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Female Authority in a Globalizing Market

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Female Authority in a Globalizing Market

Part I: Introduction

“‘Don’t act like a man,’ we tell our female bosses, ‘but don’t act like a woman either.’” This statement by Nigel Nicholson (2010), professor of organizational behavior at London Business School, accurately summarizes an issue currently facing the business world: gender equality and female leadership. Although many of today’s political systems attempt to enforce equal treatment of men and women, cultural research shows their perspective societies have not completely complied. Men still dominate the global population of senior executives, still earn higher average salaries, and are still generally seen as the “better leaders” in many societies around the world. These differences in treatment between men and women are ultimately rooted in the core value systems of each society, and are therefore not subject to dramatic change overnight. This means that, until these societies do change, some form of behavioral alteration is required of anyone who crosses between cultures. In today’s globalizing market place, this is more important than ever before. Businesses around the world are adjusting to the market and going global just to remain competitive, meaning so must their prospective employees and, even more importantly, managers. While language, time difference, and currency are usually the first aspects of a country that global business people tend to adapt to, the underlying culture of each country is also extremely important, including gender roles. Male managers typically need only learn cultural business tactics, such as acceptable leadership styles and motivation strategies, to be effective in a foreign culture. Female managers, on the other hand, must add the gender perspective to their behavior and make sure it is not too drastically different from societal gender roles, or else they run the risk of being unsuccessful. To be effective in a global market, female managers must not only adapt to business tactics, but also to

gender roles in the sense that, in many societies, they cannot socially “act like a man,” but cannot managerially “act like a woman either.” The purpose of this study is to help female managers determine how to adapt their roles to be successful in international business, and also to give specific guidelines for women who plan to do business abroad. To accomplish this, this study focuses on the countries and cultures of Japan, Spain, and India, specifically, as a primer for the American female manager.

Part II: Gender Roles

Observing the gender roles across borders is one thing, but applying the knowledge and behaving accordingly in a separate culture is quite another. Understanding the gender roles prevailing in each culture will help international female managers to discover what behaviors will be successful in each culture. This is why before crossing into a foreign culture, today’s female managers must first deeply analyze how women fit into such societies in terms of how they are expected to behave, how women in the culture actually behave, how they are viewed by men, and the underlying cultural attitudes toward gender roles in general. While some cultures have very established gender roles that are strictly monitored, others have more relaxed roles, making research on the latter cultures much less available than the former.

Japan is one culture whose reluctance to change core traditions have posed a problem in today’s equalizing world. It was not until post World War II, in 1946, that the new Constitution in Japan not only declared equality between men and women in family life, but also in their legal status (Bose & Kim, 2009). In today’s world, sixty-seven years since the new Constitution, however, gender inequalities continue to exist in Japanese culture. One of the most prevalent, and deeply rooted, of these inequalities resides within the Japanese language. In the language, there exists a concept called *onnarashii*, or “womanly” speech, which refers to the dialect of

Japanese that women are traditionally expected to use. This dialect has been described as “polite, gentle, soft-spoken, nonassertive, and empathetic” (Dow & Wood, 2006). These characteristics are generally linked to women’s powerlessness and low social standing in Japanese society. This sense of suppression embedded in their native language for over two thousand years acts as a tough hurdle on the way to true gender equality. Another gender inequality in Japanese culture that is still present today is the Japanese woman’s role in family life. Similar to many cultures around the world, Japanese families are typically run by the man, who is considered the “head of the household” and also the “bread winner” of the family, while the woman’s contribution to the family is through her domestic and motherly obligations.

While Japanese society has passed many milestones in recent years regarding gender equality, there still exists a significant population who cling to their age-old Japanese values. One important milestone was in 1995, when Japan experienced an uproar in response to a movement known as *fufubessi*, or “husband’s and wife’s different surnames,” aimed at allowing Japanese women to have the choice of keeping their last names in marriage (Bose & Kim, 2009). This very specific jab at changing the family life of Japanese citizens was not taken lightly, especially since family name is considered a significant cultural symbol and family unit label in Japanese society (Bose & Kim, 2009). Despite such resistance, the movement still passed. Another recent movement in Japan is the “jenda free,” or “gender free,” movement, which is intended to “free women and men from the traditional gender ideology” (Ishii-Kuntz, 2009). Both of these movements, however, have faced significant resistance by traditionalists, known as “backlashers,” who feel that the movement will destroy family values and social norms. All of these contrasting attitudes toward gender equality have certainly made it difficult for Japanese women to make significant progress in their society.

Gender studies in Spain, however, have proven that gender roles from the European perspective are currently somewhat different than those in Asia. Historically, although certainly more delayed than other societies around the world, Spanish gender roles had very similar aspects of inequality in those societies. From the mid 1930s to 1975, while women in almost all other Western cultures had made significant progress on the road to equality, “the authoritarian regime under General Franco actively prevented the advancement of Spanish women’s rights and status” (Bose & Kim, 2009). Franco’s government did this by calling for women to be fully dedicated to their families, and, requiring that if they wished to work outside the home, they would need specific permission from the dominant male in their lives. All schools were also segregated by sex, where females were significantly held back by only being taught domestic classes and by the lowest quality teachers in the work force. After Franco died in 1975 along with his regime, there came a democratic period, where the women’s progress in society was no longer prevented, and Spanish women could finally begin to catch up with their Western counterparts. In family life today, there is less focus on the wife’s obedience to the husband, and household and child care tasks are shared more equally between the spouses. Additionally, the extreme form of masculinity, known as *machismo* in Spanish, is no longer required by society, and the social need for male heterosexism is not as strong (Francoeur, 2001).

