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Experiences Of Female Faculty With Maternity Leave At Four-Year Universities In An Upper Midwest State

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EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE FACULTY WITH MATERNITY LEAVE AT FOUR-
YEAR UNIVERSITIES IN AN UPPER MIDWEST STATE

by

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A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

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This dissertation, submitted by Audra Myerchin, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

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Dr. Lana Rakow

This dissertation is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the Graduate School at the University of North Dakota and is hereby approved.

_____
Dr. Wayne Swisher
Dean of the Graduate School

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Date

Title   Experiences of Female Faculty with Maternity Leave At Four-Year Universities in an Upper Midwest State

Department   Teaching and Learning

Degree   Doctor of Philosophy

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Audra Dawn Myerchin
November 26, 2011

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to explore female faculty members' experiences with maternity leave, while working as a career academic in higher education. Participants consisted of women currently employed in an upper Midwest state at six four-year institutions. An online survey was completed by 121 women, and 30 of these women also participated in face-to-face or telephone interviews. Survey participants completed both open and closed-ended questions. Face-to-face interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, then analyzed for codes, categories, and themes.

Four themes emerged from the analysis of the data: there was a lack of information on maternity leave at all six institutions involved in this study; female faculty members experiencing maternity leave often felt a lack of power in their work environments to do what was best for themselves and their children; female faculty felt there were gender beliefs within their work setting concerning pregnancy, maternity leave, and how that related to their overall status at their institutions; and female faculty in this study felt stressed when becoming a parent in combination with fulfilling their faculty roles.

These four themes led to two final assertions in this study. Female faculty members who had children while employed by these universities experienced several hardships related to lack of information, lack of power, and perceived gender beliefs.

These female faculty members, who became parents while employed by these universities, also experienced stress associated with pregnancy, adoption, and child care responsibilities.

The rigors of becoming a new parent and navigating higher education as a career field may place women in an unsupportive and stressful situation. Working to craft policy that supports and guides women during the experience of becoming a parent will help to ensure women's participation at all levels of higher education.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

More women are applying for and completing graduate degrees than ever before; they now surpass men in completing graduate programs, according to Snyder and Dillow (2011). As women navigate graduate school, they are acclimated to the rigors of the academy, and this in combination with continued education, has matriculated women into the profession of higher education. Women are becoming actively involved in university life, not only as students, but as life-long career academics. As the make-up of higher education faculties begins to change, so have the needs of faculty. Women are pursuing Ph.D. programs more quickly after master's degrees than ever before and moving into tenure-track faculty positions by their late twenties. This shift in educational attainment and advances in fertility may collide with a woman's most advantageous child-bearing years. Additionally, the culmination of female faculty members pre-tenure years and optimal child-bearing years raises new questions for the academy (Valdata, 2005; Stockdell-Giesler & Ingalls, 2007).

Higher Education Overview

In 2009, degree-granting post-secondary institutions in the United States enrolled an estimated 20.4 million students (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). The statistics

gathered by the Department of Education since 1988 show the number of women

enrolled in higher education has almost doubled in the past twenty years.

Comparatively, in the ten year span between 1999 and 2009, the number of women in

undergraduate programs has increased by 63 percent, whereas the enrollment of men

increased only 36 percent (Snyder & Dillow, 2011).

In 2009, higher education employed over 3.7 million faculty, administrators,

staff, and graduate assistants at degree-granting institutions. Of that 3.7 million,

faculty comprised approximately 1.4 million career academics (Snyder & Dillow,

2011).

Higher education, born out of secular tradition and English heritage and later

moved into professionalization, has traditionally been thought of as a place for young

adults to mature, gain life experience, and become educated participants of society

(Thelin, 2004; Lefkowitz Horowitz, 1987). Higher education, in its infancy, was

touted as "educational excellence" and a place for wealthy Americans to send their

young men (Thelin, 2004).

Now, over 300 years later, American higher education demographics are vastly

different. The United States now encompasses institutions of varying size, mission,

and student make-up. Today's institutions offer an array of degree choices, academic

departments, modes of instruction, and a diverse body of students. Just as institutions

have changed with the times, so has the faculty who teach at those institutions.

Women in Higher Education

Women's entrance into the profession of higher education occurred just before

the turn of the 20th century (Thelin, 2004, p. 143). Women who pursued this

profession were, "at times called pioneers" (Thelin, 2004, p. 143). The pioneering status of women as faculty in higher education was not an easy course considering the origins of higher education as an all-male profession. Nonetheless, as of 2002, women in the United States comprised 35 percent of all full time faculty (May, Moorhouse, & Bossard, 2010; Trower & Bleak, 2004). Because women have been joining higher education faculties during a time when they are typically giving birth and/or raising children, the researcher felt that it was timely to examine women's experiences with maternity leave and associated leave policies.

The construct of higher education is unlike any other profession. The employment situation for faculty is fluid and evolving. Professors work from home, in their offices, in the classroom, at conferences, and during all hours of the day and night throughout the year. Their professional boundaries are fluid, due to the changing nature of academia (e.g., online learning). Boundaries between faculty's professional and personal life make leave policies potentially controversial. Researchers refer to this dimension of blurred boundaries as the significance of space and place. Specifically, McDowell (2003) states, "Compared to an older, more settled world, capital and labour are now increasingly restless, travelling across space in unforeseen ways and to a previously unsurpassed extent" (p. 11). The nature of academia and maternity leave policies are not an easy course to navigate or define.

Maternity Leave

The broader social construction of maternity leave in the United States might be thought of as, "rights granted and privileges withheld" (Peterson & Albrecht, 1999, p. 170). The Family and Medical Leave Act was passed in 1993, but no new

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legislation in almost 20 years requires that business still rely on this outdated law. University structures associated with maternity leave find themselves in the same predicament. Only a few flagship universities have crafted progressive policy that supports women and families (Untener, 2008; Wilson, 2008; June, 2010).

Significance of the Study

Female faculty members are directly affected by maternity leave policies in higher education. Biological and cultural factors both play a part in policy construction. Biologically, women are the child-carriers, culminating in an occasional difficult birthing process. The process of carrying and birthing a baby can be exhausting, debilitating, dangerous, and sometimes fatal (Pathi, Esen, & Hildreth, 2006). Not only can childbirth be fatal, but it results in a recovery period that is different for each woman.

From a cultural perspective, women typically take on more of the child care responsibilities than men once a baby is born (Rhoads, 2004). Even if a woman has adopted a child, caregiving is culturally constructed as a female obligation, therefore having and caring for children becomes a responsibility of the female gender (Buzzanell & D'Enbeau, 2009).

