, age, education, chronic illness or disability, unemployment, job insecurity self-employment and other variables of interest. This comprehensive overview suggests that the well-being of individuals is socially conditioned and requires rigorous study.

In a review of the gender division of housework, Baxter and Tai provide primary theoretical perspectives and important empirical research. Examining data from the International Social Survey Program, Baxter and Tai find that across 29 countries, women spend, on average, 20 h per week on household chores and men spend 7–9 h per week. The findings show wide variations across countries which has implications for time pressure, work-family conflict and general happiness, all of which affect well-being.

Ngo and Liu's chapter examines the cultural and economic context in China that impacts organizational practices, conditions for employment and employees' work orientations and values. Ngo and Liu also provide a thorough review of research on the job and career satisfaction of Chinese workers while identifying important personal, family-related and work-related antecedents focusing on variables that have been found to affect gender differences in satisfaction at work.

Focusing on working women in Arab countries, Sidani provides a 'cautious optimism' perspective. He acknowledges the unique institutional factors in the Arab world that obstruct women's progress and have a negative impact on their quality of life, while also providing arguments that suggest why 'cautious optimism' is warranted.

Concentrating specifically on the experiences of educated women in Iran, Mehdizadeh discusses the challenges that working mothers face when trying to balance work and family. She reveals the high level of anxiety that Iranian mothers face related to the emotional, physiological and educational elements related to their child while they are working. Although some organizations have instituted family-friendly policies and there are well-developed government policies regarding work and care reconciliation, the sociocultural norms in Iran lead to great pressure and decreased well-being (both physical and psychological) as women balance their triple roles as employee, wife, and mother.

In another country-specific chapter, Noor and Mahudin examine work, family and women's

well-being in Malaysia. Similar to Iran, the socio-cultural historical context greatly influences the perceptions of the importance of the roles that men and women take. Noor and Mahudin share several recommendations to increase the well-being of Malaysian women in the workplace including, but not limited to, viewing work-family issues as social issues instead of personal problems and mandating public and private sector firms to offer family-friendly workplace policies. Finally, the authors suggest that a new 'cultural policy' is needed that creates new social norms. While this may be a daunting task, it is one that is needed.

Seeking to investigate the reality of women on the Boards of Directors in Brazilian companies, Lazzaretti and Godoi use Human Capital Theory as a framework. They utilize both theoretical and empirical research and statistical data to show the rates of female participation in the Brazilian marketplace and Boards, and they also provide insight and solutions based on a qualitative study analyzing the education and professional experiences of Brazilian female directors. Results revealed inequality of opportunities for women and a strong influence of family ties with company owners.

In the final chapter that focuses on a specific country, Karim and Law acknowledge the important influence of microcredit participation on the empowerment and well-being of women in Bangladesh. The authors conducted a study using a cross-sectional design and a sample of 342 married men from villages in northwest Bangladesh. Results showed that 52 % of married women were microcredit participants but that in 81 % of the cases, the loans were fully controlled by their husbands. The husband's gender ideology had a significant influence on both household male dominance and women's active microcredit participation. The authors suggest that future research address resource and power imbalances between a husband and wife in relationship with microcredit participation.

In a review of theoretical and empirical studies addressing how women's workforce participation in developing countries impacts the risk of spousal violence against them, Chin,

unfortunately, found consistent support for a violence-triggering effect of female employment. In fact, one study reviewed found that women in professional occupations that have the most bargaining power faced that highest risk of spousal violence. Chin suggests that a sophisticated approach is needed as policies related to women's empowerment and attainment of bargaining power are developed in patriarchal societies.

Finally, in a review of literature related to discrimination and workplace stigma against women living with immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in Sub-Saharan African countries, Icheku found overwhelming evidence for the negative impact that HIV has on the well-being of working women. In addition to the physical demands of living with HIV, the stigma and discrimination associated with the disease causes constant stress, worries and anxiety. Many workers, especially women, deal with unauthorized disclosure of the disease which often leads to stigmatizing and discriminatory behaviors. Icheku provides two workplace programs to minimize the negative impact of HIV-related stigma and discrimination on women in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Part VII – Epilogue

The final section of the handbook provides a thought-provoking discussion focusing on women's eudaemonia (well-being, happiness, fulfilled life). Based on a gap in existing happiness/well-being/quality-of-life research, the epilogue proposes feminist eudaemonia as a promising research direction to promote women's eudaimonic well-being. To help further the scholarly area of feminist eudaimonia, sixteen primary research questions are posed, many with sub-questions, offering a platform for rich investigations, analyses, and examinations to inform future theoretical frameworks, qualitative and quantitative studies, and policy generation across organizations and societies.

