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A Call for Action: Research and Practice Agenda to Advance Work-Life Inclusion in Organizations

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The NSF workshop held at Purdue University Krannert School of Management in October 2018 on Fostering Gender and Work-Life Inclusion for Faculty in Understudied Contexts: An Organization Science Lens yielded rich insights and suggestions for practice and research. We first summarize each thematic paper panels of papers with its takeaway messages, followed by future agenda for research and practice. The workshop was organized by these themes: understanding work-life inclusion from an organizational science lens, intersectionality and work-life inclusion, work-life boundaries in the academy, overwork scholarly cultures, dual career and family matters, discrimination and stigma, and work-life linkages to performance.

Illustrative Finding from Each Workshop Thought Leader's Paper

The Landscape of Faculty Gender and Work-Life Inclusion from an Organizational Science Lens

1. **Ideal worker and ideal mom norms**. Work-life inclusion is the idea that work-life issues are a form of diversity and inclusion identities that shape perceptions of job belonginess and well-being (Kossek, 2020). Organizations and individuals must navigate contrasting and often conflicting images particularly between the ideal mom and ideal worker norms that pressure faculty members (King, 2020). We need to particularly identify organizational practices that support work-life inclusion during the time that faculty are managing parenting pressures while advancing careers. This age old issue has not been resolved and is not going away.

2. **Leaders play a key inclusion role**. Leaders play a key role in advancing concepts of inclusion (belongingness and uniqueness) and exclusion (the opposite of inclusion). A key issue in academia is to highlight how leader inclusion offers value (i.e. the benefits of being inclusive and the costs of not being inclusive) to the university, profession, and society. Leaders need to establish an environment where differences are valued. Shore (2020) emphasized the importance of demonstrating how : 1) the supportive inclusion attitudes of leaders; 2a) the degree of leader belongingness and 2b) leader uniqueness treatment in improving faculty inclusion relates to organizational effectiveness.

3. **Organizational redesign to promote inclusion and field experiments are needed.** There is a need to redesign organizations to foster positive work-family/life relationships and work productivity. Organizational field experiments might target the design and evaluation of workplace interventions addressing administrators' family/life supportive behaviors, boundary management norms,, and career flexibility policies to advance gender and work-life inclusion (Kossek, 2020).

Intersectionality, Gender, and Work-Life Inclusion in Academia

1. **Inclusion and Tokenism and Formal and Informal Processes Decoupling Challenges**. Inclusion (Mor Barak, 2020) is defined as "the ability to bring your entire self to the workplace." Organizations should be cautioned that tokenism (uniqueness without belongingness) should not be mistaken as inclusion. Inclusion and exclusion can relate to formal policies (e.g.,. anti- discrimination policies) and informal processes (e.g., hallway conversations), and they are often decoupled.

2. **Minority faculty experiences such as those of black women should be studied and learned from.** Given the underrepresentation within the larger group of underrepresented minority faculty, we lack understanding on minority faculty's experiences such as black women – especially in business schools (Creary, 2020). In order to get real results from the intensive and extensive efforts that are currently being made in some universities to increase and retain diverse faculty in business schools and the success of other pipeline initiatives, we need to first understand how to dramatically increase the number of underrepresented minority faculty in professional schools.

3. **Social identity theory and inclusion linkages.** Identities are contextual (and sometimes oppressive in contexts), fluid, and constructed through social interactions links to inclusion (Ramarajan, 2020). Social identity theory provides a useful lens to understand the relationships between the multiple identities everyone personally brings to work.

4. **Intersectionality can be powerful as a methodological and analytical framework.** An intersectional lens is a useful way to look at issues related to the work-life nexus because it can sharpen our focus on unidentified needs, ignored values, unacknowledged conflicts, and unsupportive advice (Ryan, 2020). It can be used as a framework to analyze: 1) how different faculty work-life groups are surviving or not; and 2) the barriers to success for these different groups.