Current research about women's maternity leave experiences is sparse at best, especially when it comes to women in higher education. Women in higher education feel pressure to time their biological clocks with the academic calendar, according to most research (Wilson, 1999; Stockdell-Giesler & Ingalls, 2007; Valdata, 2005). If women choose to postpone conception until after tenure, they run the risk of "infertility problems or a high-risk pregnancy" (Valdata, 2005, p. 36). The culture of

higher education has perpetuated concepts, such as publish or peril, which sends the message of an unforgiving career environment. As a recent study illustrated, "The Faculty and Families Project at our university, for example, found that between 1992 and 1999, only four of 257 tenure-track faculty parents at Pennsylvania State University took any formal family leave" (Drago et al., 2005, p. 22). Furthermore, Princeton University did an internal audit and found women were reluctant to ask for tenure extensions and maternity leaves for fear of career ramifications (Valdata, 2005).

It is only recently that universities have acknowledged the need for maternity leave policy. In fact, before any official maternity leave policies were adopted, women were expected to negotiate with department heads on an individual basis (Wilson, 1999). The typical pre-tenured faculty member might feel uneasy in this capacity, as Untener (2008) stated in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "The negative effects of having to "negotiate" a maternity leave are well documented but often underestimated" (p. 31). Knowing that this negotiation can be emotionally and professionally torturous, examining the research about university policy is critical to this research.

At the time of this study, research about university leave policy was more widespread than it had been in the past, but still inadequate to fully understand maternity leave. In 2007, one study surveyed 189 university institutions, specifically seeking information about family friendly policies (August & Miller, 2009). In sum, this study showed that of the 189 surveyed institutions, 78 percent of institutions had a formal paid maternity leave, 65 percent of universities had a policy to allow new parents to stop the tenure clock, 44 percent had a policy to allow female faculty

members to take additional unpaid leave beyond requirements outlined in the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, almost 40 percent provided additional paid leave, 36 percent offered paid paternity leave, 29 percent offered paid time after maternity leave, and 21 percent of universities allowed a reduction in workload for new faculty parents (August & Miller, 2009).

Researcher's Interests in Leave Policies

Reflecting on my own maternity leave experiences as a faculty member at a Midwestern university, I grappled with the nature of academia when my first daughter was born. It was an invigorating and intense time, both personally and professionally. When my second daughter was born, I found myself not only navigating the rigors of academia and caring for a toddler, but also becoming a student again myself, pursuing my Ph.D. While engaging in research during my Ph.D. program, I learned that, "The task of the initial engagement is to discover an intense interest, a passionate concern that calls out to the researcher, one that holds important social meanings and personal, compelling implications" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 27). Learning more about women's experiences at other higher education institutions became my passionate concern. Realizing that my experience was only one among many, I put aside my story and started asking others about theirs. Moustakas (1990) stated, "The self of the researcher is present throughout the process, and while understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth, the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge. Heuristic processes incorporate creative self-process and self-discoveries" (p. 9). Thus, understanding my own presence in this research, I am able to better conceptualize the significance of the study as a whole.

Purpose of the Study

This study explored female faculty members' experiences with maternity leave situations at six four-year institutions in an upper Midwestern state. The research examined how female faculty members initiated and experienced leave situations, while employed in higher education. It was hoped that by collecting the experiences of female faculty members, policies might be explored across institutions for understanding and comparison. Furthermore, this study has the potential to provide insight into how women in the academy navigate leave experiences, thus engaging women in the process of policy making.

Research Question

The research question for this study was: "What are the experiences of female faculty members in an upper Midwest university with maternity leave?" Women's experiences were coupled with an analysis of faculty handbooks, current policy construction, gender representation, and faculty salaries across all six institutions. As women continue to enter graduate school, doctoral programs, and the ranks of higher education as faculty members, a better understanding of leave experiences will benefit future employees and employers. Specifically, understanding how women in one particular state have experienced maternity leave policies across six different institutions can only serve to advance the profession of education, serve students better, and promote an equitable working environment.

Delimitations of the Study

The following delimitations were identified in this study.

1. The study took place online (survey), in-person (interview), and over-the-telephone (interview). It involved six four-year universities in an upper Midwest state: two research universities, and four regional universities.

2. Participants in the study were 121 female faculty members employed at a four-year institution in one upper Midwest state who gave birth to or adopted a child during their employment and who responded to the online survey.

3. After participants completed the online survey, they were invited to participate in a face to face or telephone interview; 30 participants elected to be interviewed.

Conceptual Framework

This study was guided by a feminist theoretical framework. A feminist perspective is typically associated with a postmodern view of gender. Postmodern gender concepts, "presumes an extreme regard for human freedom, in thought and action, affect and decision" (Backlund & Williams, 2004, p. 62). Moreover, "The essence of postmodernism is to acknowledge the temporal and spatial relativity of each cognition and to accept the possibility of deconstruction of established values" (Backlund & Williams, 2004, p. 60). Specifically, this study is guided by standpoint theory and feminist communicology.

Standpoint theory has been studied for more than 25 years and as Harding (2009) notes, it spans many disciplines. A broad definition of standpoint theory states, "women are not intrinsically (biologically) different from men, yet patriarchal power relations produce different experiences and senses of self. Because women are not

powerful, they develop a different and useful 'take' on social life" (Beasley, 2005, p. 48). Harding (2009) defines the goal of standpoint research as, "committed to the production of information women want and need in their struggles to survive and to flourish—information about our bodies and our children's bodies; our environment, governmental, and legal institutions and practices" (p. 193). While at the same time, "challenges the presumed reasonableness and progressiveness of dominate institutional assumptions and practices" (Harding, 2009, p. 194). Crasnow (2009) additionally notes, "Standpoint theory also includes the important insight that power plays an ineliminable role in knowledge" (p. 190).

Broadly, an organizational communication perspective, Modaff, DeWine, and Butler (2008) explained this structure as, "Organizational communication scholars operating from a critical theory standpoint attempt to reveal how social and technological structures within organizations serve to oppress workers" (p. 103). Most importantly, "researchers attempt to educate workers about these oppressive forces and provide means for workers' emancipations" (Modaff, DeWine, & Butler, 2008, p. 103). Not only does organization theory aim to emancipate workers, but it aims to uncover the, "traditional organizational structures that rely on bureaucratic procedures, centralized decision making, and hierarchical control [and] favor the interests of those in management while the interests of the workers are subordinated" (Modaff, DeWine, & Butler, 2008, p. 104). An essential cog in the wheel of critical approaches is power (Miller, 2006). Identifying power in organizational theory helps the researcher focus on, "the 'deep structures' that produce and reproduce relationships in organizational life" (Miller, 2006, p. 122).