India, a culture whose values are significantly affected by Hinduism, is another country whose behavior toward women is deeply rooted in tradition. Many are familiar with Hinduism’s caste system, where people are born into a specific social group, labeled as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. These castes are based around reincarnation, meaning that the caste one is born into is directly related to one’s actions in their past lives. In traditional Hindu culture, mobility, marriage, and even friendships between the castes were strictly

forbidden, giving those in the lower castes no hope of making a better life for themselves. It wasn't until India gained independence in 1947, when they also created a new Constitution, that discrimination between castes was outlawed (Singh, 2005).

This long time lack of social mobility can be directly related to the slow mobility of women in Indian society as well. Although Indian women have gained much ground in the past few years, India is still a vastly male-dominated society, where men are the heads of the household and have much control over the females in the family (Singh, 2005). They have the power to choose who can and cannot live in their household, along with whom and when a daughter will marry. Since marrying off daughters and providing "lavish" dowries is a tradition still practiced in Indian society, along with the Hindu custom where only sons may light a parent's funeral pyres, male births are seen as more preferable to most Indians (Subramanian, 2011). This preference can go as far as to parents aborting babies they know will be female, or, should they decide to keep their daughter, naming her "Nakusa," meaning "unwanted" in Hindu. One instance of this was in Satara, India, where in 2011 almost 300 girls out of a population of 120,079 people were reported to bare the label "unwanted" given to them by their fathers. That year, a movement within the community was formed to promote self-worth and dignity in India's female population. The movement succeeded in allowing these girls to choose a new name and legally change it, therefore creating for themselves a new label. While this represents only a small percentage of the massive population that India holds, it is representative of the ground that even young girls in India are gaining. Combined with ever increasing female literacy, college enrollment, and employment rates, this movement indicates the emergence of an even larger campaign for female equality in Indian society.

Part III: Cultural Dimensions and Managerial Effectiveness

There is no denying that today's marketplace is rapidly becoming more globalized—many predict that soon the earth will be viewed as one large market instead of many smaller, overlapping markets. As a result of this fact, organizations will more frequently be marketing to, working with, and managing people of all different cultural backgrounds. In order to be successful, therefore, organizations will have to learn global organizational practices, cultural context, and cultural indexes. Studying cultural context refers to studying whether or not the culture is considered a “high” or “low” context culture. In a study by Edward T. Hall on cultural factors (as cited in Hofmann, 2011), it was found that a high context culture is one where “most of the information is either in the physical context or initialized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message,” (Hall, 1976). Put more simply, in a high context culture, “reading between the lines” is extremely important, and one is expected to understand certain information in messages that are not stated directly. A low context culture is one where “the mass of information is vested in the explicit code,” or, the person says what they mean and no other messages are implied (Hall, 1976). Studying cultural indexes has, in fact, already been done by Dr. Geert Hofstede, a social psychologist and anthropologist who conducted a study on how values in the workplace are influenced by culture (Hofstede, 2001). Based on his research he concluded that there were five values from which one can measure a culture, which include Power Distance Index, Individualism, Masculinity, Uncertainty Avoidance Index, and Long-Term Orientation. These indexes are measured on a scale from 0 to 100, each score providing certain information on the culture, which will be explained in more detail later on. Studying these indexes along with cultural context and leadership styles can help a manager determine how effective, or ineffective, she will be in a foreign culture.

To start, the readings for Japan's cultural indexes are as follows: Power Distance: 54, Individualism: 46, Masculinity: 95, Uncertainty Avoidance: 92, Long-Term Orientation: 80 (The Hofstede Centre, 2013). The very high Masculinity score illustrates that as a societal expectation of behavior, men are generally expected to be assertive and competitive in Japanese society, while women are more modest and caring. Uncertainty Avoidance scores are also very high for the Japanese, showing that they are intolerant of uncertainty and ambiguity, and seek structured situations in which they are more comfortable. Long-Term Orientation is the last index where the Japanese score high, meaning they hold strong to their core values and are perseverant. The relatively low Individualism score indicates that the Japanese are a more collectivist society, in which people from birth are integrated into a strongly cohesive family group and offer their loyalty in exchange for continuous protection. Finally, the neutral Power Distance score illustrates that lower-members of Japanese society are generally indifferent about their status, meaning that they are not strictly tied to it but are not actively encouraged to try and move up, either (Hofstede, 2001). With regard to cultural context, Japan is considered an intensely high context culture with many underlying nonverbal and indirect messages that are expected to be understood by the receiver.

These indexes give significant information for a manager within the Japanese culture. First of all, it is clear from their collectivist nature that the Japanese work better and are generally more satisfied when in tight-knit teams or groups rather than by themselves. This coincides with the Japanese practice of *tsukiai*, meaning "work group socializing over food and drink" (Lincoln, 1989). The ritual of getting together with coworkers and supervisors after hours is very important to the Japanese, and leads to improved relationships and cohesiveness within groups. During these typically all-male get-togethers, it is perfectly acceptable for workers to drink alcoholic

beverages in quantities that, in American and other Western societies, would be considered “too much” at a work related event. Workers are allowed to become as “rowdy” as they would like, and should they express negative feelings they may hold toward their boss or other co-workers, it is simply ignored because the excuse of “being too drunk” is perfectly legitimate in Japanese society. Women, however, are not normally included because of the fact that women had simply never worked in offices with men when the tradition began, causing it to have a strictly male context. This practice certainly reflects Japan’s high-context attitude simply because it is universally understood by all in Japanese society, and does not need to be verbally addressed for people to comply with it. Another traditional practice in Japanese organizations is the “work for life” attitude, meaning that once an individual enters an organization, she is expected to work there for life. This practice encompasses Japanese society’s Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Long-term Orientation for a variety of reasons. The “work for life” concept implies ultimate loyalty to that organization, reflecting the expectation of loyalty in Japan’s collective family structures (Johnson, 1988). Furthermore, this practice yields a very low employee turnover rate, giving the organization high predictability, and therefore satisfies the Japanese preference for low uncertainty. Finally, the “work for life” idea corresponds with Japan’s high long-term orientation for the obvious reason that all employees are dedicated to the organization for the long term, reflecting their long-term dedication to cultural values. Each of these practices in Japanese organizations is crucial for foreign managers to understand in order to be effective. The Japanese value system is certainly a unique one and, in such a high context society, managers must learn how they are expected to behave before making a mistake that is seen as irreversible.

