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# Representation of Women Leaders in Business Magazines: 2010-2018

Kia Ja'Shona Cooper  
*University of North Florida*

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REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN LEADERS IN  
BUSINESS MAGAZINES: 2010-2018

by

Kia' J. Cooper

A thesis submitted to the School of Communication  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science in Communication Management

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### Certificate of Approval

The thesis of Kia Cooper is approved

(Date)

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Dr. John H. Parmelee

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Dr. Stephynie Perkins

---

---

Dr. Berrin Beasley

Accepted by the Communication Department:

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---

Dr. John H. Parmelee

Chair

Accepted for the College of Arts and Science:

---

---

Dr. George Rainbolt

Dean

Accepted for the University:

---

---

Dr. John Kantner

Dean of the Graduate School

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## Abstract

This framing analysis focuses on the portrayal of women leaders in popular business magazines. Framing theory was used to examine how women leaders were portrayed in Forbes, Fortune, Entrepreneur, and Bloomberg Businessweek magazines from 2010-2018. The study identified three key frames, which include the minority frame, asset and fixer frame, and the work-life balance frame. Further findings from the study suggested that the portrayals of women have changed following the women's movement in the 1970's and that women are indeed beneficial to organizations in senior-level positions, although there is still a low percentage of women in these roles.

Historically women in the workforce have occupied jobs that are traditionally viewed as positions fit for the female gender, such as educators, nurses, and secretaries. Many studies have suggested that women are continually viewed in frames that are stereotypical, “The earliest studies were inspired by the Women’s Movement in the early 1970s; this research consistently showed that advertisements confined women primarily to traditional mother-, home-, or beauty/sex-oriented roles, which were not representative of women’s diverse roles in society” (Lindner, 2004, p. 409). After the women’s movement, a campaign in which women sought to fight for equal rights and liberation, women pursued more non-traditional roles, which defied the cult of domesticity and allowed women to seek positions in various industries that were less domesticated and considered predominantly male in nature. In today’s society, women professionals are steadily increasing across the world and women have strategically escalated into a multitude of roles including senior leadership positions such as communication managers, which is evident from the expansion of women CEOs since the first in 1972 (Pew Research Center, 2018). However, the media coverage for women professionals is very low compared to men in similar positions, which can partially be attributed to the lack of women in senior-level positions over time (Brunner, 2006). While women are just as equally qualified and experienced as men for these positions, research suggests that this disparity exists due to the lack of scholarly research and mentorships for senior-level positions geared toward women professionals. (Brunner, 2006)

Framing and priming from the media plays a vital role in how much and in what ways women professionals are represented and viewed within society. While men are stereotypically viewed in positions of power and leadership, accurate and sufficient representation of women



leaders in the media could have a positive influence on how society, especially young women, view women in the workforce. Several studies have shown that women leaders are equally capable of leadership roles, and one study from Pew Research (2018) discovered that 6.4 percent of Fortune 500 companies had women CEOs in 2017. This paper seeks to examine how women leaders are characterized within business magazines from the last decade. A qualitative frame analysis was used to determine the changes overtime, if any, on how women leaders are characterized in print media, specifically business magazines. Along with this analysis, framing theory will serve as the primary theory to understand how women are characterized in media that are specifically geared toward the business industry.

## Literature Review

### Framing of Women in the Media

Traditionally there have always been gender differences in the way men and women are viewed across media outlets. Typically, women are depicted as sexual objects or in domesticated roles for the purpose of entertainment or advertising and “Despite some shifts in the portrayal of women since the early 1970s, there seems to be no serious trend toward less gender stereotyping” (Linder, 2004, p. 411). Framing “refers to the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p, 104), and the framing of women in media affects the perspectives that society has about women. The way in which women are portrayed in the media results in women being viewed as less powerful and less important than men in society due to stereotypical gender roles, especially since many Americans generate ideas and views on groups of people based on

media coverage. This is mainly due to the fact that stereotypical gender roles are created from observation of sex-roles in society, with men being viewed as the breadwinner and women's roles being more favorable toward homemakers or lower-status roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Furthermore, utilization of media frames "refers to the words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker (e.g., a politician, a media outlet) uses when relaying information about an issue or event to an audience" (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 100). As a result, frames in communication alter how individuals and society understand an issue or shape their opinions. The impact of framing can be very crucial to any group at any particular time as it is used across varying media outlets including television, social media, and even newspaper and magazine articles. Many people read several media outlets a day, which can impact their perceptions of various groups and ideas which is important because "each primary framework allows its user to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms" (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). According to Robert M. Entman, there are minimally four locations of frames that can be identified in the communication process. The first location is the communicator, who consciously or subconsciously creates the various frames. The second location is the text, which includes keywords, stock phrases, and stereotyped images. The third frame are receivers, who process the frames and mix them with their own personal frames. The last location is the larger culture, which are "commonly invoked frames," (Parmelee, 2003, p. 27). The researcher in this study focused on the second and fourth locations. These locations are essential as the study is geared toward understanding how women leaders are portrayed in business magazines and how this affects how they are viewed and shaped within society. Framing in communication is very important because they "affect the behaviors and attitudes of

their audiences” (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 109), as a result, women are continually met with several gender gaps in society which include compensation and promotions.