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Specifically, feminist communicology, as described by Mumby and Ashcraft (2006) this way: "At the root of our model is the assumption that gender is a complex, fragmentary, ongoing and contradictory accomplishment that unfolds at the nexus of communication and organizing" (p. 74). Communicology aims to examine "how work and gender become entwined, how this relationship is effectively sustained and altered over time and across arenas of human symbolic activity, and how communication functions as the medium and outcome of institutionalized power" (Mumby & Ashcraft, 2006 p. 83).

Using standpoint theory in combination with feminist communicology provides for unique insights into this research. Using women's situated experiences as a backdrop for social and institutional forces helps to uncover gender beliefs in the workplace.

Organization of the Study

In the first chapter, the study was introduced, providing necessary background information as a foundation to the significance and purpose of the study. The research question and delimitations gave direction and clarity to the study. The conceptual framework of standpoint theory and feminist communicology provided a conceptual framework for the mixed methods research. In the second chapter, the mixed methods research design is presented, as well as methods used in conducting the study, including codes and themes from the data. The third chapter follows with the findings of the study. The fourth chapter relates to the discussion of the findings with respect to the literature. Finally, the fifth chapter is a presentation of the conclusions, summary and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore maternity leave experiences of female faculty members at four-year institutions in one upper Midwest state. The study began with the research question: "What are the experiences of female faculty members in the higher education with respect to maternity leave situations?" A beneficial way for the participant and the researcher to understand these experiences was through a mixed methods approach. Creswell (2008) explained the value of this way: "The basic assumption is that use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, in combination, provides a better understanding of the research problem and questions than either method by itself" (p. 552).

Human Subjects Participation

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the Research University 1 (Approval #201205-390) and Regional University 1 (Approval #1248). The other institutions granted permission to rely on these approvals. The protection of willing participants was assessed throughout the study to ensure an ethical research process. The IRB consent documents can be found in Appendix A.

In an IRB review process, researchers are charged with several standards: allow the participant to give full consent, allow the participant to withdraw at any time

without repercussions, allow the participant to know the full extent to which the data will be used and to have full confidentiality, and privacy (Creswell, 2008, p. 157-160). Institutional Review Boards are mandated and follow guidelines developed by the Food and Drug Administration specifically based on, "…three principles: respect for persons (their consent, their right to privacy, and anonymity), beneficence (weighing the benefits of research versus the risks to individuals), and justice (equity for participation in a study)" (Creswell, 2008, p. 158). These three ethical principles are put in place for the participants benefit. It allows participants to assess the risks of participating in research and to judge for themselves if they want to proceed (Creswell, 2008, p. 158). Participants in this study had the option to opt-out at any time without ramifications or without having their anonymity revealed.

Because most participants felt the discussion of their maternity leave arrangements was a sensitive topic, not only from the standpoint of the physical experience of giving birth, but also from the professional sense of job security, complete confidentiality was a necessity. To ensure privacy, survey participants were not asked their names, and interview participants' names were coded as pseudonyms. Furthermore, participants were not associated with their department or university in the findings.

Mixed Methods Design

This study's mixed methods approach can be specifically defined as, "those that combine the qualitative and quantitative approaches into the research methodology of a single study" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 17; Creswell, 2009). Mixed methods research became widespread by the 1980s and is a commonly

accepted research practice in the social and behavioral sciences (Tashakkori &

Teddlie, 1998; Maxwell & Loomis, 2003). Kemper, Stringfield, and Teddlie (2003)

stated, "Nearly any complex research question requires more than one sampling

technique" (p. 273).

Mixed methods research can be applied differently throughout the research

process. This study utilized the mixed methods approach, "within different phases of

the research process" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 19). For example, Creswell,

Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson (2003) stated, "when quantitative data precede

qualitative data, the intent is to explore with a large sample first to test variables and

then to explore in more depth with a few cases during the qualitative phase" (p. 217).

Open and closed-ended survey questionnaires were sent out first, allowing participants

to self-nominate for the qualitative interviews.

Utilizing multiple methodologies provides for a triangulated approach to

research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 109; Neuendorf, 2002, p. 49). More aptly stated,

"the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth

understanding of the phenomenon in question" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 7).

Triangulation not only refers to multiple methods, but as a source of balance and

trustworthiness: "Triangulation involves checking information that has been collected

from different sources or methods for consistency of evidence across sources of data"

(Mertens, 1998, p. 183).

Initial Survey

In the simplest form, "Surveys can be thought of as methods used for

descriptive research or as data collection methods used within other research designs"

(Mertens, 1998, p. 105). Surveying is typically associated with quantitative research methods. Quantitative research, "…asks specific, narrow questions, collects quantifiable data from participants; analyzes numbers using statistics, and conducts the inquiry in an unbiased, objective manner," a tradition born out of the physical sciences (Creswell, 2008, p. 46). Quantitative data traditionally uses comparison as a primary tool for creating statistical analysis (Creswell, 2008, p. 47). "A survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population" (Creswell, 2009, p. 145). Statistical data from a survey was used in this study, along with participant interviews. The use of a survey in this study represented a, "one-shot survey for the purpose of describing the characteristics of a sample at one point in time" (Mertens, 1998, p. 108).

Participant selection.

Criteria for this study stipulated participants had to be female faculty members currently employed full-time and on a tenure track contract at a public four-year university in an upper Midwest state. The participant must have given birth or adopted a child during her employment cycle at the time of this study.

The survey was distributed through assigned public campus e-mails, segmented by gender and provided by each institution. There was no way to determine which women had adopted or given birth while employed, so a self-disclosure tactic was used in the e-mail greeting (see Appendix B). This greeting was sent to all female faculty members asking for their voluntary participation in a survey if they had a baby while employed at their institution. Additionally, the survey served as a tool for participants to self-nominate for interviewing.

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As Kemper, Stringfield, and Teddlie (2003) noted, "The sampling strategy should stem logically from the conceptual framework as well as from the research questions being addressed by the study" (p. 275). In order to understand a woman's lived experience, the researcher wanted to include as many participants as possible. It is commonly known that, "The anonymity of self-administered questionnaires permits respondents to be more candid" (Nardi, 2003, p. 59); the survey in this study provided that anonymity.

While only females were recruited, it is important to note that there was no way of truly knowing if the requested population sample completed the survey. As Nardi (2003) suggested, "researchers do not always know if those responding are who they say they are and if they are answering honestly" (Nardi, 2003, p. 59). However, the computer program used to administer the survey had a tool that allowed the principal investigator to delete non-qualified respondents.

Participants were selected if they were employed by one of six institutions. Table 1 presents broad descriptors of each institution.

Table 1. Descriptions of Participating Institutions, 2011.