Spain reflects scores that are to some extent similar to those of Japan, which are: Power Distance: 57, Individualism: 51, Masculinity: 42, Uncertainty Avoidance: 86, and Long-Term Orientation: 19 (The Hofstede Centre, 2013). While Power Distance, Individualism, and Uncertainty Avoidance are quite parallel to Japanese society, Masculinity and Long Term Orientation are over 50 points lower in Spain. This slight difference in cultural dimension can actually play a large role in how managers should behave in a Spanish context. A low Masculinity score indicates that in Spanish society, men's and women's values are similar in that they both reflect modesty and care. Men are not as assertive and competitive, nor are they expected to be by society. To a global manager, this means that she may have to act differently toward men depending on the Masculinity Index of her own culture. Without this knowledge, the manager may inadvertently end up insulting her employees through expectations of gender behavior that do not coincide with Spanish culture. For instance, if a manager sends a male employee to a particularly stubborn client with the idea that he will bring a more aggressive attitude to the negotiation, she may find herself unhappy with him since most Spanish men do not behave in an assertive manner, causing conflict in the organization. Spain is also considered a high context culture; not as high context as the Japanese, but generally higher context than other Western cultures (Hofstede, 2001). In Spanish organizations, this may pose a particularly unexpected problem to a foreign manager, since there are many aspects of Spanish culture that are simply followed as practice but not necessarily directly spoken about. One of the most commonly known of these aspects is the notion of the Spanish *siesta*, where shops and businesses shut down mid day to take a break (Australian Government: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2003). This break can last up to three hours, and the reason being that Spanish people traditionally take long lunches in order to rest and spend time with friends and

family. The tradition of the *siesta* is a reflection of the Spanish culture's collectivist attitude, and is therefore considered very important in Spanish society. An additional reason for the *siesta* is that, in Spanish culture, people stay awake for longer hours into the night than most cultures, and therefore need to be able to rest during the day. Dinner is usually not eaten until around ten-o'clock at night, and can last until midnight or one-o'clock in the morning. For the international manager, this may require a vast change in lifestyle, and would therefore need to adapt in order to be effective in a Spanish organization.

India's cultural index, on the other hand, is fairly different from those of both Japan and Spain, including scores of: Power Distance: 77, Individualism: 48, Masculinity: 56, Uncertainty Avoidance: 40, and Long-Term Orientation: 61 (The Hofstede Centre, 2013). The high Power Distance score shows that Indian society has "an appreciation for hierarchy and a Top-Down structure" in that those in low status positions depend on the boss or authoritative figure for direction and are accepting of an unequal distribution of rights (The Hofstede Centre, 2013). The low Uncertainty Avoidance score demonstrates Indian society's high tolerance for uncertainty, differing opinions, minimal rules, and differing religious views.

Indian organizational practices have recently been referred to as the "Indian Way" of doing business. Characteristics of the Indian Way have been divided into four principle practices, which are: holistic engagement of employees, improvisation and adaptability, creativity, and social purpose (Cappelli, 2011). The Indian Way as a concept reflects Indian society's high-context nature. This is because analysis into the idea has only begun recently, but the practice has been around in Indian society for decades, showing that it has no need to be verbally addressed to be understood by all in the Indian culture. In Indian organizations, it is said that "people are viewed as assets to be developed...as sources of creative ideas and pragmatic

solutions; and as bringing leadership at their own levels to the company” (Cappelli, 2011). This attitude not only reflects the “holistic engagement of employees” of the Indian Way, but, interestingly, directly contrasts with India’s very high Power-Distance score. The encouragement of lower level employees to develop their skill set and bring individual leadership to their job reflects a drastic change in India’s cultural mindset as well as India’s business environment. For women in the Indian marketplace, this could mean the emergence of a more accepting and empowering work environment, but could also mean that women entering management positions might not hold the authority they once would have over subordinates. Another idea advocated in the Indian Way is the Hindi term *jugaad*, meaning “finding a way to work around obstacles.” Instead of turning away in the face of change and uncertainty, Indian organizations find ways to adapt their organization to make it stronger in the new environment. Jugaad corresponds with India’s very low Uncertainty Avoidance score in that Indian organizations are willing to deal with change and view it in a positive light. The Indian organization’s high tolerance for uncertainty is also shown in the “social purpose” of the Indian Way through managers’ emphasis on personal values, where diversity and creativity are strongly encouraged. Since Indians are comfortable with differing opinions, minimal rules, and differing religious views, a flexible and diverse work environment works well for them. To the international manager, this means that although strict rules and regulations work well in some cultures, this would certainly not be accepted in India, and the organization would suffer as a result. Understanding and applying the Indian Way to a manager’s skill set would provide her with the tools to become an effective manager in India.