In communication, frames highlight certain information repetitively, which as a result “elevate them in salience;” salience can be defined as “making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences” (Entman, 1993, p. 53). The effects of frames are imperative to how strong the frame is and how often the frame is repeated for the audience, thus individuals who often read and view women in traditional roles would be more likely to associate them this way. The repetition of specific content can cause for the audience to be triggered through certain words, images, and phrases through a process called priming. According to research “priming constantly uses a viewer’s own memories as a persuasive weapon” (Parmelee, 2013, p. 421), thus if women are represented in the media as sexualized beings, viewers will ultimately associate women as sex objects. In addition to priming, other theories such as the role congruity theory support the notion that “prejudice toward female leaders follows from the incongruity that many people perceive between the characteristics of women and the requirements of leader roles” (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 574). Unfortunately, the lack of representation of women as professionals is mainly due to the idea that women are less often perceived to be in high status positions such as executive board members or chief executive officers in the first place.

Although there has been a shift from traditional to non-traditional job roles of women distinctly over time, “Given limitations of time, attention, and rationality, getting people to think (and behave) in a certain way requires selecting some things to tell them about and efficiently cueing them on how these elements mesh with their own schema systems” (Entman, 2010, p.

337). Schemas “are cognitive structures that are based on prior knowledge that help individuals organize and evaluate information they gather from media sources” (Parmelee, Perkins, & Sayre, 2007, p. 186).

Framing, priming, and schemas have a shared relationship under the overarching framing theory although they are uniquely distinct. Frames are information, which are developed through salience and selection, which the audience then creates schemas or “mental maps” by organizing said information. Schemas are triggered through the process of priming, which is “a technique in which a person’s schemas are activated through visual or verbal stimulation” (Parmelee, Perkins, and Sayre, 2007, p. 186). During the priming process the audience schemas are triggered, which, as a result, enhances frames. How women are framed in business magazines affects the audience’s personal frames or schemas of how they perceive women as managers, leaders, and in the general workforce. Because women are underrepresented in the media as leaders, society’s schemas are less likely to associate them as professionals. Research suggests that the effects of visual images and text are dependent on how unique their characteristics are (Geise and Baden, 2014), further suggesting that consistent contact with women in roles that are traditionally stereotypical can have an overwhelming impact on society’s view of women having less professional capabilities. This information leads to the first two research questions:

RQ1: How have women managers been portrayed in business magazines from 2010-2018?

RQ2: Has there been an important change in the representation of women leaders over the past decade?

Representation of Women Leaders Over time

Prior to the start of the feminist movement, commonly referred to as the women's movement, in the early 1900s, the majority of women assumed stereotypical gender roles as wives, caretakers, and servers. During this movement, women began to shift into non-traditional gender roles and pursued equality with regards to politics, economic activities, and careers. The feminist movement is characterized by four distinct waves. During the second wave of feminism beginning in the 1960's women focused on reproductive rights as well as equality in the workforce, "many second wave feminists were acutely aware of issues of race, class and imperialism" (Mann & Huffman, 2005, p. 60). In the third wave of feminism, which began around the 1990s, women continued work from previous waves and also focused more on gender pay gaps and disparities for women in the workforce and politics. In comparison to the second wave, "the new discourse of the third wave embraced a more diverse and polyvocal feminism that appealed to those who felt marginalized or restricted within the second wave," although these women were still seeking to eliminate discrimination and increase equality similarly (Mann & Huffman, 2005, p. 87). Research from data collected during these periods suggest that there were several shifts in how women professionals were characterized during these times. One content analysis explored issues in Broadcast magazine in the 1950's from their ongoing feature "Something for the Boys." Broadcast magazine served as one of the leading media outlets in the communication industry during this time and had a predominantly male readership. Four major frames were developed from the analysis which included women as housewives, women in stereotypical gender roles, women as decoration for sex objectives and women as professionals (Foust & Bradshaw, 2007). Findings from the analysis showed that women were primarily viewed in all frames except professionals. The information from the analysis provides clarity on

how women were represented in print media prior to the women's movement. There was little change from the 1950's up until the time frame following this social movement for women in regards to the workforce, which is evident from research conducted in later years.