Work-life Boundaries in the Academy

1. **Faculty time allocation across work and family roles.** Preliminary results from an NSF-funded study on faculty time use suggests significant gender differences in faculty time for

research and service that favor men over women (Allen, 2020). Female full professors spend far more time on service which increases their weekly work hours. This results in a larger discrepancy between desired time use and actual time spent compared to male full professor faculty- the later of whom often reduce their teaching time in order to have more time for research.

2. **Flexible and permeable boundaries should be decoupled to enable benefits and not burdens**. Technology could be a burden because it creates the expectation that faculty will constantly be available (Dumas, 2020). We still lack knowledge on topics, including: 1) study of seasons of work (e.g., changing work demands across an academic year); 2) international norms allowing periods of greater segmentation (e.g., France); 3) and boundary permeability during leaves such as sabbaticals when faculty are supposed to be off work for recovery.

3. **Boundary Management Strategies in the "always on university".** Professionals are engaging in various technology boundary management strategies including: 1) setting limits (e.g., not checking work emails after work hours); 2) turning off devices at work or home; 3) separating social media between work and home; and 4) assigning different ring tones for work and home (Furst-Holloway, 2020). However, we still need to understand how these strategies influence their career and well-being.

Overwork Scholarly Cultures and Demands- Organizational Linkages

1. **Academia as a revealing organizational case for overwork norms.** Ideal worker norms and the ratcheting standards of evaluation heighten faculty achievement expectations in strong overwork cultures (Fox, 2020). We need to pay more attention to: 1) childcare issues beyond the preschool children; 2) overload for senior female faculty; and (3) the unequal benefits/penalties of gender-neutral leave policies.

2. **Illusions of flexibility among academic careers.** Faculty often struggle to reconcile between how others not in academia see them (as having flexibility and summers off) l) and how faculty fulfill work-nonwork competing expectations in an overwork culture of academia (Ladge, 2020). We need to find ways for faculty to successfully leverage the purported flexibility they have compared to occupations with12 month appointments and more rigid face time schedules to push back on the availability and performance expectations on the institutional level, where there is a stigma to actually use flexibility for work-life well-being.

3. **Causes and remedies of overwork norms in academia.** Overwork norms are externally-imposed (lack of flexibility, short tenure clocks, and expectations of extra service) and internally-imposed causes (the importance of work identity, early career success,

competition, and isolation) of "overwork culture" in the academy (Leana, 2020). Although the internalized norms are far more difficult to change, external stimuli can help change these norms through mandatory structural changes, staffing systems, 2-way evaluation systems, and accountability.

Academic Dual Career and Family Matters: Organizational Linkages

1. **Organizational work-family support (or lack thereof) across life stages.** Although organizational support is important in employees' work-family and health outcomes, the reality is that many employees do not feel supported, especially pregnant employees (Little, 2020). Flexibility is a key and we need to better understand: 1) the different maternity support and child care needs across life stages considering the parenting needs related to the developmental ages of children; and 2) how to better support the needs and resources of the family unit and the effects of having availability to (or not) of (spousal support) when implementing flexibility policies.

2. **HR view helpful in understanding barriers to organizational work-family support in academia.** Organizational efforts to accommodate employee non-work needs are reflected not only in providing but also embracing supportive benefits and policies by proactively encouraging employees to practice healthy work-life management (Matthews, 2020). To explain why faculty still experience high levels of work-family/life conflict, many other factors need to be more effectively considered. These include: 1) the need to strategically create an overall university work-life culture that considers the equality and equity needs of all employees, not just faculty; 2) being more responsive to different unique work-life needs across faculty groups; 3) increased faculty demands due to changing universities' business models; 4) updating policies to better manage work-life needs in complicated bureaucratic administrative and legal structures; 5) the need to better define and execute work-life organizational strategies; 6) shrinking resources due to changing financial structure of institutions; and 7) improving the selection of university leadership.

3. **Organizational and marital turnover in dual academic career couples.** Although being part of an academic couple can have many benefits, including sharing intellectual interests and can help in engaging in overlapping professional networks, it can also be challenging for couples. Issues include 1) having to refuse job offers if their partner does not have a satisfactory position in the same institution; 2) the power imbalance between the first hire and the "trailing" spouses; and 3) how the dual academic career can sometimes raise competitiveness tensions between partners. Research is needed examining marital turnover in dual academic couples (Thompson, 2020).