Conclusion

This handbook provides extensive and in-depth analyses of high quality scholarship of the important topic of the well-being of working women. Whether from an eudaimonic or hedonic view, it is our hope that it will be used to stimulate further discussion and research while also influencing decision makers in organizations and society with the practical implications suggested to enhance the well-being of working women.

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Part II

Gender, Social Group Hierarchy, and Well-Being of Working Women

Workplace Discrimination and the Wellbeing of Minority Women: Overview, Prospects, and Implications

2

Gwendolyn M. Combs and Ivana Milosevic

Introduction

The positive outcomes of employee wellbeing have received increased attention (Berry et al. 2010; Wright et al. 1993; Wright and Cropanzano 2000). The term wellbeing encompasses numerous concepts such as happiness, life satisfaction, quality of work or personal life; and can be general or domain specific (Anderson et al. 2011). Research demonstrates that individual wellbeing is a critical antecedent to sustainable employee performance and retention (Avey et al. 2010; Cropanzano and Wright 2001; Piccolo et al. 2012). Wellbeing is also positively associated with social relationships (Diener and Seligman 2002) and mental and physical functioning (Roysamb et al. 2003).

Although research regarding wellbeing in the workplace is strong, the connection of discrimination and workplace inequalities to the wellbeing

of minority women has not gained a prominent place in this discourse (Buzzanell et al. 2007; Hughes and Dodge 1997). According to the 2010 US Census, women of color comprise 33 % of the women in the workforce (Burns et al. 2012). The sizable representation of minority women in the US workforce suggests that the voices of minority women are important to the discussion of workplace wellbeing. Additionally, the intersectionality of race and gender may result in work experiences that may be attributed to identity salient prescriptions (e.g., harassment/discrimination) that may affect interpretations of work context (Buzzanell et al. 2007; Combs 2003). Such identity salient interpretations may, in turn, influence individual determinations of wellbeing.

Workplace discrimination research suggests that stress and health related disorders are associated with perceived discrimination (Ganster and Rosen 2013). For example, Minor-Rubino and Cortina (2007) propose that whether direct, indirect or vicarious, experienced inequality and discrimination can affect the wellbeing of women. Moreover, such stressors can increase vulnerability to illness including mental and physical disorders (Ganster and Rosen 2013). In addition to access discrimination in the hiring process, minority women hold a peculiar position in gendered pay disparities and inequities in promotion and career progression (Catalyst 2013a). This irregular position in relationship to majority women may

Note: Due to representation in the literature we use the terms women of color and minority women interchangeably.

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potentially compound a negative perception/experience of wellbeing for minority women.

Research inquiring into the effects of discrimination on individual wellbeing in the workplace is relatively new, with the majority of the research cited in this chapter conducted primarily over the last 10 years. In addition, research into the relationship between minority women wellbeing and experiences of discrimination is particularly recent and scarce (Berdahl and Moore 2006; Pascoe and Richman 2009). Therefore, in this chapter we illuminate some of the recent findings to draw attention to the wellbeing of minority women in the workplace. More specifically, this chapter will be organized as follows. We first report research findings in the area of discrimination and its negative impact on wellbeing. Next, borrowing from the literature on gender discrimination, we illuminate the disparate workplace experiences faced by women that result in and contribute to gender based inequalities and discrimination. Borrowing from the general gender discrimination literature is necessary because the disaggregation of data regarding discrimination towards minority women is not common. Then, we apply the negative health outcomes of discrimination and gendered experiences of women to actual and perceived wellbeing of minority women. Finally, we will offer suggestions for managers and researchers on how to move forward. Specifically, we will discuss two levels of action: (1) The organizational level, or how organizational process systems should be redesigned so they are more inclusive and attentive to the concerns of minority women; and (2) the individual level, or how minority women may build their psychological capacity for sustainability and minimize the impact of discrimination on their wellbeing generally and at work.

The convergence of the impact of discrimination, work experiences of women of color, and workplace wellbeing is important for two reasons. First, most research on discrimination and employee wellbeing targets either majority women (in terms of gender) or minority men (in terms of race (Combs 2003)). This focus results in a fractured and incomplete understanding of wellbeing and the intersectionality of race and gender for women of color. Second, the increasing number of minority women entering the

workplace and the demonstrated connection between wellbeing and work performance makes it critically important for organizations to recognize and attend to the duality of race and gender on wellbeing.