Institution Pseudonym	Number of Students	Public	City Size
Research Institution 1	10,000 to 15,000	Yes	50,000 or more
Research Institution 2	10,000 to 15,000	Yes	50,000 or more
Regional Institution 1	3,000 to 5,000	Yes	30,000 or more
Regional Institution 2	1,500 to 3,000	Yes	5,000 to 10,000
Regional Institution 3	1,500 to 3,000	Yes	10,000 to 30,000
Regional Institution 4	0 to 1,500	Yes	Less than 2,000

Instrument description.

The survey instrument was designed as a tool to gather preliminary information in order to probe deeper into issues that most concerned the participants. It is commonly recognized that, "In general, brief surveys are preferred to lengthy ones" (Reinard, 2001, p. 231). The survey design was adapted to meet the needs of the participants in this sense. There was a variety of open-ended and closed-ended questions as well as some questions associated with a Likert scale (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 128). At a minimum, the survey was designed so that participants might complete it in ten minutes; that said, if participants felt inclined to elaborate, there was unlimited space. This is critical to the research process as Iarossi (2006) noted, "Open-ended questions do not force respondents into a set of predetermined answers, this is the only type of inquiry that allows them maximum spontaneity of expression" (p. 71).

Considering the use of a Likert scale, "There is no consensus in the literature on the optimal number of categories to use" (Iarossi, 2006, p. 60). However, although "some scales adopt up to 12 categories, experiments show that it is preferable to use between 5 and 9 categories" (Iarossi, 2006, p. 61). This study utilized five categories, including a neutral response.

The survey was e-mailed to 838 female faculty members. E-mail, as a system for gaining access to participants and ensuring responses, has proved beneficial over time (Reinard, 2001, p. 236; Nardi, 2003, p. 58). In fact, "It is less likely that researchers would affect the outcome of a self-administered survey when respondents

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read the items on their own, compared to face-to-face interview" (Nardi, 2003, p. 59).

The survey can be found in Appendix C.

Data collection.

Survey monkey was used as the survey administration tool. The survey was e-mailed to female faculty at the identified institutions in mid-June and closed at the beginning of August. Participants had slightly over six weeks to click the supplied link and partake in the research process. There were minor glitches with survey monkey throughout the survey administration period. Participants were supplied the researcher's e-mail address and contacted the researcher directly, if there were problems. All technical problems were remedied so that the interested participants successfully completed the survey.

In terms of survey response, rates can be considered adequate for what social scientists hope to attain. Exactly 838 e-mails were sent out soliciting survey participation. However, of that 838, it is unknown how many women qualified for the survey, either through birth or adoption of a child. Exactly121 women completed the online survey, 14.4 % of 838. Although, knowing that not all women choose to have children this percentage is considered low in terms of actual response rate. It is believed that the response rate for the survey was probably closer to 30% or 40%, adequate for this study.

Data analysis.

Quantitative research is more closely associated with, "data using mathematical procedures, called statistics" (Creswell, 2008, p. 56). Survey monkey

was used as a tool for statistical data analysis. Computer programs are often used in analyzing data from quantitative survey research (Creswell, 2008).

Personally Interviewing Participants

Interviewing is more closely aligned with a qualitative approach to research. Phenomenological research should be conducted when the researcher wants to "understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon" (Creswell, 2007, p. 60). "Phenomenology is committed to descriptions of experiences, not explanations or analyses" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 58). Interviewing was specifically chosen with consideration to the research question and the participants. Warren (2002) noted, "Researchers often choose qualitative interviews over ethnographic methods when their topics of interest do not center on particular settings but their concern is with establishing patterns or themes between particular types of respondents" (p. 85). Additionally, it was important for the researcher "to derive interpretations, not facts or laws, from respondent talk" (Warren, 2002, p. 83).

Participant selection.

Initially, participants were able to self-nominate during the survey portion of the study, if they wished to participate in the qualitative interview. Thirty women volunteered to be interviewed. E-mails were sent to these participants with the Institutional Review Board consent form found in Appendix A and a tentative schedule for face-to-face interviews. Traveling across the state made certain interview arrangements difficult; thus, later telephone interviews were offered through Institutional Review Board approval.

The researcher was employed by one of the participating institutions; therefore, some convenience sampling took place. Convenience sampling is known as "recruiting whomever you have access to" (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 18). Later in the interview gathering stage of this study, snowball sampling was used as a method for garnering additional participants. Snowball sampling is when "the researcher asks participants to identify others to become members of the sample" (Creswell, 2005, p. 149). These people then refer others who might be possible candidates for the study. This strategy anticipates, "each new person has the potential to provide information regarding more than one other suitable case, the sample mushrooms as the study continues" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 76). The term snowball comes from the notion that "these people are also asked for referrals, and the sample 'snowballs' in size" (Reinard, 2001, p. 294).

This study took a saturated sampling approach to conducting interviews (Kvale, 1996, p. 101). It became apparent early in the interview process that many similar themes were appearing; nonetheless, no two women's experiences were the same. In total, 30 women from across an entire upper Midwest state were interviewed. No interviews took place at two regional universities, since no faculty members at these institutions volunteered for interviews or responded to e-mail requests.

Instrument description.

The interview instrument was merely a tool for the principal investigator to use while facilitating beginning conversations (see Appendix D). Each interview was unique because each woman's maternity leave experience was different. In the beginning, grand-tour or historical perspective questions were asked with little

interruption on behalf of the investigator (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 124; Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 16).

These interviews were conducted entirely in a semi-structured format beginning with each informant being asked a set of similar questions (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. 29). Semi-structured interviews allow the participant more control and the researcher more "comparisons across interviews" (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. 29). This unstructured format dictated data collection that proved abundant.

Data collection.

Data collection was simply the execution of semi-structured interviews. These interviews were audio recorded for accuracy, transcribed, and evaluated for themes. As Mertens (1998) stated:

> Data collection is the vehicle through which researchers collect information to answer their research questions and defend their conclusions and recommendations based on the findings from the research. The collection of data allows researchers to anchor what they wish to discuss in the empirical world. (p. 285)

Data collection was rigorous in that interviews ran between 30 minutes and 90 minutes. Participants were given freedom to control the tone and flow of the interview; this allowed for the researcher to follow-up on new topics broached by the participants (Reinard, 2001). The researcher used audio recordings to improve accuracy, while also taking notes during the time participants spoke. The participant was encouraged with probes, such as, "tell me more about that." This allowed for participants to talk extemporaneously about their maternity experience. Probing became an essential technique for the principal investigator. As Bernard and Ryan (2010) state, "The interviewer covers each topic by asking one or more questions and

using a variety of probes (like 'Tell me more about that')" (p. 29). It is important to understand probing is not prompting (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p. 31; Johnson & Turner, 2003), but rather, "Probing is the action of asking the respondent to provide clarifications or additional information. Understanding how to probe is among the most difficult of the interviewer's tasks" (Iarossi, 2006, p. 182).