It is clear from these findings that the business cultures within Japan, Spain, and India each incorporate very specific and well known practices. Since each of these countries is also

considered home to a higher context culture than that of the United States, it is very important for the American manager to familiarize herself with them. It is also helpful for her to fully understand the cultural indexes from within her home country in order to effectively prepare herself to enter another. The cultural indexes for the United States are as follows: Power Distance: 40, Individualism: 91, Masculinity: 62, Uncertainty Avoidance: 46, and Long Term Orientation: 29 (The Hofstede Centre, 2013). Comparing these indexes with those of Japan, Spain, and India will reveal to the American female manager which customs she may have trouble adjusting to. For instance, the “work for life” tradition of Japan may make her feel very uncomfortable since America has a relatively low Long Term Orientation, and she may have to make this clear to her Japanese counterparts before committing to a position there. Her high tendency toward individualism, however, might work very compatibly with the practices of the Indian Way that promote individual leadership within each position. By analyzing cultural differences from the perspective of cultural index, the female manager can reach new levels of understanding of the organizational practices within the cultures of Japan, Spain, and India.

Part IV: Effective Female Managers

The ongoing struggles women have historically faced in society are certainly making their way into the global marketplace of today. These struggles are directly linked to the fact that many organizations generally link managerially “effective” traits with the “masculine” behaviors of individualism, aggressiveness, and competitiveness; and consider behaviors such as collectivism, solidarity, and sensitivity, which are seen as feminine, as “ineffective” behaviors (Rodriguez, 2011 *Management, Women In*). It is the stereotype of believing that all males and females behave accordingly to these generalized traits that holds many women back from advancing their careers and moving upward in their organizations. The strength of this

stereotype, among other gender-related expectations, varies vastly between cultures, as has been covered in the previous sections of this report. In many cultures, males simply have never worked in a business environment with a woman before, and are therefore unsettled by her presence in what they believe to be a strictly male environment. Female managers must be aware of this fact, so as to prepare themselves for any behaviors they might encounter, as well as specific behaviors that are expected of them. This presents a unique challenge to women within international organizations, raising the question as to whether they should adhere to expectations of their home country, or adapt to the customs and cultural expectations of the host country. The international female manager must remember that she sometimes might have to compromise her own societal norms and expectations in order to be effective and successful in a foreign culture. This section will help the American female manager discover what exactly these norms and expectations might be within each of these cultures.

In a study called “Women Leading Across Borders,” Tom Verghese (2008) shares a story from a female client of his who, in 2008, faced struggles when entering the Japanese organizational culture. He says:

“Tracey was a western woman who was working in the IT industry and regularly travelling to Japan. One of the challenges that she faced was that a lot of the ‘business’ occurred outside of the office in the evenings at the Karaoke bar over drinks. It didn’t take her long to realise that as a woman this was not actually a place where she felt that she was genuinely welcome, nor did she feel comfortable. Tracey’s dilemma laid in how could she build relationships and be privy to some of the issues and information that was discussed if she wasn’t attending the evening activities.” (Verghese, 2008).

This issue that Tracey faced is obviously very culture-specific to Japan, since the Japanese are known for their practice of *tsukiai*. Many American women may find this comparable with the value that the game of golf plays within American business culture. American businessmen use golf as not only a way to get to know clients and co-workers, but also to strike deals and get work done in an informal setting. Since women were historically not involved in business deals, and do not commonly play golf, they are normally not involved in these “outings.” This comparison can help the American female manager understand the workings of the Japanese business culture as it applies to her inclusion as a woman, and adapt her behavior to the way she would react in her home country. According to a study done by Dr. Sue Freedman and Lothar Katz, the ultimate problem in Japanese organizations is that “most local businessmen have no concept for relationship building with foreign women,” which presents a huge problem for female managers in multinational organizations (Freedman & Katz, 2008). One of the top pieces of advice this study gives to the foreign female manager in Japan, although this may not be the first choice for powerful women, is to travel into the country accompanied by her male colleagues first and establish herself as playing a vital role in the group. When their Japanese counterparts see how important she is to her male colleagues, the Japanese will be more likely to treat her as an equal. With regard to Tracey’s issue, the study suggests that she only attend business events and get-togethers where she feels certain and confident that she is welcome. While, ideally, all events should be open to both genders, this is not the case in Japan, and Tracey would damage her reputation as a businesswoman and lose her colleague’s respect by violating such an established social norm. This relates back to the very high context, Masculinity, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Long-Term Orientation aspects of Japanese culture. It is clear from these high scores that Japan’s societal values are embedded incredibly deep, and

trying to change these aspects while also successfully running an organization is an endeavor that no one female manager could accomplish alone.

According to Virginia Kouyoumdjian, who lived and worked in Japan for almost 20 years as a foreigner, however, this venture may not be needed for the global manager in Japan. From her experience, she says “A foreign woman working in Japan is always a foreigner first and a woman second...they are expected to be different” (Kouyoumdjian, 2010). Another discovery she made in her experience was that, many times, sending a businesswoman rather than a man to Japan could be a strategic move for the international organization. The business tactics of Western businessmen are usually more aggressive than their Japanese counterparts. This observation, combined with the Western man’s larger physical size, can produce an uncomfortable environment for the Japanese, causing a less-than-optimal business relationship.

Spain, as mentioned earlier, does not hold nearly as strong gender expectations as does Japan. While women in Spain have historically lagged in gaining equality compared to women in other Western societies, they have certainly succeeded in catching up. Freedman and Katz’s study reinforces this observation by saying that Spain is a country “where conducting business usually does not present any special problems to women” (2008). The foreign female manager, therefore, need not have to tip-toe around cultural gender expectations to be accepted, and can instead focus on adapting to other cultural attributes. These attributes can be found in Hofstede’s work on Spain’s culture, as well as other nuances such as the *siesta*, eating habits, general attitudes toward work, and language. Freedman and Katz’s study does provide one piece of advice for female managers crossing into Spain, which is, “American women have to be especially careful, because what is considered assertive in the US may be considered aggressive in several European countries. As a rule of thumb, tone it down and pay attention to the

consequences of your behavior” (2008). This is, again, very socially specific and more gender neutral in the sense that American men may have similar behavioral problems when dealing with their European counterparts.