Discrimination and Wellbeing in the Workplace

Research continues to espouse the benefits of diversity and organizations are admonished to initiate practices that encourage more inclusive work environments (Pascoe and Richman 2009; Roberson 2006; Shore et al. 2011). Although access based discrimination may have dissipated over the years, research suggests that members of stigmatized groups (e.g., women, racial and ethnic minorities, and older workers) are more likely to experience discrimination compared to members of non-stigmatized groups and are more likely to be disadvantaged (Crocker and Major 1989; Grossman 2000; John J. Heldrich Center 2002). For example, EEOC charges from 2007 to 2008 rose to a record high of 95,402 (15 % increase). Charges reached 99,947 in 2011 with 99,412 charges in 2012. Race and gender charges comprise 33.7 % and 30.5 % respectively of all charges in 2012 (EEOC 2013). These statistics suggest that instances of workplace discrimination remain an issue.

Discrimination and Health Influences

The continued prevalence of workplace discrimination is of concern due to its adverse effect on individual stress and aspects of wellbeing (Ryff et al. 2003). For example, Inzlicht et al. (2006) found that individuals whose stigma was made salient are more likely to experience discrimination and are consequently more likely to have impaired self-control compared to those whose stigma is not salient. The experience of discrimination may leave individuals with fewer resources for engaging in healthy behaviors and productive work. Studies have found that high levels of discrimination or prejudice can negatively impact the psychological and physical wellbeing of its

targets (Clark et al. 1999; Ganster and Rosen 2013; Gee et al. 2007)

The high occurrence of discrimination coupled with the covert, subtle and aversive nature of “modern racism” or “current day” discrimination may contribute to more psychological and emotional trauma associated with discriminatory acts. For example, aversive racism describes a form of implicit prejudicial behavior where discriminatory acts are committed by those who believe they hold egalitarian non-biased beliefs and values (Dovidio et al. 2002). Similarly, Brief et al. (2000) demonstrated that modern racism is a function of perceived or actual sanction of discriminatory behavior couched in the context of a legitimate business justification. Drawing from McConahay (1986), Brief and colleagues suggest that the primary tenets of modern racism include taken for truth beliefs such as: discrimination is a relic of past decades, blacks [minorities] are pushing too hard; blacks [minorities] are receiving gains, status, and attention that is undeserved; methods and demands of blacks [minorities] are unfair; and that racism is wrong (for a full description see, Brief et al. 2000). In summary, those operating under the tenets of modern racism do not see themselves as racists and work to protect a non-racist image.

Minority groups may rely more on nonverbal behavior in cross racial interactions (Dovidio et al. 2002), so reactions to aversive and modern racism may be exacerbated. For example, in a social gathering one author of this chapter directly observed a minority woman demonstrate intense psychological and emotional anguish as she attempted to explain her challenge of figuring out the meaning and motivation of cues in her work environment. She talked about cues that on the one hand praised her skills and expertise, but at the same time raised questions/doubts about her ability to be successful and productive. Not observing this dichotomy in her peers and being the only minority woman in her peer group, she questioned whether her experience was due to gender, race or both. These and other types of subtle discrimination may result in what we term “interpretational ambiguity” for targets of perceived discriminatory acts. We define interpretational ambiguity as a failure in the ability to make

sense of aversive, conflicting, and colliding circumstances. Interpretational ambiguity may be triggered as targets of discrimination attempt to identify actual discriminatory intent and develop mechanisms to buffer the emotional and psychological effects of the discriminatory experience. Although not necessarily gender specific, we contend that operating in this context of interpretational ambiguity can lead to levels of self-questioning and inauthentic behaviors at work that can negatively impact wellbeing (Erickson and Ritter 2001). We further suggest that women of color suffer doubly.

Resource Deficits and Illness Vulnerability

Harmful health effects of discrimination include depression, psychological distress and decreased levels of overall wellbeing (Kessler et al. 1999; Pascoe and Richman 2009; Williams et al. 2003) as well as physical health problems such as hypertension, and substance abuse (see Williams and Mohammed 2009, for a review). Discrimination has been represented as a particularly harmful stressor that over time depletes individual psychological and physiological resources (Ganster and Rosen 2013). This resource deficit can have a negative impact on situational and general wellbeing (Ganster and Rosen 2013; Major et al. 2002; Williams and Mohammed 2009). Our personal discussions with women of color indicate that resource depletion may lead to derailed careers, self-isolation, depression, low self-esteem and confidence, paranoia, and general lack of personal engagement. Thus, the consequences on wellbeing stemming from discrimination for women of color may be quite significant. Given this background, efforts toward increasing employee wellbeing may be fruitless without proactive and intentional action aimed at recognizing and eliminating experiences of modern racism and subtle forms of workplace discrimination.