Another content analysis analyzed the framing of women in an ongoing feature in Esquire magazine from 1987-2006 called "Women We Love." Findings from the analysis showed that the "ideal woman" was viewed less in non-traditional diverse occupations, such as business or politics, and more in traditional occupations such as beauty and entertainment following the women's movement (Sheehy & Hong, 2011). This feature in Esquire magazine represents an accurate portrayal of women as it was one of the leading magazines during the time. The change over time in the representation of women suggest backlash toward the women's movement, especially since women in non-traditional occupations served as supplementary content for the feature as opposed to woman in traditional occupations having the most coverage. While women have made notable progress in the workforce since the end of the women's movement, there is still a strong disparity among women leaders in nearly every industry. Women are paid much less than their male counterparts although they are equally qualified and equipped for the same positions and are often more educated. Women are more likely to have attained a four-year college degree and postgraduate education among 25-64 year olds (Pew Research Center, 2018). Increased education in women is one of the main contributors to their increase in the labor force since the 1950's and a decline for men up until 2017.

Research has shown that women are less often considered for high-level positions in comparison to men because it goes against stereotypical gender roles, "In thinking about female leaders, people would combine their largely divergent expectations about leaders and women,

whereas in thinking about male leaders, people would combine highly redundant expectations”(Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 575). Besides the stereotypical belief that men are leaders, the sex of the perceiver also plays a role in how a leader is viewed. Women employees are more likely to have experience with female managers and as a result they have an easier time perceiving women as leaders in comparison to men employees. On the contrary, because men have “greater social power” they have the ability to deviate from gender stereotypical roles more often (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 577).

Perceptions of women as executive leaders in combination with framing has a pronounced effect on how women are viewed in society. Women have previously been affected by the glass ceiling phenomenon but as of recently they have also been impacted by the glass cliff phenomenon, which “refers to appointments or positions that are precarious (or dangerous) for one or a combination of four reasons” Hennessy, MacDonald & Carroll, 2014, p. 125). These reasons include the likeliness of the leaders to be criticized if the company is doing poorly financially, becoming targets of unfair blame, feeling as they have to take responsibility on behalf of the company, and/or the leader is blamed when the company is performing poorly as opposed to the organization.” (Hennessy, MacDonald & Carroll, 2014, p 125). In an article published in the Harvard Business Review, the authors address the glass cliff cliff phenomenon, which is the idea that women have greater chances of breaking the barriers as leaders when the organization is going through a crisis (Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2014). The authors conducted an experiment in which they created different scenarios, a version with two organizations: one historically lead by men and the other by women, along with a second version that included a thriving organization and one that was having financial hardship and laying off

employees. College students were then asked to choose between a male and female leader depending on the scenario, findings from the study found “When the company had been led by men and was doing well, 62% of the students who read that scenario chose the male candidate. But when the male-led company was in crisis, 69% chose the female candidate” (Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2014). Information from studies such as the aforementioned are prime examples of how women are disproportionately judged in high status positions for organizations in recent years. Interestingly enough, while there has not been an influx of women in positions such as CEOs, CFOs, and COOs, in the past decade, many people are satisfied with women leaders as 59 percent of Americans would like to see women in top executive positions (Desilver, 2018). This data proposes the last research questions:

RQ3: Is coverage of women leaders from the last decade more likely to be associated with organizations in crisis?

### Methods

In order to explore the proposed research questions, a qualitative frame analysis was conducted of articles that include women leaders in various industries in business magazines. Business magazines were utilized as a source for this study as they represent and cover both leaders and professionals in various industries and have coverage on professionals within the specified field, in this case managers. While there is a distinct difference between managers and leaders, for the purpose of this study, the terms were used interchangeably in order to widen the population and include women in multiple industries. Articles in business magazines are also an appropriate choice because they provide relevant text to support the posed research questions in regards to women leaders. A sample of articles were analyzed from prominent business



magazines which included Forbes, Bloomberg Businessweek, Entrepreneur, and Fortune. These magazines serve as some of the top business publications nationally and internationally and have high levels of readership and subscriptions. These magazines also have some of the highest base rates for advertising, with 650,000 for Forbes, 600,000 for Bloomberg Businessweek, 500,000 for Entrepreneur, and 830,000 for Fortune (Forbes, 2018; Bloomberg Businessweek, 2017; Entrepreneur, 2019; Fortune 2018).

The researcher used the University of North Florida publication database to search within the four magazines from 2010-2018 to find relevant articles. Over 100 different issues from the magazines were examined. The researcher used keywords such as “women leaders,” “women executives,” “businesswoman,” “women entrepreneurs” and “women managers” to search within each publication to find appropriate articles. Once an article was selected and analyzed, that issue was further examined to determine if there were additional articles that could be used inside that issue. Each issue of the magazine was then thoroughly examined to identify articles which included and/or focused on women leaders. In the event that a particular issue did not have any additional articles to use, the researcher continued searching. Two hundred articles that highlighted or discussed women as the primary focus of the article were analyzed, with 5-6 articles being analyzed per year per magazine, from 2010-2018. Fifty articles were analyzed from each of the four magazines during this time span. Figure 1 represents the total number of articles per year.