For a female manager crossing into the Indian culture, other behavioral alterations will need to take place. According to the study by Freedman and Katz, the main problem for the Indian businesswoman is that “conducting business can be somewhat difficult for women because traditional expectations of female roles may still prevail” (2008). This finding is certainly accurate considering the traditional treatment of women in Indian culture, where they are set up in arranged marriages, required to provide dowries, and expected to be the homemaker of the household. The first piece of advice the study offers to businesswomen travelling to India is to “emphasize the importance of your company and your role in it” along with demonstrating “confidence and assertiveness in ways that are mirrored in the culture” (2008). When the female manager is persistent in behaving in such a way that does not coincide with the Indian male’s typical view of women, she will be more likely to gain their respect as an equal. These measures, however, may not be necessary according to the story of American businesswoman Tara Bradford, who in 2003 had her job as a customer service representative for Earthlink moved to the central city of Hyderabad, India (Mitchell, 2004). While Hyderabad is a predominantly Muslim city compared the other Indian cities such as New Delhi, its society still holds most Indian cultural attributes. Tara explained that her main issue when first arriving on the job in Hyderabad was, “Even though India exports lots of people to the U.S., there is not a solid understanding of the U.S. and U.S. society in India” (Mitchell, 2004). Initially, this made her job as a manager especially challenging since her American style of management could not be fully understood by her employees. After some time working in Indian society, however,

Tara found that holding the label as a “foreigner,” along with the position of manager, exempted her from many gender expectations that Indian males usually hold for other women. She could freely approach any male and speak with him without the presumption of being disrespectful or wanting a romantic relationship. Tara said that, in the workplace, women are “put on pedestals” as opposed to being looked down upon or avoided, which certainly makes the experience for the female international manager in India that much easier. The fact that Tara’s co-workers put her hierarchical and international standing before her gender also ties in with India’s very high Power Distance index. While the Indian Way has caused some changes in the way Indian organizations view hierarchies, this example demonstrates that there is still an underlying tendency to respect positions of power in Indian business culture, which the international female manager can certainly use to her advantage.

The combined information about these three countries can prove very useful to the female manager wishing to cross into them. For instance, it is clear that Japanese and Spanish business cultures tend to value fairness and friendly relationships as opposed to competition and assertiveness. This means that the American businesswoman’s female-oriented behavioral traits can work to her benefit when dealing with both male and female clients in these countries. Female managers should be careful, however, and be sure not to sacrifice their confidence in trying to behave more “womanly,” since it might not only undermine her authority of her position but might also run the risk of a male client perceiving that she wants a romantic relationship, just as it would in American society. American female managers additionally have the advantage of being viewed as foreigner before being viewed as a woman, allowing her some leeway in these societies. This means that she will have an easier time in gaining respect in authoritative positions than a female manager from within each of these countries might, but

must be able to find a balance with regard to the question of how “American” she can behave and still be accepted. If, for instance, she insisted a Spanish client meet with her during *siesta* time, expecting that since she is American it is acceptable, the client might find her disregard for Spanish culture extremely rude and discontinue doing business with her. It is therefore most advantageous to the international female manager to use her foreign status as well as her feminine traits strategically while still respecting cultural contexts and indexes in order to be fully successful within these societies.

Part V: Successful Global Women Today

While it is important to learn from the experiences of other female managers who have crossed cultures for their careers, it is also helpful to understand how females within each culture have dealt with the challenge of achieving career goals with the presence of gender obstacles. Many women in Japan’s, Spain’s, and India’s modern day societies have managed to become as powerful as their male counterparts, if not more so. While these women faced more traditionalistic treatment from their societies in their career advancement than future businesswomen will face, their stories are nonetheless informative of the underlying attitudes toward gender that exist. From reading the stories of successful businesswomen within each culture, female managers from around the globe can gain insight into specific obstacles they might face as well as which strategies and practices can prevail in each culture.

From learning its history and culture, Japan has proven to be one of the most conservative countries and most resistant of equality for women out of the three discussed in this report. Some Japanese women, however, have found hidden opportunities in the system and worked past the obstacles. One of these women is Junko Nakagawa, who was recently appointed CFO of Nomura Holdings, Inc.—the major financial institution’s first female executive its 86 years of

existence (Fukase 2011). While her accomplishments can be solely accredited to her hard work both at Kobe University and during her almost 20 years with the company and seen as a national progression, Nakagawa admits this is not the case. “She says her promotion is consistent with the company’s push to globalise and compete with its rivals on Wall Street” says an article in the Wall Street Journal (Fukase 2011). She was promoted at the same time as Jasjit "Jesse" Bhattal, an Indian man whose promotion marked the highest achievement for a foreigner in Nomura’s history, allowing the company to show the world a more “modern” face. Despite her accomplishment, Nakagawa still intends to keep a “low profile” in her position because she is a woman. She says, “Being a woman is just one facet of myself - it's like being a different nationality...[Japan] is different from Western society; it may take a bit more time to see some change” (Fukase 2011).