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Discrimination and Stigma

1. **Family Responsibilities in Academia: Premiums, Penalties, and Policies.** Family responsibilities can be a source of either career premiums or career penalties inside academia, and that university policies and practices can influence these outcomes. Based on social role theory, Manchester (2020) proposed that whether family responsibilities lead to career premiums or career penalties depends on whether family responsibilities centers on breadwinning to provide financial support or caregiving to support related others. The extent to which faculty connection to one role or the other is primary (breadwinner versus caregiver) determines career consequences.

2. **Masculinity as a Psychologically Permeable Barrier to Gender Equality.** Masculinity can be a barrier to gender inequality, but there are ways to target men's beliefs to reduce the tendency to deny the existence of gender inequality using gender system justification theory. This is based on the idea that people can justify gender inequality to view a social system positively in order to rationalize the status quo. Based on the implicit theories of gender roles, Kray (2020) argued that a growth mindset (an assumption that a given trait is malleable) instead of a fixed mindset (an assumption that a given trait is fixed) may reduce gender system justification, as well as the extent to which self-affirmation operates as a mechanism to encourage a growth mindset.

3. **Proof or Pedigree: Prestige of Men's but not Women's Ph.D. Program Predicts Top Placements.** Male and female academics are often assessed using different standards, and these shifting standards are one of the contributing factors of diversity in universities (Johnson, 2019). Status characteristics theory may be helpful in examining why and how a job candidate with mismatching status characteristics (e.g., a woman graduating from a prestigious school) is subject to additional scrutiny due to status inconsistency, whereas a job candidate whose status characteristics are consistent (e.g., a man graduating from a prestigious school) is perceived as more competent and hirable, resulting in gender inequality. Overall, compared to men, women with similar prestigious academic degrees, are generally hired at less prestigious institutions.

Work-Life Inclusion Linkages to Performance and Strategy

1. **Five Key Inhibitors of Women's Advancement.** There are several key inhibitors of women's achievement in business schools. These include: 1) no time clock limit for promotion to advance between associate professor and full professor; 2) an over focus on "A "publications; 3) masculine cultures; 4) hierarchical structures; and 5) unequal distribution of service responsibilities between men and women. Future research should examine the

effectiveness of change strategies including: 1) bias training for faculty and management; 2) increasing the representation of female members in the highest level of university leadership (e.g., chancellor, board members); 3) revamping leave structure to be more flexible; 4) reducing the stigma of using work-life policies; 5) revamping reward structure to take account teaching and service accomplishments in promotion decisions; and 6) holding the leadership more accountable for implementing diversity practices (Triana, 2020).

2. **Creating Inclusive Organizations through Policies.** Standards of "meritocracy" might contribute to gender inequality rather than reducing the gender gap because the meritocratic culture can makes people feel that they can express their own biased beliefs to preserve the status quo (Park, 2020). This reflects the "paradox of meritocracy." Policies and practices that support the differing needs of diverse individuals could help to create a more work-life inclusive culture. In order for family leave policies to work effectively, 1) they have to be available; (2) employees need to be aware of them; 3) employees need to feel a leave is affordable; and 4) there needs to be an assurance that there will not be career penalties for taking a leave.

3. **Gender Diversity in Business schools and Enhanced Performance.** Past research suggests that increasing diversity alone is not necessarily effective in improving performance and gender diversity, but there may be a business case for diversity management (Dwertmann, 2020). Based on leader-member exchange perspectives, the criteria based on which leaders differentiate their relationship quality with their employees, such as the basis of differentiation being demographic similarity is important in understanding the effects of diversity management as it can lead to lower diversity climate. In contrast,, leader differentiation based on other factors such as performance and needs signals that everyone can become a member of the leader's in-group, which positively affects diversity climate.

 Research Agenda

Besides future research directions from the presenters, the scholars gathered at the workshop developed a future research agenda for each topic areas:

Advancing Understanding of Work-Life Inclusion

Overall, experts agree that there is much work to be done to improve work-life inclusion in business schools, businesses and universities more generally. Below we suggest some areas for future research suggested by the findings above.