Data analysis.

Data analysis in qualitative research does not follow a prescribed set of rules, nor is there only one way to do data analysis.

> Analysis is not simply a matter of classifying, categorizing, coding, or collating data. It is not simply a question of identifying forms of speech or regularities of action. Most fundamentally, analysis is about the representation or reconstruction of social phenomena. (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, pp. 6)

This study utilized qualitative coding in both the analysis of the open-ended survey questions and the analysis of responses by participants personally interviewed by the researcher.

Data analysis takes the form of codes, categories, themes, and finally assertions about a research topic. Coding is, "used to break up and segment the data into simpler, general categories *and* is used to expand and tease out the data, in order to formulate new questions and levels of interpretation" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 30).

After coding the data, the researcher moves toward formulating categories. This involves searching, "for connecting threads and patterns among the excerpts within those categories and for connections between the various categories that might be called themes" (Seidman, 1998, p. 107). The researcher is moving from the narrow

data to broader themes in this delicate process of data analysis. Broader themes can be thought of as assertions, larger societal issues or connections. For example, "A theme is an implicit topic that organizes a group of repeating ideas" (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003, p. 38). Finally, "The last stage of interpretation, then, consistent with the interview process itself, asks researchers what meaning they have made of their work" (Seidman, 1998, p. 111).

For this research, analysis and interpretation occurred immediately following completion of the initial online survey and immediately following each interview. Developing patterns within the data were critical to not only final assertions, but to systematically involve the participants' voices as a guide in data analysis. Using the participants' words, (i.e., in-vivo) to develop codes produces richer and better represented assertions (Roulston, 2010, p. 150-153).

When conducting qualitative research, investigators must account for the reliability and validity of their results. This not only aids in qualifying the research, but ultimately keeps the participant at the center of the research. Qualitative researchers are concerned with trustworthiness and authenticity. Some ways qualitative researchers can account for trustworthiness is through triangulation, narrative descriptions, coding, extraction of themes, and overall use of participants' words (Roulston, 2010). Not only did this research employ these techniques, but additional steps were taken to ensure trustworthiness. Those steps included: doctoral advisor oversight, and reviews by three faculty peers experienced in qualitative research analysis.

Textual Analysis

Lastly, textual analysis was used to analyze institution specific faculty handbooks, leave policies, and public information at six public four-year institutions in one upper Midwest state. Textual analysis as Lindkvist (1981) stated is "dependent on the individuality of the qualified interpreter. The meaning of a text is the meaning ascribed to its interpreter" (p. 25). Textual analysis is most certainly concerned with the actual text; however, an even more important area in this research methodology becomes the production and dissemination of the cultural texts (Grigely, 1995, p. 7; McKee, 2003, p. 63).

A text can be produced by a cultural group or organization. The importance of a text was illustrated by Ebron and Lowenhaupt Tsign (1995), who contended the social construction and reading of cultural texts produces ways of knowing the world (p. 390). Morse (1994) offered a unique insight into the formulating of texts together: "It is a process of piecing together data, of making the invisible obvious, of recognizing the significant from the insignificant, of linking seemingly unrelated facts logically, of fitting categories one with another, and of attributing consequences to antecedents" (p. 25). Additionally, "texts can bring about changes in our knowledge (we can learn things from them), our beliefs, our attitudes, values and so forth" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 8).

Instrument selection.

Instrument selection in qualitative research is vastly different from quantitative research. There is no one prescribed instrument for all studies, but rather researchers use their knowledge and skills to adapt to each study. In this study, the principal

investigator gathered texts and analyzed them from a gender and cultural perspective, this led to themes among the texts. Those themes will be highlighted in Chapter III.

Data collection.

Faculty handbooks at all six institutions were available in an online format. Faculty handbooks were utilized as a cultural text, because they represent the nature of faculty self-governance. The actual document of a faculty handbook is the agreed upon policy structure between university administrations and individual faculty members.

Faculty make-up by gender and salaries was also gathered as means to better understand policy structure. Financial considerations comprised a dominant theme in the survey and interview conversations; therefore, a representation of public information (i.e., faculty salaries) was gathered.

Data analysis.

Data analysis of the text is not only hinged on the previous section of multiple interpretations, but also different groups have a stake in textual analysis. This research study has the epistemological underpinnings of a feminist framework. Hesse-Biber and Lina Leavy (2007) pointed out, "Feminist researchers also use textual analysis to explore issues that are central to women's lives—issues that have historically been made to appear invisible within academic literature" (p. 234). Utilizing a feminist lens may allow researchers to,

> . . . ask different research questions, approach the data differently, and use their resulting knowledge to effect intellectual, social, and political change. Furthermore, this kind of research often looks at texts from the viewpoint of women who may not otherwise be considered. (Hesse-Biber & Lina Leavy, 2007, p. 236)

Significant Themes

Four categories emerged from data analysis and coding: lack of information, lack of power, gender beliefs, and stress. From the categories the following four themes were identified: there was a lack of information on maternity leave at all six institutions involved in this study; female faculty members experiencing maternity leave often felt a lack of power in their work environments to do what was best for themselves and their children; female faculty felt there were gender beliefs within their work setting concerning pregnancy, maternity leave, and how that related to their overall status at their institutions; and female faculty in this study felt stressed when becoming a parent in combination with fulfilling their faculty roles.

Reflection on the themes led to two assertions. Female faculty members who had children while employed by these institutions experienced several hardships related to lack of information, lack of power, and perceived gender beliefs. These female faculty members, who became parents while employed by these institutions, have also experienced stress associated with pregnancy, adoption, and child care responsibilities. The codes, categories, themes, and assertion are summarized in Table 2. Support for each of these themes is presented in Chapter III.

Resulting Codes, Categories, Themes, and Assertions

Through the use of survey, phenomenological interview, and textual analysis a better understanding of women's experiences with maternity leave at universities has emerged. Table 2 presents codes and categories that resulted in four primary themes and two assertions. Themes and assertions will be further discussed in Chapter III.

Table 2. Data Analysis.

Codes			Categories	Themes	Assertions

Lack of awareness
Lack of policy
Lack of support
No resources on campus
No accommodations
Guessing
Nothing official
	Uncertainty
	Silence
	Uncommunicative
	Discuss quietly
	No guidelines
	First in my department
	Unknown possibilities
		University had zero
		   guidance
		No communication on
		   related policies
		Uncertain chain of
		   command (HR or
		   chair)
			Lack of Information ⟶	⟶ There was a lack of information on maternity leave at all six institutions involved in this study.	First Assertion: Female faculty members who had children while employed by these institutions experienced several hardships related to lack of information, lack of power, and perceived gender beliefs.