Other female executives in Japan have found alternative ways to advance their careers in the country’s society. Many, including Haruno Yoshida, president of British Telecom Japan, and Yoshiko Shinohara, founder and CEO of Temp Holdings, travelled westward before seeking opportunities in their own country. Haruno Yoshida started her career in Japan, then transferred to a Canadian telecommunications company and held several positions in the United States before joining British Telecom Japan (British Telecom 2012). The western cultures in the U.S. and Canada were more accepting of hiring foreigners and women, allowing her career path to be much clearer. Yet, she still feels intense pressure from her home country’s work environment saying, “As a Japanese female executive, I feel I cannot afford to fail” (Birmingham 2012). Yoshiko Shinohara travelled to Europe and then Australia in an attempt to find out what she really wanted in life. During her travels, Shinohara “saw women managers thriving and was struck by how temporary-work agencies opened doors for them” and was immediately inspired

to give Japanese women those same opportunities through founding Tempstaff in Japan (Bloomberg Businessweek 2004). Other Japanese women, like Takako Ariishi, are lucky enough to gain power through family inheritance, yet still face hardships. Her father was the president of Daiya Seiki, a manufacturer for Nissan. Ariishi was only able to fully take on this position after her father's death, as he openly preferred her infant son to be President over her (Fackler 2007).

From the experiences of these women, we can conclude that there are many loopholes existing in the Japanese culture through which women can find opportunities. The growing tendency toward globalization is one of these said loopholes. While Junko Nakagawa received her promotion primarily because Nomura wanted to show a global face to competitors, it still does not change the fact that she got the job, and therefore the status that comes with it. Nakagawa saw that globalization was beginning to force Japanese organizations to re-evaluate their practices and used it to her full advantage. The fact that she still made the point to recognize and behave within her role as a woman and keep a "low profile," however, shows that Japan's high Uncertainty Avoidance has caused firms to still have a hard time viewing women as equals in the workplace. Globalization has also allowed many Japanese women to develop their global skills and knowledge abroad. The women can then use these skills to establish themselves as effective businesswomen, which in turn helps them gain status and opportunities when they return to Japan—as has been done by women listed above. In fact, some Japanese women have found that this may be the only option for aspiring young Japanese businesswomen. Sakie Fukushima, who is one of Japan's most powerful executives and currently sits on the Bridgestone Corporation board, says that had she never started her career in America, she would have been the housewife and homemaker that all women of her generation were expected to be.

“If I was to work for a Japanese company, a large Japanese company, I don't think I would have come this far” (Lah 2010). A second loophole used by women in Japan to gain status is family and inheritance. The story of Takako Ariishi is a perfect example of this, but also shows the problems tied to inheritance. While she does hold the title of president, she does not necessarily hold the respect. For instance, the fact that she is a woman led her father, who had appointed her president when he retired, to fire her when her son was born and give the position instead to the child simply because he was male. Further, she says that the first time she attended the company's semi-annual meeting as president, she was asked to wait in a separate room with the secretaries. “I still have to prove all the time that a woman can be president,” said Ariishi even after three years of holding the position. So, from the global manager's perspective, a key to gaining status as a woman in Japan can be said to lie within either acquiring talent and skill, taking advantage of global changes, or holding family status.

Historically, Spain's women have been the most advanced with regard to gender equality of the three nations analyzed in this report. Even though they did lag behind compared to their other western counterparts, Spain's women seem to have caught up quite quickly. In earlier years, seeing a female in a management position in Spain was “relatively uncommon in anything other than family-run firms” (WorldBusinessCulture 2012). Most of Spain's most powerful professional women today, however, do not have high societal barriers or depend on their family name, but instead earn their positions through acquired skills and knowledge. Many of these women can thank Spain's new educational system, whose recent reforms to encourage and support women in higher levels of schooling include instituting mentoring programs and more scholarships for female students (Tarzian 2007).

Two of these women are Amparo Moraleda, senior general manager of IBM Spain, Turkey, Portugal, Greece, and Israel; and Petra Mateos-Aparicio Morales, independent director of Solvay SA. Moraleda earned a degree in industrial engineering from Universidad Pontificia Comillas, and then obtained an MBA from IESE Business School at the University of Navarra (Wharton Global Alumni Forum 2010). Moraleda has since spent her entire career at IBM Spain. In an interview, when asked about her challenges as a professional Spanish woman, Moraleda replied saying, “women have progressed more since the childcare systems changed and since men began helping more in the domestic arena. I've always felt very respected at IBM. There is no gender discrimination as long as you're talented, which allows you to work your way up the ranks” (Mallory). Similarly, Morales earned her doctorate in economics and business administration from Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Before working for Solvay, a Belgian company, she was employed as chairperson at Hispasat, the Spanish satellite communications operator (Wall Street Journal 2012). While Morales did feel that Spain’s traditionally male-dominated business world presented an obstacle for her, she was still able to earn authority within her positions through her skill and perseverance and has said that “Today's generation has a different mentality” with regard to these traditions (Tarzian 2007). This shows that Spain’s women have been able to take advantage of the increasingly strong pressure on Spain’s infrastructure with regard to gender equality. Most other countries in the western world have already created systems that support a level playing field for women and Spain has been the one playing “catch-up.” Now, with Spain’s systems finally developing, Spanish women such as Moraleda and Morales have a clearer path toward reaching their goals.