Insert Figure here

Frame analysis was chosen as the primary method, as research has found this method to be very reliable in understanding content and text of a designated topic over time, which this research study seeks to do with regard to the representation of women professionals. The researcher's primary framing locations for this study are the second and fourth locations as this study determined how business magazines have framed women leaders and common frames that may be prevalent as a result of their portrayals. In order to find frames, the researcher used open, selective, and theoretical coding for all of the articles by first extracting words, phrases, and images, isolating them into groups and lastly placing them into themes. This analysis followed steps from previous studies for frame analysis, which include identifying an issue, isolating a specified attitude, identifying frames and conducting an analysis of relevant articles. The researcher chose to focus on several key areas while coding, the articles which included physical descriptions, personal and professional traits, as well as women in relation to their organizations, especially mentions of the glass cliff and ceiling phenomenons, following Entman's process of frame analysis by examining "Keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments" (Entman, 1993, p.52). Additionally, the researcher also focused particular attention to how the articles chose to "Promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" while also focusing on images which supported text and how women were presented visually and if they were presented as sexual objects (Entman, 1993, p.52). Moreover, the researcher sought to discover during the coding process whether women were presented as strong/weak leaders as well as if they were personally characterized as having easy-going or overly emotional personalities or traits to

work with. Lastly, the researcher also focused on how women were portrayed in relation to traditional gender roles such as being a mother or wife or being in industries that are traditionally women-dominated, such as beauty or entertainment. While textual analysis and coding is never 100 percent accurate, coding has proven to be very sufficient, especially when categories are clearly defined and outlined. (Lombard and Snyder-Duch, 2006). Another advantage to manual textual analysis is, “In contrast to machine coding, manual or human coding guided by prototypes instead of exact terminology allows greater flexibility to discover new frames that were not identified in the initial coding scheme” (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p.108).

This analysis was originated after past research suggested a lack of representation of women leaders in media following the women’s movement. Justification for this analysis can be attributed to studies such as those conducted by Heilman in 1995. Evidence from this study found that women who assume leadership roles would still have negative reactions, even after having a positive evaluation in the role (Heilman, 1995). Also, although the research described women leaders as successful, participants in the study characterized them with more negative attributes, such as hostility and less rational, in comparison to men in the same position (Heilman, 1995).

The articles were analyzed to determine frames of women managers found in business magazines which included characterizations of professional and personal qualities and traits which will contribute to the coding scheme. While coding and analyzing the articles, the researcher considered personal and professional attributes, which were defined prior to finding the relevant text. Professional attributes were defined as skills or qualities designated to the current job role or function. This include elements such as communication skills, experience,

work ethic and knowledge of the industry. Personal attributes were defined as characteristics unique to one's personality, this includes integrity, empathy, and personability. Each article was assessed to determine how the article represented each women in the article and several key words, phrases, and images were identified throughout the process. The articles were also coded to determine the current state of the organization associated with the women managers in the articles to determine if there was a connection between them. For example, if the main focus of the article discussed how the leader's organization was currently suffering or not making goals, it would be coded as being in a negative state. If the article's main focus discussed how the organization saw an increase in sales or positive shift due to a change in leadership, it would be coded as being in a positive state. These frames were then used to compare with data from past analyses from other timeframes to determine whether there has been a concrete change in professional and personal traits of women in non-traditional occupations. After major themes were identified, each article was categorized into designated themes. Articles were continually coded and new themes developed until the researcher reached saturation. The constant-comparative method was used to develop new themes consistently. During this method data is analyzed as it comes in and each article was compared to the last in a continuous developmental process, this method can be described in four strategic stages, which include "comparing incidents applicable to each category, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the theory and writing the theory" (Glaser, 1965, p. 439). Each article was thoroughly examined to eliminate any outliers through negative case analysis, which is the "process of revising hypotheses as each new negative or deviant case arises" and ensures that none of the articles used in the data contradicts any of the themes found (Allen, 2017).

## Findings

After conducting a thorough frame analysis the researcher found frames that answer the aforementioned research questions. Findings from the analysis of the business magazines from 2010-2018 suggest that there has been a notable shift in how women are currently being portrayed nearly four decades following the first wave of the women's movement in the 1970's. Findings showed that while women were characterized as being dedicated and powerful leaders who made positive impacts to their organizations, women still represent a very small portion of employees in top ranking positions, which was mentioned heavily within the articles. Further findings also discovered that women struggle with work-life balance, which aligns with gender-roles that are often disassociated with men in similar positions. These findings are most important as they show that women are no longer being portrayed for their physical features and stereotypical gender roles as often and more for their professional traits and qualities in roles that are non-traditional for women. After coding and analyzing 200 articles from the four business magazines, three main frames emerged:

1. Women leaders as minorities at the senior level
2. Women leaders as organizational assets and fixers
3. Effects of work-life balance on women leaders

### Minority frame

Women were continually presented in a way that compared women to men, with direct focus on presenting women as a minority in both positive and negative aspects to their roles.