To further understand the negative health outcomes of discrimination, it is useful to conceptualize discrimination as an uncontrollable and unpredictable stressor that increases individual

vulnerability to illness (Ganster and Rosen 2013; Major et al. 2002; Williams and Mohammed 2009). Research on the psychological implications of discrimination has utilized a stress framework to analyze the behavior of the individuals targeted by discrimination (Major et al. 2002). For example, Pascoe and Richman (2009) suggest that discrimination is a social stressor that triggers a particular physiological response (e.g., elevated blood pressure, heart rate, or cortisol secretions) which may over time have adverse effects on individual wellbeing. Similarly, Gee et al. (2007) proposed that repeated experiences with discrimination can result in chronic stressors that produce long-term negative health effects. Moreover, Jackson et al. (2010) found that individuals who are chronically confronted with stressful conditions in their lives will engage in unhealthy behavior such as smoking, alcohol abuse and overeating in order to alleviate the symptoms of stress. Although these behaviors do in fact help alleviate stress, they also contribute to the deterioration of physical wellbeing and the development of health disorders later in life.

In a recent meta-analysis of 134 samples, Pascoe and Richman (2009) found that perceived discrimination has a significant negative impact on both mental and physical wellbeing, increased feelings of stress, and is related to increased participation in unhealthy behaviors. Also, chronic discrimination contributes to overall long-term poor wellbeing (Pavalko et al. 2003; Pascoe and Richman 2009). For example, using a longitudinal design, Pavalko et al. (2003) found that women who believed they were discriminated against in the years between 1977 and 1982 were more likely to experience some type of physical illness in 1989 compared to women who did not. Similarly, Branscombe et al. (1999) found that among women, but not men, perceptions of discrimination were associated with harmful consequences. Given the considerable evidence that poor wellbeing is associated with undesirable organizational outcomes (Cooper and Payne 1988; Ellemers et al. 2012), understanding how discrimination impacts the wellbeing of minority women is of critical importance.

Minority Women and Discrimination

As members of dual stigmatized groups, minority women experience workplace discrimination based on both gender and race/ethnicity (Bell and Nkomo 2001; Combs 2003). Given the demonstrated negative psychological, emotional, and physiological effects of discriminatory treatment (Gee et al. 2007; Major et al. 2002), the workplace wellbeing of minority women can be seriously jeopardized. Our review of the literature revealed a dearth in terms of studies of the experience of minority women generally or by specific racial or ethnic group. Our discussion of minority women and discrimination will pull from the literature related to general gender discrimination, and where available discrimination regarding African American and other minority women.

Although EEOC charge statistics are not delineated for minority women, data from other sources suggest that minority women may be particularly vulnerable to even subtle and aversive discrimination that could influence their perceptions of wellbeing (Berdahl and Moore 2006). Catalyst reports that in 2012, women of color represented only 3.3 % of Fortune 500 board members; and, with some exceptions for Asian women, weekly wages of minority women continue to lag behind those of minority men, white women and white men (Catalyst 2013b). There is clear evidence that the overall representation of women in managerial and executive positions considerably lags the representation of men (Berdahl and Moore 2006; Eagly and Sczesny 2009; Ryan and Haslam 2007). These numbers become even more discouraging for minority women in management and executive positions where the participation rates remains at around 5 % (EEO-1 National Aggregate Report 2011). Such workplace experiences for minority women could result in feelings of unfairness and tokenism (Kanter 1977) with serious negative impact on perceived wellbeing.

Tokenism and Stereotypes

Specific arguments regarding differing experiences for women in the workplace is embedded within the tokenism literature (Kanter 1977; King et al. 2010; Nelson and Burke 2000). Tokenism refers to individuals who are the first or one of a kind in a particular context and who make up less than 15 % of the work group, unit, or organization (Kanter 1977; Nelson and Burke 2000). Women and minorities in managerial positions are often the only or one of few representatives of their demographic group in managerial ranks which can lead to the experience of token status. Kanter (1977) argued that because the token is different from others in a manner that is highly visible (such as race, gender, or physical disability), the token will more likely be noticed and others will tend to judge whether the token's performance compares favorably to the performance of others who traditionally occupied the position. For example, a minority woman who is an engineer or an executive may experience added scrutiny and heightened evaluation of her work compared to males occupying similar positions. Tokens may be under pressure to act as representatives for their groups, feel isolated from their networks, and particularly vulnerable to stereotypes and discrimination stemming from their visible differences (Nelson and Burke 2000).