While some of Spain’s top businesswomen still do obtain their positions through family means, it is not quite in the same way that Japanese women, like Takako Ariishi, have. While

Ariishi was viewed as simply a “place-holder” in the position by her father, women in Spain have been awarded freedom and opportunity within their inheritances. Ana Patricia Botin, chief executive of Banco Santander, for instance, is a fifth generation banker of a very famous Spanish family. Instead of simply working for the Santander group led by her father, Botin spent seven years at J.P. Morgan in order to develop herself as an international executive before deciding to join Santander (Forbes 2012). Another famous Spanish heiress of a professional position is Esther Koplowitz, who, along with her sister, Alicia, inherited Formento de Construcciones y Contractas from their father, the company’s founder. While the company was run by Esther and Alicia’s husbands for a number of years, the two women took over in 1989 when the marriages ended. Esther ended up buying the her sister’s share of the company and establishing herself as a 45% owner and board member of the company, as well as a board member of Cementos Portland Valderrivas and Veolia Environnement. Esther also founded the Esther Koplowitz foundation, which supports and houses the mentally and physically impaired (Forbes 2010). The accomplishments of these women show that Spain’s women currently have an easier time holding respect and authority as compared to Japanese women. Although Botin and Koplowitz did use their family names in order to obtain their positions, it does not change the fact that from these positions they were able to reach even higher levels of achievement despite Spain’s traditional gender biases.

Another interesting trend across articles on Spain’s top businesswomen is that they seem to hardly be asked about their positions with regard to the fact that they are female. On the contrary, most interviews held with these women inquire about the challenges they face as a businessperson such as economic struggles, industry structure, and company plans for the future. This proves that Spain’s society has grown to accept women within powerful business roles and

respects them for their position as a person, not as a woman. Despite the fact that this new attitude allows Spanish businesswomen to have an easier time within their positions, there is one challenge which they still face. Spain's current infrastructure has a significant lack of child care support for working parents, specifically mothers. Since, as mentioned previously in this report, Spanish women have traditionally been expected to work as housewives and stay-at-home mothers, the child care industry in Spain is not quite as developed as in other countries in Europe such as Germany and Norway (C. Sanjust, personal communication, December 10, 2012).

Although Spain's men have recently begun contributing to their households in more than just a monetary sense, the women are still facing a struggle. According to Celia de Anca, professor of organizational behavior at Madrid-based business school Instituto de Empresa and director of its Center for Diversity in Global Management, "While men interested in business careers spend that crucial decade of their thirties pursuing business education and networking...family becomes the priority of many women in their thirties" (Tarzian 2007). Further, another senior female investment manager at a major bank based in Madrid has said that "There is a perception on the part of management...that if a woman's personal life calls her, she will respond to that call...[If she does,] she loses it all and is relegated to the back office" (Tarzian 2007). According to the article in *Businessweek* from which this came, this executive wished to remain anonymous.

From these women and their stories, it can be said that Spain's women do not necessarily need to find "loopholes" in order to obtain high-ranking positions and respect from their male counterparts. The western world has pressured Spain to take action and make changes to their traditionally male-dominated business culture. Spain's societal developments with regard to gender equality along with advancements in educational support for women allow Spain's

businesswomen to pursue the career they desire just as a man would. The fact that women such as Amparo Moraleda and Petra Mateos-Aparicio Morales earned their positions on their own shows that these changes have been effective. It is when these women decide to start a family, however, that they face challenges. For the global female manager, this information is important. Managers from more advanced western countries will have to realize that their Spanish counterparts are facing much pressure both from work and at home, and must tailor their leadership and motivation strategies to these needs. Until Spain develops a stronger child care support system, many of Spain's businesswomen will continue to work under the "double duty" stress that being a fulltime wife, mother, and businesswoman entails.

While India's women have faced historically similar hardships to those of their Japanese counterparts, the barriers in the Indian business world are not quite as high. As stated in the international database entitled World Business Culture, "...the rank of an individual supersedes any notions of gender inequality which may be inherent in Indian society. If a woman has the position of manager, she must be there for a reason and her instructions will be followed just as diligently as those of a male manager," –which parallels the information offered by the story of Tara in the previous section. (WorldBusinessCulture 2012). Still, the actual process of getting to the position of manager poses a challenge for the Indian businesswoman. This challenge has already been taken on by many Indian women, some of whom have been successful and are now among the top businesspeople in India. Included in this group are Shobhana Bhartia, chairperson and editorial director of HT Media, and Mallika Srinivasan, chairperson of Tractors and Farm Equipment. These two women are among those in India who, similar to some in Japan and Spain, were able to gain their positions through family inheritance. They, however, did not face the harsh backlash that some in Japan did, and were able to use the position to their fullest

advantage. Bhartia, for instance, was able to take the opportunity and run with it by taking HT Media and “transforming it from a stodgy publisher into fast-growing listed outfit HT Media...It publishes the Hindustan Times, India's second-largest English newspaper, with 3.7 million readers” (Forbes 2011). Srinivasan, whose company is now the second largest tractor maker in India, “is credited with catapulting it from a domestic player [to one] with \$70 million in revenue” (Forbes 2011). Further, similar to Spain, in the many documented interviews with these women, not once were they asked about their jobs with regard to their gender. Every interview focused solely on the company’s business activities and plans, as well as their personal insights on the business as a whole. This fact shows that these women, contrary to those in Japan, are highly respected in India simply for the positions they hold and the skills they have, not the fact that they hold these positions while being a woman.