Gender and Work-Life Inclusion in Business Schools & Understudied Faculty Contexts: What are the Issues and the Terrain?

First, we need to develop a deeper understanding of the leader and organizational characteristics fostering work-life inclusion, the interplay between individual, family, and organizational work-life inclusion pressures, norms, and outcomes and requisite policies and cultural changes.   Future studies should interview leaders and employees to help us better define the concept of work-life inclusion. One current study is in progress (Kossek, Lee, Pratt, Misisco, Allen Bodner 2020).   Such studies are needed to develop measures of the climate dimensions that comprise a work-life inclusive organization in order to validate and assess its presence, and metrics to evaluate the degree of cultural support. It also may be helpful to understand when work-life inclusion is similar to other forms of inclusion, how it links to other forms of intersectionality (e.g., gender, race, religion, sexuality) (also discussed below) and when it differs. This inquiry would need to identify individual, group, and organizational factors associated with a positive climate for work-life inclusion and how they relate to faculty employee perceptions and organizational outcomes. Such research may also advance organizational change on the science of work-life inclusion and how to develop and implement more effective policies across other many organizational contexts.

Future research is also needed in order to better understand how to link work-life inclusion to existing organizational barriers that prevent faculty healthy work-life integration. We also need studies to identify best practices in improving work-life inclusion such as how to better support gender and work-life inclusion at various career transition points. For example, what are the potential unintended negative consequences of the extended tenure clock for women or for men? What are the barriers to the transition from associate to full professor? More research is needed on contrasting images of ideal worker and ideal mom norms and how these are pressuring faculty (King, 2020); the role leaders play in advancing concepts of inclusion (belongingness and uniqueness) and exclusion (Shore, 2020); and how to redesign organizations to foster positive work-family/life relationships, productivity and implement interventions (Kossek, 2020).

Intersectionality, Diversity, Gender, and Work-Life Inclusion

Intersectionality can be a powerful methodological and analytical framework. Social identity and inclusion theories (Ramarajan, 2020) can be integrated in order to advance an intersectional lens as a powerful methodological and analytical framework (Ryan, 2020).

For example, such lenses be used to examine how different minority groups are surviving or not; what the barriers to success for different employee occupational groups; and the power dynamics of various faculty groups such as how tenure-tracked vs. non-tenure tracked job groups intersect with race, class, gender and family status. We also need to examine the effects of tokenism and the burden this places on minority faculty in every day work-life interactions. Future research is needed on the differences between inclusion and tokenism and what leads to decoupling processes between formal policies and informal processes (Mor Barak, 2020). Studies are also needed to learn from minority faculty experiences (e.g., black women) and their implications for pipeline initiatives in professional schools (Creary, 2020).

Technology & Boundary Control in Academic Job Design: Gender and Work-Life Effects

Future research is needed on significant gender differences in faculty desired and actual time for research, teaching, and service that favors men over women (Allen, 2019) and how these related to the management of flexible and permeable boundaries to enable benefits and not burdens (Dumas, 2019); and successful boundary management strategies in the "always on university (Furst-Holloway, 2019). We also need to examine the benefits and negative consequences of setting work-life boundaries and technology-related boundaries (e.g., email response time) in academic settings. Moreover, there is a need to examine the effects of social pressures on faculty's work-life well-being . For example, what are the effects of pressures from co-authors, review requests, conferences, and students on faculty's work-life well-being? How do we distinguish internal vs. external pressures and do they have differential effects on faculty's work-life well-being?

Work-Life Stigmatization, Overwork Faculty Cultures

Experts agreed that we need to find ways of looking at our faculty work more multi -dimensionally and holistically. For example, how do we reward individuals not just for the research and teaching productivity but what we care about, such as rewarding faculty for being better mentors or doing services to the university? Future studies should examine academia as a revealing case for strong overwork norms (Fox, 2020); career identity illusion tensions for faculty struggling to reconcile between how others see them (having flexibility & summers off) but not experiencing careers in this way, and fulfilling competing overwork cultural expectations (Ladge, 2020); and the external and internal causes and remedies of overwork norms in academia (Leana, 2020).