Although empirical research on experiences of tokenism provides mixed conclusions, findings suggest that token status results in negative outcomes depending on the particularities of the contexts (King et al. 2010). For example, research found that in traditionally male dominated contexts, such as the military and engineering, women tended to feel socially isolated with limited opportunities for engagement in roles that are traditionally considered feminine (Goldenhar et al. 1998; Yoder 1983; Yoder and Schleicher 1996). King et al. (2010) recently examined organizational context in understanding token status. Study results show that women's experience of token status is related to their perceptions of inequitable gender climate in their organizations. Moreover, women's perceptions of gender climate

are negatively related to job satisfaction, affective commitment, and helping behaviors, and positively related to turnover intentions and job stress. The authors suggest that token status stems from subjective perceptions and thus its negative outcomes may be avoided by nurturing an equitable gender climate and focusing on systematic inclusion (King et al. 2010).

Another area of research important to the wellbeing of minority women is the concept of stereotype threat. Stereotype threat describes a situation in which individuals suspect their actions may be judged based on negative biases and stereotypes based on identity group membership, rather than merit (Steele and Aronson 1995). The premise is that the fear of being stereotyped or having ones actions support existing negative stereotypes may negatively impact individual performance (Steele 1997). African American women are typically portrayed as strong, independent, and aggressive (Sanchez-Hucles 1997) and sometimes labeled as "angry". Wanting to avoid the negativity of the angry stereotype, African American women may lessen the expression of confidence and try to appear less self-defining. This act of adjustment could lead to performance deficits. Inzlicht and Kang (2010) found that prolonged exposure to stereotype threats may not only impact relevant performance levels, but may have multiple affects extending to more general life domains. More specifically, they found a "spillover effect" of stereotype threat extending to aggression and hostility, food intake and decision making. This spillover effect could have considerable wellbeing implications for minority women due to the stereotypes that are associated with race and gender.

Workplace Harassment

Recent research suggests that targets of discrimination and harassment often experience multiple forms of mistreatment simultaneously (Berdahl and Moore 2006). For example, Berdahl and Moore (2006) submit that gender harassment often occurs alongside racial harassment (Berdahl

and Moore 2006). The EEOC receives thousands of cases annually that fall into these categories. Gender and racial harassment can be subtle or severe and pervasive and create a hostile and intimidating work environment. Gender and race based harassment often pose a challenge in that what constitutes harassment can be subjective. However, harassment that reaches the level of hostile environment can affect targets in very negative ways. Research has established that sexual and racial harassment at work may lead to negative physical, psychological, and organizational well-being for minority women compared to their majority female counterparts (Schneider et al. 2000, 1997).

Workplace harassment research has been somewhat silent regarding the extent and particular experiences of minority women (Pascoe and Richman 2009). Yet, it is reasonable to argue that if most recipients of sexual harassment at work are women and most of the recipients of racial harassment are minorities, minority women may experience double jeopardy in their vulnerability to workplace harassment (Berdahl and Moore 2006). The double jeopardy hypothesis stems from research on the joint effects of gender and racial discrimination (Beal 1970; Berdahl and Moore 2006; Garcia 1989; Lorber 1998; Texeira 2002). Empirical analysis of the double jeopardy hypothesis has reported that African-American and Hispanic women experience more pay disparities (Browne 1999) and segregation into low end, less desirable jobs (Aldridge 1999; Spalter et al. 1999). More recently, Pascoe and Richman (2009) found that minority women were significantly more harassed compared to majority women, minority men, and majority men, thus demonstrating that minority women are particularly vulnerable to workplace harassment.

Minority Women, Discrimination and Wellbeing

Extant research often overlooks the unique position of minority women who are likely to experience the most discrimination in comparison to other commonly studied demographic groups

(Berdahl and Moore 2006). For example, the majority of research on sexual harassment and gender discrimination has focused on experiences of majority women (Cortina 2001; Mecca and Rubin 1999) and the study of race-based discrimination has predominately analyzed the experiences of minority men (Hull et al. 1982). Consequently, our understanding of discrimination experiences of minority women and consequences of that discrimination is limited. Therefore, we thought it instructive to establish a context by providing summaries of a few brief anecdotal examples from minority women (across several races) of their work experiences related to discrimination and workplace wellbeing. We used a panel of minority women with extensive experience in both the public and private sectors. All of our panelists have held leadership roles in their respective fields at either middle or executive levels. In addition, four of our panelists have experience in consulting, three panelists work in higher education, and one has extensive entrepreneurial experience across different industries. With this panel, a wide range of experiences are represented. These summaries are in no way represented here as scientific analysis, but merely for the purpose of illustration.