Other women, such as Zia Mody, co-founder of AZB & Partners and Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, founder, chairperson, and managing director at Biocon, did not have such family connections, but were able to find other ways to get to the top of India’s business world. Mody, for instance, sought to follow in her father’s footsteps as a lawyer, so went westward first to Cambridge University in England and then to Harvard in the U.S. (Perkins 2012). Mody was also lucky enough to have a mother, father, mother-in-law, and husband who all supported her goals, saying, “This was highly unusual [in India] and might not have occurred had [I] married into another family,” (Perkins 2012). Mazumdar-Shaw followed a somewhat similar path. Inspired by her father to become a brew-master, she completed a graduate program in brewing in the western-oriented society of Australia at the University of Ballarat in Melbourne (Encyclopedia Britannica 2012). When she found the brewing industry to be vastly male-dominated with high barriers for women, however, she decided to instead make a strategic shift

in her specialty. At the same time, Mazumdar-Shaw came across Leslie Auchincloss, then owner of Irish Firm Biocon Biochemicals, who quickly became her partner in founding Biocon India. While Mazumdar-Shaw was easily able to apply her brewing knowledge to the field of biotechnology, the challenge here was that a biochemical industry in India at the time simply did not exist. By applying her skill set to building a brand new industry in India instead of attempting career advancement in the brewing world, Mazumdar-Shaw was able to set the tone for a new industry in such a way that it was neither male nor female dominated or prescribed. Many Indians, however, were still skeptical with regard to her gender and many were not willing to work for a woman, causing Biocon's growth to be rather slow (Encyclopedia Britannica 2012). The company, nonetheless, persevered, and after 26 years in the year 2003 Mazumdar-Shaw earned the title of the richest woman in India. The fact that both of these women started their careers in the paths of their fathers shows the strong male influence still present within Indian families. The other commonality between both women was seeking experience abroad before working in India which proves that, as compared to the West, India has fewer opportunities for women at the top of the industry. Finally, Mazumdar's decision to "give up" per se on the brewing industry and start a new industry from scratch gives light to the fact that some industries in India are simply averse to including women and will therefore take much longer to reach gender equality.

One trend across all the top women in India no matter how they advance their careers, however, has been what has been referred to as a "guilt conscience," which is very similar to the pressure felt by their Spanish counterparts. Indian women have traditionally taken the role as housewives and stay-at-home mothers as soon as they are married and have children. While the housewife expectation has significantly faded over the years, the full-time mother obligation has

not. Many of the above Indian women have found it extremely difficult to succeed in both their career and motherly duties, and attribute their success to the rare yet essential support they get from their families. Indeed, it may be one of the top reasons they have been able to hold their positions in the first place. Most Indian women, once having children, “have to drop out because they don’t have support at home” (Perkins 2012). In an interview with Chanda Kochhar, the managing director and CEO at ICICI bank, India’s largest private bank, she says, “There is no past tense to guilt conscience. I have been living with it every single day — even now” (Majumdar and Chakraborty 2011). In recent years, full-time working Indian females have dealt with this by hiring full-time nannies to care for their children and households. This new trend has certainly helped with regard to career advancement for women in India, but has also created some controversy as to whether sacrificing family time for work is the best solution to the issue. From the experiences of these women, we can conclude that there are a number of ways a businesswoman can succeed in India, but unfortunately there will most likely be a trade-off. Similar to their Japanese counterparts, Indian women can gain powerful positions through inheritance, seeking opportunity in the West, and drawing upon knowledge and skill. While the Indian businesswoman’s journey is somewhat easier than that of Japanese women in that they do not experience nearly as much backlash and do not have to “prove themselves” once they earn their position, Indian women do need some degree of family support in order to retain their success.

As one can deduce from the stories above, a common trend across each country discussed is the issue of child care. It is clear that the goal of having a successful career and a wholesome family, a goal that most women strive for, is extremely difficult in today’s global society. This information is crucial to the global female manager because understanding a global trend such as

this can help her relate to all other businesswomen around the world. It is additionally important because no matter which country she and her family might decide to live in, this issue is something that a businesswoman will have to face if she wants to pursue a successful career. While many countries have been advancing their child care infrastructures, it is clear that the work-life balance is still uneven for working mothers around the world. Another issue prevailing in Eastern cultures is the lack of educational opportunities for women. As discussed above, many of the female executives in the Eastern cultures of Japan and India sought their education as well as their first jobs in the West in order to develop their skills. This is important because as long as the West outperforms the East in terms of educational and career opportunities, women in the East will continue to struggle with regard to gender equality in high-ranking positions. With regard to the international female manager, this means that the population of upper management positions in the East will be predominantly male, requiring her to prepare to be a minority within eastern organizations.

Part VI: Conclusion

As a woman, adapting to a foreign culture is one thing, but trying to be respected as a manager in one requires much more skill and understanding. Whether it be Japan's tradition of *onnarashii*, Spain's practice of *siesta*, or India's concept of *jugaad*, the foreign manager must be aware of the behaviors that make the culture she crosses into unique. When crossing into a foreign country with deeply held gender values, it is in the female managers' best interest to put the cultural expectations of women in the country first, and then react to her environment accordingly. The female manager must also be wary of where she can use her femininity and foreign status to her advantage in the global marketplace and where she cannot. Not all businessmen act alike, even those that are part of the same culture; so expecting them to do so is

simply naïve. Even though, as of now, men are still the dominant gender in the population of business executives, this can be changed. Initiatives are already in place to require organizations to include women on their executive boards, provide them with equal salaries, and prevent any other forms of sexual discrimination. This however, should not lead the female manager to assume that since the marketplace is becoming global, so are these initiatives. As highlighted in the fifth section of this report, many businesswomen around the world still seek out loopholes within their societies in order to obtain higher ranking positions—some being more difficult to find than others. Issues of childcare availability as well as educational opportunities for women are still prevalent around the globe, causing the gender-equality battle to continue. The next step for women on a global scale is to create change around these problems instead of simply acknowledging them. The unique kind of potential our world's women hold must be valued at the same level as a man's would; only then will real progress be made to solve them. Until then, to be effective in today's global marketplace, the female manager must not only adapt to business tactics, but also to cultural practices and gender roles in order to preserve the amount of confidence, respect, and authority that she has come to hold in her home country.

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