Often women leaders referenced how they were minorities in their industries as well as in high positions within their organizations. Along with this, the articles addressed how women were making positive strides or falling behind compared to males in their roles. Women constantly noted how they were forced to overcome great strides and barriers to be acknowledged in a male-dominated society and workforce, which are less often geared toward women. As a result, this pushed many women to prove that they were equally well qualified and skilled for positions that are traditionally held by males, including CEOs, CFOs, COOs and business owners. While women were often presented as being essential assets to their organization and implementing positive change, there is still a large gender gap for women in senior-level management and leadership positions. The following quotes from the analyzed magazines articles demonstrate this frame:

In Jennifer Reingold's September 15, 2016, article in Fortune she notes that women CEOs are still very rare:

Still, scarcity does not completely explain the fact that only, 24, or 4.8%, of the CEO positions in the Fortune 500 are currently held by women—a number that's been stagnant for two years and that has risen only glacially in the past decade. (Reingold, 2016, p. 102)

In Jennifer Reingold's September 2016 article in Fortune she also mentions statistics from a study conducted by students from Utah State University:

They found that 42% were appointed during times of crisis, compared with 22% of a matched sample of men in the same period. Those women also began their jobs with less influence; only 13% who became CEOs were also named chairman of the board—compared with 50% of the men. (Reingold, 2016, p. 103)

Alan Murray notes in his October 6, 2014 editor's desk article in Fortune how women are scarce in top-level positions:

Women occupy the majority of spots at elite colleges and universities and get snapped up for prime jobs on graduation. Yet at each step up the corporate ladder, their relative presence shrinks. At the top, only 24 of the Fortune 500 CEOs are women—less than 5%. Clearly not an optimal economic outcome. (Murray, 2014, p. 10)

Susan Adams adds a perspective from an interview with one female CEO in the May 3, 2018 issue of Forbes, "Corporate America chewed me up and spat me out. For 18 years I was a sales engineer for a large engineering company where I didn't get the same promotions and recognition as the white males" (Adams, 2018, p.48).

In a June 13, 2017 feature article in Forbes, Lynne Doughtie notes how there is a disconnect with women employees and women in senior management positions:

In the United States, about 52 percent of all management, professional and related occupations were held by women in 2015. Yet women today account for only 5 percent of the CEOs of S&P 500 companies and less than 20 percent of the board members of Fortune 1000 companies. (Doughtie, 2017, p.74)

The CEO of Stitch Fix, Katrina Lakes, mentions in Ryan Mac's June 21, 2016, article in Forbes her experience as being one of the only women CEOs:

Other decisions likely came down to the "implicit biases" of an industry where "94% of VCs are male," Lake says. "As men are deciding what companies to get passionate about, the deck is a little stacked against you when you're in a business that caters to women. (Mac, 2016 p.86)

Ben Waber notes in his February 3, 2014 article in Businessweek the disparities women face in comparison to their male peers:

One data point everyone agrees on is that women and men face huge disparities at the office. In the U.S., female workers are still paid only 77 cent for every dollar their male colleagues make. A mere 4.2 percent of chief executive officers at Fortune 500 companies are women. (Waber, 2014, p.8)

In Jessica Grose's August 2016 article in Businessweek she discusses how women are less often involved in organizational conspiracies, "At all levels of crime, women profit less than men-a female CEO will steal less than a male CEO, a female middle manager will steal less than her counterpart, and so on down the organizational chart." (Grose, 2013, p.77)

#### Organizational Asset and Fixer frame

In profiling women in the various articles, women were often characterized as a beneficial addition to the growth of the company. Women executives, specifically, were discussed in reference to increasing sales, profit, and employment as well as cutting production costs and lowering financial expenditures. This characterization held most often true for organizations that were suffering financially or actively going through a crisis during the onboarding of women executives. As a whole, women in senior management and executive positions were highlighted as notably contributing to their organizations and making improvements that were previously only projected. Furthermore, research found that many women in these positions were affected by the glass cliff phenomenon, discussed in prior research. Women were often hired to oversee organizations that were going through



organizational crisis prior to onboarding or shortly after. As a result, women were portrayed as being organizational saviors and/or cleaners, making changes that ultimately positively impacted their organization. The following quotes from the analyzed magazines articles demonstrate this theme:

In Ellen McGirt's September 15, 2016, article in *Fortune* she discusses how Anne Marie Campbell has benefited the Home Depot corporation:

Campbell, who is an executive vice president and one of three women on Home Depot's seven person executive committee (she reports directly to CEO Craig Menear), is the company's great implementer of new processes and ideas. It's a skill she honed in her previous job as president of Home Depot's southern division, a fleet of nearly 700 stores. The changes typically evolve like a call-and-response, often taking months or years to complete. (McGirt, 2016, p.144)

Kristen Bellstrom and Beth Kowitt note in their October 1, 2017 article in *Fortune* how one women EVP has successfully impacted her organization, "The 32-year company veteran has also played a critical role in the retailer's push into e-commerce, working to streamline operations for the more than 40% of digital sales picked up at its stores." (Bellstrom & Kowitt, 2017, p.59)