Dual-Career Couples, Singles, & Organizational Work-Family Support

Future studies are needed on organizational work-family support (or lack thereof across varying life stages and access to spousal support), particularly for pregnant employees; (Little, 2020). Studies are also needed to advance how and why increasing a focus on HR systems view is helpful for explaining why faculty still experience high levels of work-family/life conflict, unhealthy lifestyles, despite the availability of policies as well as identifying the barriers to effectively implementing universities' organizational work-family support (Matthews, 2020). Research is also needed on organizational and marital turnover in dual academic career couples and problems in dual-career "trailing spouse" policies (Thompson, 2020). As a new way of defining and examining success, the concept of "net family success" can be useful because who the breadwinner is may change on a daily or weekly basis, requiring a more systemic approach. For example, how does one spouse's success impact the dynamics of couple relationships or the success of the other spouse?

Leader's roles in Fostering Work-Life Inclusion as an Organizational Strategy to Close the Gender Gap

As the average length of a Dean is relatively short, research is needed on how the turnover of a Dean affects the diversity of leaders and how and whether diversity initiatives get sustained after leader turnover. Research is needed on the tension between designing clear criteria for promotion and tenure, and having less clear criteria in order to have more flexibility and be able to adopt a broader portfolio view of the balance between faculty contribution based on research, teaching, and service. Studies are needed to find empirical ways to address this later philosophical question to change organizational cultures and the benefits of this for employees and employers.

Discrimination, Work-Life and Gender Inequality, and Closing the Gap

Additional research is needed on when family responsibilities are a source of career premiums or penalties inside academia and the moderating influences of university policies and practices Manchester (2020). Studies are also needed to better understand masculinity in work cultures as a psychologically permeable barrier to gender equality (Kray, 2020); as well as on why the prestige of men's schooling but not women's Ph.D. programs predicts top placements and linkages to status characteristics attributions (Johnson, 2020). Moreover, there needs to be more nuanced research on the stigma of using leave policies. For example, how does it affect men and women differently? How does it differentially affect single women or single mothers? How do we reduce the stigma of being labeled the "trailing spouse" or the "diversity hire"?

Faculty Gender & Work-Life Inclusion: Links to Organizational Strategy and Performance

Studies are needed on the key inhibitors of women faculty's achievement in business schools (Triana, 2020); how to create inclusive organizations through policies and whether standards of "meritocracy" might contribute to gender inequality rather than reducing the gender gap (the paradox of meritocracy) (Park, 2019). Research is also needed on the differences between increasing diversity only versus proactively managing diversity such as improving leader relational climate influences as a business case for enhancing organizational performance (Dwertmann, 2020). Moreover, we need a better way to evaluate teaching to reduce persistent gender bias in teaching evaluations. We need to test different evaluation methods (e.g., qualitative vs. quantitative), different evaluation criteria (e.g., subjective vs. objective criteria), and the effects of using inclusive language in evaluation forms to identify how we can best reduce gender bias in teaching evaluation. We can also test whether implicit bias training for students is effective in reducing gender bias in teaching evaluations.

Practice Agenda

Besides the presentations from scholars across the country, three Deans of leading business schools, David Hummels at Purdue University, Kathy Farrell at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Srilata Zaheer at the University of Minnesota, participated in a panel discussion on the leader's roles in fostering work-life inclusion as an organizational strategy to close the gender gap (Deans' Panel Discussion, 2018). Taken together, we identified the following six themes related to how we can increase work-life inclusion in organizations.

Theme 1: The importance of leaders' work-life inclusive messaging
 Recognizing the importance of leaders' role in gender and work-life inclusion in organizations is an imperative. Leaders are an important role model in any organization, setting a tone for the organization, particularly for how it manages diversity and inclusion. Employees in organizations take cues from how and what leaders talk about and behave to decide what is expected and valued in the organization (Ely & Meyerson, 2010). Thus, when communicating a gender and work-life inclusion agenda, leaders need to be mindful of their power to change the culture of the organization and leverage it for the good.