Constant compromise
Zero time off
Department chair's call
Dean's decision
Administration decided
Discretion of administration
Human resources
No boundaries
	Having to ask favors
	No money
	Burdening colleagues
	Pre-tenure years
	Unpaid colleagues
	Did not qualify
	Still negotiating
	No response from chair or
	   human resources
		No funding or pay
		Hoops to jump through
		Uncertainty
		Want to trust your chair
		Colleagues wanted
		   compensation
		Work from home
		No private space
		Poor handling by chair
			Lack of Power ⟶	⟶ Female faculty members experiencing maternity leave often felt a lack of power in their work environments to do what was best for themselves and their children.	

Physical status
Pregnancy
Maternity
Comparison to male
   colleague's wives
Child care responsibilities
Breastfeeding
Family
Prove myself
Did not feel supported
	No policy
	No support
	Derogatory comments
	Male colleagues do not
	   understand
	Childless colleagues
	[State's] lack of women
	   administrators
	Negotiated with men
	Priorities change
		Higher education's lack of
		   female representation
		Second baby will come
		   after tenure
		Felt small
		Unequal arrangements
		   between women
		Nervous about job security
		Anger (toward pregnant
		   woman)
			Gender Beliefs ⟶	⟶ Female faculty felt there were gender beliefs within their work setting concerning pregnancy, maternity leave, and how that related to their overall status at their institutions.	Second Assertion: These female faculty members, who became parents while employed by these institutions, also experienced stress associated with pregnancy, adoption, and child care responsibilities.

Financial stress
Emotional stress
Tired all the time/Exhausted
Worry
Pregnancy complications
Fertility
Dependence on colleagues
Rearrangement of work
   conditions
Planned for summer delivery
Time to heal and bond
	Physical changes
	Constant compromise
	Doing work from home
	No legal standing
	No paid time off
	Promotion and tenure
	   concerns
	Rearrangement of work
	   conditions
	Work ahead
	Went into labor, still taught
		Everything is new
		Breastfeeding
		Child care
		Sick children
		Biological clock & tenure
		   clock
		Inconvenient to colleagues
		Stressed marital relationship
		Medial/Surgery
		Checked e-mail while
		   breastfeeding
			Stress ⟶	⟶ Female faculty in this study felt stressed when becoming a parent in combination with fulfilling their faculty roles.	

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

I will have it all, I just won't have it all at the same time.

- Alexandra, Interview Participant

The purpose of this study was to explore maternity leave experiences of female faculty members at four-year institutions in one upper Midwest state. In this chapter, the findings of the study are presented, beginning with the demographic data related to the participants. Subsequently, each of the four themes revealed in Table 2 of the previous chapter are supported with data collected from surveys and interviews. Finally, results of the textual analysis conducted are presented. All participants were assigned pseudonyms in order to protect their identity and will appear in this chapter. Additionally, the quotes presented in this chapter are only a representative sample of the survey and interview data collected.

Demographics

Survey participants had the option to complete demographic data about themselves. All of their survey responses were voluntary; none were required to complete the entire survey. Figure 1 displays selected demographical data taken from survey participants' responses.

Considering both survey and interview participants who chose to respond, 94 traditional births and 7 adoptions took place. One respondent reported serving as a

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surrogate mother, and one experienced a stillbirth. Of the survey participants, only one respondent reported a miscarriage. During the 30 interviews, 11 miscarriages were reported, and 4 women had two or more miscarriages; however, this was not a direct question.
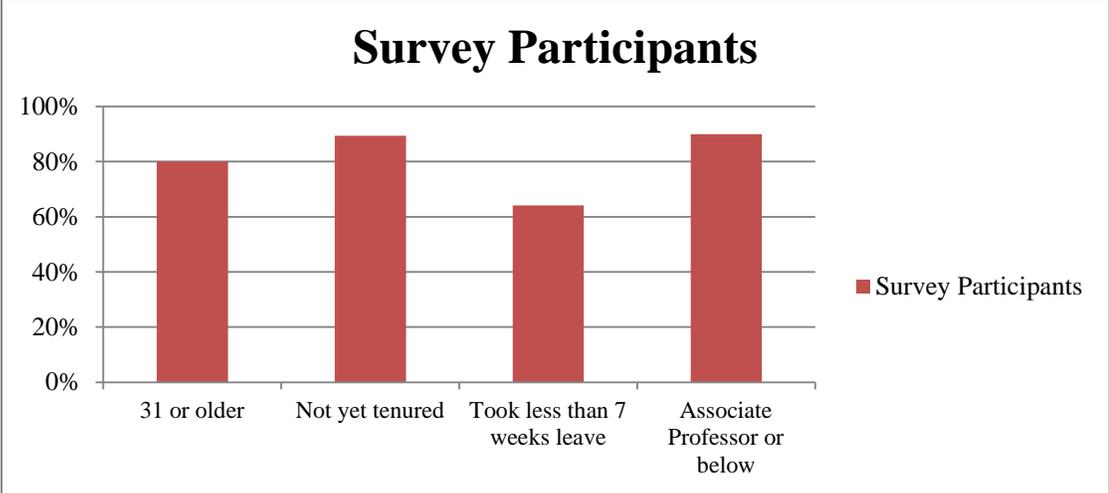
Figure 1. Survey Participants – Demographics.

Though additional leave time being requested was not a topic of any interview question, two of the 30 interview participants volunteered the information that they had requested additional time, as was their right according to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993; one participant requested an additional six weeks, and one requested an additional two weeks. Of these two women, only one had her wages withheld as the FMLA suggests. Both women worked for the same institution and had their babies within two years of each other.

What follows are sample representations of responses to open-ended questions on the initial online survey and the follow-up interviews. Responding to an open-ended survey question was not mandatory for survey completion; nonetheless, most respondents chose to expand on the questions.

Theme 1 – Lack of Information

Lack of information contributed to some female faculty members' continued struggle to communicate with colleagues and administrators. Because there were no maternity leave policies at any of the participating institutions (during the participants' time of maternity), women were forced to seek information without predetermined boundaries. Participants expressed two underlying issues related to the lack of information: the lack of criteria and a lack of communication.

Lack of Criteria

All 30 interview participants noted a lack of criteria associated with maternity leave. The lack of criteria left participants to ask colleagues and friends within the university structure for past criteria, which varied for each person.

Online surveys.

Survey respondents wrote the following:

- Maternity leave does not exist for faculty.

- There was no such thing.

- There is minimal support at the University level.