Caroline Fairchild, Beth Kowitt, and co-authors mention in their October 6, 2014 article in *Fortune* how Helena's Foulke's strategic contributions have been extremely beneficial:

Overseeing more than 7,700 pharmacies serving more than 5 million people every day, Foulkes was a key architect of the company's decision in February to become the first pharmacy chain to stop selling tobacco products. In September the company renamed itself CVS

Health, in part to reflect the change in strategy. (Fairchild, Kowitt, Leahey & Vandermeij, 2014, p. 129)

Fairchild and Kowitt also note in their October 2014 article how Sherri McCoy at Avon has pushed the beauty company through various hardships:

McCoy, brought in from Johnson & Johnson to fix troubled Avon in 2012, will cut \$400 million in costs by 2016 in hopes of reversing two years of losses and a stock down by a third in the past 12 months. (Fairchild, Kowitt, Leahey & Vandermeij, 2014, p. 129)

In a September 2017 promotion in Forbes, Lynthia Romney mentions how women leadership is essential to a successful organization:

Economics and EY, revealed that an organization with 30% female leaders — in the C-suite or on boards — could add up to 6 percentage points to its net revenue margin. For profitable firms, a move from no female leaders to 30% representation is associated with a 15% increase. (Romney, 2017, p. 85)

Michael Ozanian adds in his October 25, 2010, article in Forbes a statistic from a study conducted which suggest that women have improved stock performances in various companies:

We looked at the stock performance of the 26 publicly traded companies headed by females on the Power Women 100 list and found that as a group they outperformed the overall market— average, and topped their respective industries by 15%. (Starting point for each entry: the date the company announced a new female CEO. (Ozanian, 2010, p.71)

In Joann Muller's October 24, 2011 article in Forbes she notes how Mary Barra's vision at General Motor has been essential to their productivity, "One success so far: Barra pushed to speed up the consolidation of GM's three small-car engine lines, arguing that it shouldn't wait

four years to introduce a single, more fuel efficient engine that could be used worldwide”  
(Muller, 2011, p.36).

Lynne Doughtie mentions in a 2017 Forbes feature how the leadership of women has made a major impact in the quality of companies:

Study after study finds that companies with more women in leadership roles tend to be considered “higher quality” companies, with better returns on equity. Companies that utilize female talent effectively also are 45 percent more likely to report improved market share. (Doughtie, 2017, p. 74)

In a March 2018 article written by Kris Frieswick in Entrepreneur, Shelly Sun, CEO says:

In my perspective, I think women tend to be better managers, leaders, and inspirers of talent,” says Sun. “Every business needs employees to scale. In a small-business environment where it feels like family, women tend to create that dynamic to get the most of their people. They make them feel cared for. People root for that leader, including her employees. (Frieswick, 2018, p. 69)

Sanat Vallikappen notes in her April 22-28, 2013 article that women are preferably in certain industries when it comes to clients:

Some Asian clients trust female private bankers more than their male counterparts to educate young family members about wealth planning. Lim says. "After a while they get close to you, so you have the relationship with the next generation as well," she says. "Men tend to be big-picture, and they're not very into details." (Vallikappen, 2013, p. 39)

Susan Berkfield and Michael Arndt discuss how women often come into distraught organizations in their January 25, 2010 article in Businessweek:

In the late 1990's, she turned around Kraft's business in Canada; troubled as it was when she arrived, the first thing she had to do was show skeptical colleagues that an American could understand Canadian consumers. As chief executive, she has won most employees' cooperation for a wrenching reorganization. (Berfield & Arndt, 2010, p.37)

### Work-life Balance frame

In the analyzed business magazines, women in senior-level roles referenced balancing their personal and professional responsibilities, usually with regard to being a successful leader and being a supportive mother and/or spouse. Traditionally women in society have been characterized as being the caretaker and nurturer in the household. As a result, women in leadership positions striving for work-life balance proved to be very challenging, according to the analyzed articles. When women were interviewed or discussed in various articles this was a recurring issue which many women leaders felt as though posed a struggle for them. Women explained how they managed balancing personal responsibilities, especially with being dedicated leaders. Decision-making skills and time management played a significant aspect in how women balanced duties and responsibilities in their professional and personal lives on how to delegate themselves accordingly. This often proved difficult as many women were portrayed as being dedicated and motivated to their organizations. Throughout the magazines, there was a consistent emphasis on the dedication and commitment of women leaders across various industries and organizations. Women often divulged how they tirelessly worked toward making improvements within in their organizations and were described as having commendable work ethic. Women in leadership positions were described as "powerful," "focused," and "driven" in regards to their

overall work ethic. This motivation can partially be contributed to the minority frame. The lack of women in senior management positions would often trigger women to feel as though they needed to prove themselves as a valuable asset, which can be demonstrated in the organizational asset and fixer frame. The following quotes from the analyzed magazines articles demonstrate this frame:

In a September 15, 2016 article in Fortune written by Jennifer Reingold, Lepore accounts how women are required to deal with work-life balance more often than men:

After selling Drugstore.com to Walgreens in 2011, Lepore opted to remain in Seattle because it was best for her children. "To do this [CEO] job well," she says, "it's all-encompassing. I also think that men have set up their personal lives in such a way that they have the infrastructure and the ability to have that maniacal focus. Nobody's asking them to take care of their aging parents, to handle the child with learning differences. (Reingold, 2016, p.106)

Aubrey Boone Tillman mentions how it's important to balance work and personal responsibilities in Kate Taylor's September 10, 2012 article in Forbes:

But as an extraordinarily successful career woman and mother of three teenage children—and a daughter of a career civil servant mother—Tillman also offers a key suggestion for others striving to strike the balance between work and professional life. "Balance isn't just going to happen," she says. "You've got to make it happen." (Taylor, 2012, p.93)

In Ryan Mac's June 21, 2016 article in Forbes he describes Katrina Lakes's experience divulging her pregnancy:

With so much going on, Lake's been on call nonstop, though that will change when she has her baby in September. She plans to take advantage of the company's 16-week maternity leave policy...Lake waited until early May to tell her employees she was pregnant (with a boy). She treated it as business as usual, burying the details in the regular companywide Friday e-mail. (Mac, 2016, p.87)

A feature article in December 30, 2016 by Lynthia Romney she mentions how women struggle to return to the workforce due to personal obligations:

We're seeing many women who want to return to the workforce after leaving for a number of reasons: to start a family, serve in the military or care for a loved one," says Edna Kamara, client relationship executive, Deloitte Services LP. "They often need support to sharpen skills, build networks and understand how workplace culture may have changed since they left. (Romney, 2016, p. 68)

Kris Frieswick notes in her March 2018 article in Entrepreneur, an account from franchisee Tonya Brigham:

While she built a thriving career, she wished for one that worked better with her family life.

Brigham was an events and meeting producer for large associations in the Washington, D.C., area, which involved a lot of travel. "One night my 18-month-old woke up with a fever, and I had to do a cross-country trip the next day," she says. "I had to be on a flight at 9 a.m. I cried all the way across the country." (Frieswick, 2018, p.68)

In Krisitine Aquino's August 2016 interview in Businessweek with Brenda Trenowden, she recounts her experience being a finance executive and first-time mother:

When I had my first child, I had a very short maternity leave and ended up taking him on a business trip when he was a month old. I was very conscious because a number of people went on maternity leave, and then people thought, Oh, they're not going to be very committed. I had to work extra hard to show them that I was no less committed and I was still going to lead my business. (Aquino, 2016, p.76)

### Discussion

Overall, the findings from this study correlate with past research conducted on women, although most of the findings suggest a noteworthy shift in how women have previously been portrayed in similar text, however, women are still affected by traditional stereotypes while in leadership roles. Previous research has found that women were often portrayed as sex objects with special attention to physical features and less on their roles as professionals which catered more toward a male-dominated audience (Lindner, 2004, p.409); (Foust & Bradshaw, 2007).

Recent findings from this analysis represent women in a more positive perspective and focuses primarily on their contributions and successes within the workforce and their designated fields overall. The frames that emerged from the study show that while women are characterized positively they are still extremely scarce when it comes to high-ranking positions such as CEOs, presidents, financial operators, executives, ect, despite women making up a larger portion of the workforce now more than ever. It is also important to note that many of the articles consisted of more than one of the discovered frames and often overlapped. One notable alignment with past studies is the portrayal of women as a minority and the gender gap in high-level positions. Throughout the articles there was a common theme of addressing women in comparison to men

and describing their success and representation in an array of industries in comparison to their male counterparts. As a result, the minority frame emerged, which portrayed top-level positions for women professionals as a rarity. This frame can be seen as both a positive and negative attribution to how women are viewed within society's schemas. While this frame sheds light on the disproportion of women, it can also be discouraging to women and young girls who could potentially view it as a hardship in becoming successful in these positions. This can also evoke a crab-bucket mentality that many minorities face within in the workforce, increasing competition amongst women because they feel there are limited positions and opportunities for them at these levels. Meanwhile, many women who are offered the opportunity in high-ranking positions are often affected by the glass cliff phenomenon.

While more women are college educated than men in the United States and are equally qualified for senior management and high-ranking positions, offers are minimal. Findings from the study found that women were most often overseeing organizations that were undergoing organizational crisis or facing hardships or losses. The glass cliff phenomenon has previously been researched as negatively impacting women in their professional development and continues to plague women in the last decade (Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2014); ( Hennessy, MacDonald, & Carroll, 2014). The articles often discussed how women were on-boarded during a time of crisis or were met with an assortment of organizational issues shortly after beginning their role, which contributed significant to them being framed as an organizational fixer. Among enduring an array of struggles as a woman, this added pressure was often addressed when discussing professional development and work ethic of women. Alternatively, women were praised as being essential assets to their organization due to their strategies, leadership skills, and