Theme 2: Make leaders accountable for the faculty's success and reducing systemic bias

It has been established that measuring accountability is a very important way to increase diversity and inclusion in organizations (Castilla, 2016). When leaders are held accountable (e.g., diversity goals tied to bonus or promotion), diversity and inclusion efforts get real results. Moreover, when leaders, including senior faculty members, hold themselves accountable for

junior faculty's success and leading culture change in the department to reduce systemic biases, significant changes are more likely to occur faster.

Theme 3: The need to broaden academic career success models

It is time to consider that academic success does not have to look the same for everyone. In the current rigidly defined tenure and promotion system, there is little room for individualized goals or individually defined success. Thought leaders argue that in order to achieve this change, organizational leaders need to change traditional imbalanced views on success, where success in one area (e.g., research) is valued more than in other areas (e.g., service) (Link, Swann, & Bozzman, 2008). We need to evaluate new initiatives that ensure greater fairness and equality in career success evaluation systems while allowing more flexibility to customize to individualized goals and expectations.

Theme 4: Move beyond win-lose identity sacrifice

In an overwork culture, we are forced to decide which identity we are to prioritize above all other identities (e.g., spouse or parent) in order to be successful (Cha, 2010). It is time we move beyond this win-lose paradigm to create a more work-life inclusive culture so that people do not feel they need to sacrifice other areas of their life to be successful at work or leave the workforce because they cannot fulfill responsibilities at work and at home at the same time (Cha, 2013). We need to acknowledge that we all occupy multiple important identities at the same time and to find ways to value and respect them without risking the possibility of success at work.

Theme 5: Increase dual-career support

Whether they are dual-academic couples or dual-career couples, faculty members in a dual-career relationships need greater university supports. Unless both spouses find a satisfying job in the same city, one spouse typically has to sacrifice and take a less satisfying job. Or it is increasingly common that sometimes faculty and families need to live apart, creating stress and conflict. Women are unequally affected by the growth in dual career families. For example, they are often more likely to make career tradeoffs as research shows that women are less likely to initiate dual-hiring negotiation than men (Morton, 2018). Women academics are also more likely to refuse a job offer if their partner does not find a satisfying employment, even if they consider their career as primary compared to their partner's (Zhang, Kmec, Byington, 2019). Considering that more female faculty are married to another academic than male faculty are (Schiebinger, Henderson, & Gilmartin, 2008), improving dual-career hiring support can help increasing gender and work-life inclusion in universities.

Theme 6: The need for field experiments

Many universities have implemented work-life policies (e.g., stop the tenure clocks or universally extended tenure clocks) in an effort to increase gender and work-life inclusion. However, evidence suggests these policies are not always successful and may result in new career problems. Leader and organizations need to conduct action research and experiments to better assess the benefits and sometimes unintended negative consequences of these policies to inform improved future policy implementation. Rather than across the board policy changes in large bureaucratic universities, we need to implement pilot studies evaluating new policies and identifying effective implementation tactics, and compare initiatives with a control group. These studies could inform us which policies are effective under what conditions. These steps will ensure that evidence-based policies are developed and implemented in ways that not only meet the unique circumstances of the organizational workforce but can ensure an effective culture of work-life inclusion to attract and retain diverse and leading faculty and students.

Closing

In some ways, universities are lagging behind business organizations in closing gender gaps in hiring, promotion, and pay. As institutions to educate future leaders and workers, universities need to be a model of diversity and inclusion rather than a follower. This monograph has the overarching objective of advancing understanding of linkages between gender diversity and work-life inclusion, and implications for strategies to foster women's and minorities' career success in universities, business, and society. We drew on leading thought leaders perspectives to identify scientific gap and address an under-researched critical area of organizational science. The research agenda developed may encourage future interdisciplinary scholarship on gender equality and work-life inclusion that can help policymakers to engage in more effective evidence-based practices. We hope this monograph will foster new insights on the organizational science regarding how to foster more gender and work-life inclusive businesses and universities. Such knowledge also will advance scientific knowledge on strategies enhancing the attraction, advancement, retention, and career longevity of women faculty, which also helps address societal inequality.

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