- The pressure from the administration was also very indirect - like not having a policy, telling me my department would have to deal with this on its own. Pressure is not really the word here, more lack of support in any way.

- Because [Research Institution 2] has no policy supporting childbirth, it is entirely up to the department chair to do as [he/she] pleases (Same is true of any hospitalization or medical leave. My department chairperson was given paid leave for three months that [he/she] took to get over a nervous breakdown while my family medical leave, taken a few years later was unpaid.). The result is bias and a complete lack of protocol in supporting medical leave for people who are sick or bearing children.

- Maternity leave does not exist for faculty. I brought my baby to work when I could.

- There was really no university support - I was told it was up to my department to work out any accommodations and that put a lot of unspoken pressure on all of us: our teaching loads are already very heavy in my department (at the time we taught 4/3) and asking colleagues to increase their loads to cover me was not an attractive (or fair option). I therefore felt pressure to keep my time out to an absolute minimum – maybe, in retrospect, not the best thing for me or my baby.

- Because there is not a policy, it brought on a lot of uncertainty and inappropriate comments about the leave.

Personal interviews.

Interview participants said this:

- Everyone has to negotiate it with their chair independently. There is not one that goes across the board. Usually what happens is it kind of goes by word of mouth, that people know, so and so in this other department asked for and got. (Elizabeth)

- I didn't feel very supported and I was mad. (Amelia)

- I'm a rule follower. I don't mind following rules. I don't like it when there is Rule A for this person, but it is Rule B for this person. (Louisa)

- It would be nice to get some guidance on who is covering your classes, whose responsibility is that. Are other people willing to help out? Are they not willing to help out? Is it okay to ask? . . . or just a little bit of guidance, yeah. (Delia)

- But, I think that there could be some more standardized guidelines for it at least though. Just leaving people to have to negotiate it completely on their own without really knowing what other people have done, it seems like the system gets kind of skewed against the moms then. (Elizabeth)

- That is the interesting thing as far as our faculty contracts, we don't acquire sick leave that you can actually see a number that builds up; so there's nothing—not even vacation—we don't really have during the nine months any type of vacation that accrues to feel like you can take that. (Isabel)

- It was challenging to get there. And there were a lot of hoops that I felt I had to jump through and a lot of uncertainties. But in the end, everything worked out; I had great coverage. And I mean, I still did work when I was on leave. (Amelia)

- It's almost as if they [administration] want us to think we have a sick leave, but we don't. (Charlotte)

Lack of Communication

The lack of information coupled with a lack of two-way communication associated with maternity arrangements led participants in many directions.

Online surveys.

Survey respondents wrote the following:

- When I brought up the amount of time I would like to take for maternity leave, the first response I got was "many women in our department have come back to work two weeks after having a baby." This didn't make me feel very supported by administration!

- Thanks to my department's support, I felt safe. I received no support from the administration.

Personal interviews.

Interview participants said this:

- It's just not really verbalized to faculty and so faculty doesn't even know that they get any paid time off. I just, I wasn't getting any [communication], and I didn't get an email response. (Amelia)

- So our lack of policy – there's no policy to enforce, but people want to enforce a policy even though there isn't a policy. And that kind of goes with personal leave, funerals, etc. (Catherine)

- I really tried to fly under the radar until it was obvious I was pregnant. My chair would know, but nobody else would even know. I wasn't going to—there is that fear that they're going to pull your contract, and I just don't want that. (Zoe)

To summarize Theme 1, participants in this study felt they were in a state of confusion when it came to maternity leave guidelines. Most participants wanted to plan for their departments, colleagues, and students, but ultimately had no information in which to guide their decision making process. This led to development of a second theme, Theme 2, their lack of power within this process.

Theme 2 – Lack of Power

Participants feeling a lack of power emerged early in the data collection process and continued throughout interviewing. Participants, with no concrete guidelines, were less likely to make decisions based on their needs; instead, they made decisions based on the needs of the university and their administrators. Respondents spoke of timing sex and fertility treatments in order to give birth during university break. Breastfeeding, child care, well-baby visits, and attending to sick children were scheduled to accommodate their faculty responsibilities. In some cases, these women risked their physical and mental well-being, not being able to set boundaries.

Lack of Support

Online surveys.

Overall, 35% of survey participants said there was a lack of administrative assistance in organizing their maternity leave. One survey participant noted a lack of attention to her situation, thus crippling her ability to make decisions for herself and her family. Some responses of survey participants are listed below:

- After contacting HR it seemed pointless to pursue; like it was more trouble than it was worth.

- Administrators need to take the first step. There was no leave available and no accommodation offered. My request came with a price tag, which I paid, but wish I had not had to.

- The pressure from the administration was also very indirect - like not having a policy, telling me my department would have to deal with this on its own, pressure is not really the word here more lack of support in any way.

- I have not yet told my Department [currently pregnant] and am very concerned about the outcomes if I should given the paternalistic behavior of the chair the last time I was pregnant.
    For instance, when I was six months pregnant, [he/she] told me I could not go to [foreign country] to teach courses I had been asked to teach stating [he/she] would not let me because I was pregnant on multiple occasions despite me asking [him/her] to refrain from doing so. I was not in a tenure track position at that time and had no recourse, no power, and did not seek help outside the Department. I am worried about what will happen this time. I love what I do and I love being a mother. I do not want to be denied opportunities in my career because of my choice to be a mother.

Personal interviews.

Interview participants said this:

- We had a slot at the day care at six weeks of age, so probably the first two weeks I was at home—the hospital and home—the whole time. I would come in after that to teach my class and then go back home during the last four weeks of that. (Hannah)

- Now a couple of my colleagues . . . my chair did make the comment that, [he/she] said, "Well you know when my wife had kids, we planned it for summer break, so I'd be off." So, there was a couple of those little comments. I know one of my colleagues was a little bit bitter. (Lydia)

- First of all, you'd have to get them [HR] to answer the phone, email, or be in [his/her] office. (Charlotte)

- What HR representative told me was, "I'm sorry, but because you adopted and you didn't give birth yourself, you don't have"—essentially what I read into it was that you don't have the same rights as another mother because you don't get leave. Because you don't get leave. To be frank, it was horrible. The two worse semesters of my life. (Louisa)

Alexandra had particularly difficult problems with her chair, while trying to arrange her leave:

- [He/she] [department chair] was very difficult, and [he/she] acted like I was trying to get something that I didn't deserve…. I felt like, I was some unwed mother that made a really poor choice, instead of a 30 something assistant professor and all this—. They said, "You made a decision to have a baby in the middle of the semester." With fertility the way it is and my diabetes, it was just fortunate that I had <u>gotten</u> pregnant.…

  We have an executive committee that does our faculty evaluations, so I had the chair of the executive committee come and sit with me, and [he/she] was the chair who hired me, and while I'm sitting there, I said, "Well, it's really fortunate I want to plan this out in advance because I feel like that's the fair thing to do and actually it is kind of fortuitous because we know it's coming right? It's not like I had a heart attack or a stroke, it's a health condition, but it's a plannable one."