overall managerial skills. While industries varied from business to entertainment to the automobile industry, there was a consistent trend, which represented women as being positively impactful. The organizational asset and fixer frame could have a positive effect on the connection that the publications' articles have on their audiences for both men and women. Audiences may be more inclined to make positive associations with women as professionals and dissociate them with traditional gender roles such as nurses, assistants or caretakers. Continual ties with these magazines may result in potential attention from companies seeking new employment to consider women for these positions, which they may have not have considered in previous years. Many articles note how organizations have recently transitioned to women in high-ranking positions for their first time, although they had been in existence for years. Framing of women in these articles, which consisted of leading women such as Mary Barra, Ginni Rometty, and Ursula Burns, have set a strong example of the success of women in positions such a CEO, which in turn can affect how audiences could be primed to correlate women with more professional associations through these magazines. Moreover, despite the challenges that women have to endure to get into these positions, they still seem to make exceedingly positive changes as leaders while balancing personal responsibilities.

While the findings from the study show a shift away from women in their traditional gender roles, women still continue to struggle with work-life balance as dedicated leaders, an issue that does not have such an impact on men. In various articles, especially ones that consisted of personal profiles and interviews, the authors and women notably mention the struggles of balancing personal and work responsibilities and learning time management skills. Many of these women learned to understand when work responsibilities took precedent over the personal

issues. Many women recounted experiences in which being a daughter, mother, wife and or caretaker conflicted with their everyday work flow and visa versa. The work-life balance frame was the only frame that aligned with traditional gender roles with women being a caretaker. Furthermore, the nurturing aspect of women and their participation in these roles may be a frame which may never change. Fortunately, while work-life balance was an overarching impediment for many women, it did not stop them from being dedicated leaders and successful in their roles. Although achieving the balance did prove difficult, women were characterized as staying focused and driven, dedicating long nights and extensive amounts of time to their work to better themselves and their organizations.

The frames that emerged in this study can possibly be attributed to majority of the articles being written by women, which would explain the professionally dominated portrayal of women in these magazines. Of the 200, 117 articles were written by a woman or had a woman as a co-author. Commonly, the articles focused little to none on the physical attributes of women in text and visuals. Images that supported the text most often showed women facing forward, pictured from the waist up, fully clothed and wearing little to no make-up. The prevalence of women as authors in the magazines may also contribute to there being limited stereotyping. Secondly, the time frame that was chosen may play a key factor as to why stereotyping was limited. In the past decade, the majority of the workforce in the United States has been comprised mostly of millennials and generation Xers. These groups tend to be more inclusive and diverse, which may explain the lack of stereotyping as well as a need for the publications to target a wider and younger audience.

### Limitations/Weaknesses

The researcher found several limitations that could be attributed to this study. First, the study is narrowed down to only four business magazines. The frames found among these publications may not be a completely accurate portrayal across similar publications or serve as full representation of the population. Furthermore, the sample of articles collected were subject to the researcher through non-probability sampling. Secondly, the focus and topics of the articles play a role in how many articles could be used for analysis, which was limited. This may be a result of the timeframe researched or validate the lack of representation of women professionals in publications. Lastly, researcher bias could contribute to the findings including but not limited to the gender, background and experiences the researcher may have.

### Further Research

The researcher recommends several suggestions for further studies. As technology continually advances, society utilizes the internet to gain access and information, especially on people. As a result, it may be beneficial for future researchers to also include articles and posts from the publications' websites as opposed to printed text alone on the designated topic. The analysis of website articles may validate the current findings as society uses internet sources on a daily basis to access information, which contributes significantly to the priming process and society's overall perspective of women professionals. In addition to this, a secondary method may also benefit the study. Interviews or focus groups with women managers could be useful in understanding the experiences and viewpoints of these women and comparing it to how women are framed within the publications to determine if the information aligns accordingly. Lastly,

researchers may also want to focus on discrimination of women in the workforce as an impediment to their overall professional development and advancements in their fields. Several analyzed articles noted that gender-gap starts as early as the interview process with many women being stereotyped prior to be hired due to preconceived notions about personal responsibilities (i.e. children, caretaking) affecting their daily job functions. Further investigation into this topic could also explain the scarcity of women in senior-level positions (Reingold, 2016); (Waber, 2014); (Suddath, Hellier, Meakin, et al, 2018).

## Conclusion

Overall, the findings from the study identified a shift in the portrayal of women professionals following the women's movement from 2010-2018. While women were previously framed in ways which focused attention on their physical attributes and stereotypical gender roles, there appears to be a notable change of these frames in the last decade. Findings from the study concluded that while women were more associated with organizations in crisis, they were still depicted as dedicated leaders and organizational assets. Further, frames are consistent with previous research, which identify women as minorities in senior-level positions. Along with this, women were still affected by gender roles with regard to work-life balance, especially being in higher-level positions within in their organizations in the c-suite or executive board.

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## Figures

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Total Articles	20	22	21	23	23	21	23	23	24	200

Figure 1