A relevant, yet insufficiently explored, issue is whether psychological and occupational consequences of experiencing multiple forms of harassment are qualitatively different for minority women, leaving an important opportunity for future research (Buchanan and Fitzgerald 2008). The research imperative is illustrated in a comment from one minority woman:

I take pride in being a Black woman. Sadly others don't always understand or accept all that I bring to the workplace. I think that the lens from my view is one by which I can offer much. Unfortunately, I am treated sometimes in a manner that is inappropriate, but I am not able to pinpoint it to my gender or race. I think it is because of both.

Schmitt et al. (2002) found that perceptions of discrimination were positively related to harmful consequences among women but not among men. More specifically, research on stress and health outcomes among women managers suggests that some stressors (e.g., role conflict and

overload) were shared by women and men. However, other stressors including discrimination, negative attitudes toward women in management, sexual harassment and tokenism were found to be unique for women (Davidson and Fielden 1999; Langan-Fox 1998; Offermann and Armitage 1993).

Bell and Nkomo (2001) insightfully documented the experiences of professional African American women. Their findings indicated that African American women experienced *racialized sexism*, where gender discrimination and race/ethnic discrimination are interwoven. More specifically, women in their study reported hitting a concrete wall, actions of which are represented through discourse that included statements such as “reserved only for men” and “there certainly weren’t any blacks [in this position]” (p. 139). Bell and Nkomo (2001) argue that this concrete wall experienced by professional African American women manifests itself in six ways: (1) Daily doses of racism; (2) being held to a higher standard; (3) the invisibility vise; (4) exclusion from informal networks; (5) challenges to authority; and (6) hollow company commitment to the advancement of minorities.

Although not all African American, the minority women we talked with made mention of several of the manifestations mentioned by Bell and Nkomo (2001). Experiences of token status remain a salient issue for minority women. Comment from our panel of minority women describe how being the “first or only minority woman in their work environment at the managerial/professional level” led others to question their ability and commitment to work. As a consequence, they carry the burden of maintaining a demeanor that is “relentlessly focused, all-business, socially “correct”; “get it done well, quietly and quickly.” The women also spoke of discrimination in the form of “micro-inequities” of not being invited to lunches or to pertinent work discussions, comments ignored at a meeting, etc. These micro-inequities impact access to informal networks that are important for career advancement and organizational survival. Also, token status was often communicated in comments from majority colleagues like, “Who

would have thought that a person like you would be in this position.” In that others in that position were white and male, the statement was perceived as a demeaning reference to both race and gender.

The notion of invisibility was also mentioned as discriminatory acts that negatively impact the wellbeing of minority women. Comments such as: “As a consequence, I move extremely well “*in the background and on the periphery.*” One woman equated her visibility to being there but not there, visibility was afforded when it benefited the organization, otherwise as she states, “*I felt that I was not to have an opinion, particularly if it did not support the majority view.*” Additionally, disadvantages due to race and gender in resolving workplace conflicts were expressed. The concerns of the minority women were subjugated to the desires and in one instance protection for their male and female majority peers. The position of the minority women did not matter and they were treated in “*disrespectful*” and “*condescending*” ways. A Native woman describes this situation working on a project about Native women with other white project members:

I was selected to be a part of this project because I am a Native woman. Yet my voice is often not heard... I seem to be invisible. Who I am is important to them when it helps them achieve their goal of getting the funding and opportunities for the project but not so when it comes to fully including me in the decisions made about the project.

Minority women also adjust their behaviors in order to have their voices heard without the danger of backlash that works to create or perpetuate a stressful and sometimes hostile work environment. For example, we heard of “balancing acts” where they want to make sure that they are heard but in a way that is not going to “hurt the egos” of their male colleagues. This effort adds to an already stressful environment, by requiring them to go above and beyond to deliver their opinions while still wondering whether that opinion will be heard and if so, will it result in devastating consequences for them. One woman said: “*My response is immediately seething anger and that I am feeling used and exploited. But of course I*