  [He/She] said, "It is nothing like that at all. You made a decision, and you have to live with the consequences of your decision…."

  I said, "Well, I guess I could have an abortion, but I really do want this baby, and I am sorry I feel that way," or something like that….

  [The higher level administrator then called and said] "I could have whatever I want." (Alexandra)

But that was not the end of her story, even though the dean gave her a personal call and the freedom to arrange her leave, she said:

- And even with the maternity leave and being an associate professor, my reviews this time around took a hit; and again, I have an issue with my department chair so I can't tell how much of that was me or how much was the pregnancy, but I usually get an "exceeds in service" because I get invited to National Science Foundation panels. Well, obviously the year I gave birth, I didn't get invited because they knew I had a baby. So I took a hit and didn't get an "exceeds."… I'm not as likely to get a pay bump. (Alexandra)

- I called HR, and they said I was faculty. Well, faculty don't normally have children. It was expressed to me by my chair that this was a gift, that they could not paid [*sic*] me, and I would have taken unpaid leave; and then they threatened, not threatened in writing, but I'm the benefit carrier, my husband is independently employed. So, it was that whole fear of losing your health insurance. I had one time when my chair

commented, "Well most people when they assume your responsibilities choose not to have children." (Zoe)

Lack of Boundaries

Setting appropriate boundaries became difficult for female faculty members while they were pregnant and during their maternity leaves. Women combined work and child care to fulfill their obligations during maternity leave. Women talked about breastfeeding in front of students and bringing their babies to campus; one participant taught while in labor; and immediately after her class, went to the hospital and delivered her baby via C-section.

Online surveys.

Survey respondents wrote the following:

- My son was in the office when he was five days old until he was old enough to go to daycare.

- All of my pregnancies have been deliberately planned for the end of my 9 month contract in order to avoid the necessity of a leave and to have more time at home with each infant.

- Could not completely leave my ongoing research, I was in the midst of a major data collection effort.

- I only had four weeks after the birth of my daughter before going back to work; I should have arranged for at least two more weeks off.

- I simply continued on as if I were teaching. I did the grading, wrote tests and the like, and my colleagues were asked to cover the actual in-class teaching.

- Please note that although I was on a paid maternity leave, I was expected to run my classes during this time from home. Technically, it was not a "leave," it was a rearrangement in working conditions.

Personal interviews.

Interview participants said this:

- I was checking email while he was feeding; while he was sleeping, I was dealing with student advising. (Sarah)

- But my daughter – yeah – got probably a little short-changed in there. (Rachel)

- I guess looking back, it was kind of stupid because of the condition I had. If the placenta had pulled away, you know we really would have had minutes, so it was probably stupid to [she taught while in labor]. (Charlotte)

- He was born on a Thursday, and I went back on Tuesday. (Liberty)

- I would breast feed in the middle of meetings. Students would come in for office hours. I'm like, "Are you weirded out by this?" They're like, "I'm being a nurse, who cares. I'm like okay." (Pearl)

To summarize Theme 2, participants acknowledged a lack of support from their chairs and deans. This lack of support led to their perceived inability to make informed decisions about their unique maternity situations. Additionally, women were put into positions where it became difficult to establish boundaries for themselves in their work situations.

Theme 3 – Gender Beliefs

Gender beliefs emerged as a significant theme related to women and maternity leave.

Women

Participants expressed feelings of discontent relating to their overall status within their institution. Gender beliefs were most often perceived by participants because they lacked support and felt higher education still exists as a system for men, with less consideration of women and families.

Online surveys.

Survey respondents wrote the following:

- It has always seemed to me that universities did not support females with their families, and their issues. My male colleagues would leave early to pick up their kids, or come late after dropping them off in the morning. Yet, I was told I was gone too much when I worked a second job to pay for my Ph.D. work that they required. None of them had attempted to attain a Ph.D. when they had a family, and the sense I had was that no other faculty member ever thought about the demands of working toward a Ph.D. as a female faculty member with children. The programs are set up based on a model that worked for men. If a male faculty member provided transportation for his kids, he was an "involved father." When I had to stay home with sick kids, I was not dedicated, and should have made other arrangements.

- It is sad that after all we know, we still use the old outdated model that rewards those who are supported while they attain an education (more often men), or when they publish, but women who wish to advance can only do it with those criteria, which are much more difficult to attain as a working mom.

- Our jobs require us to make compromise[s] between jobs and family life.

- For instance, when I was six months pregnant, [he/she] told me I could not go to Ghana to teach courses I had been asked to teach stating he would not let me because I was pregnant on multiple occasions despite me asking [him/her] to refrain from doing so.

- I love what I do, and I love being a mother. I do not want to be denied opportunities in my career because of my choice to be a mother.

Personal interviews.

During the interview process, women conveyed dissatisfaction with higher

education's overall outlook on women. Interview participants said this:

- It is pretty overwhelming. And the other thing is--this is kind of anecdotal but we were in a meeting the other day and its really weird because most of the women take on the leadership roles in our department. We actually get the work done. The men don't really take much of a-- you know we have a lot of assistant chairs and directors and all of us females have a position. (Lydia)

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- I don't understand why they burn their women. (Zoe)

- Well, academia for all its progressiveness is still largely a system that was designed, its traditions were designed, around male professors who either were single or who had wives at home taking care of the kids. Despite the fact that women have been professors for decades now, that there still has not been any really good system put into place to support that, that for a while the idea was, "Well you should just suck it up and be like the guys," But many of the systems in place, for instance, the sabbatical leave privileges people who are traveling, the ability of preference to sabbatical proposals that involve travel. Well, if you are a female professor with young children, that is really problematic as that is hard to do. (Elizabeth)

- I was at that point where I had to get a degree. It was written in my contract, either get a degree or you're done. The interesting part of that was the chair, at the time, told me, "Just go work for Job Corps; don't get a degree." (Rachel)

Organizational structures at times operate around the assumption that mothers should be working in dead-end jobs, as this comment by Rachel's chair illustrates. It is understood that good jobs don't "fit" mothers (Heilman, 1983).

- [When Rachel pursued a Ph.D.] I had to give up all of my income and all of my insurance for that year and a half which was – and later I learned that I could have kept my insurance, but nobody told me that because they saved money if I didn't. (Rachel)

- But before that project started, there were even fewer women on campus; and the women who were on campus were feeling very isolated. I mean there are horror stories of outright discrimination and things. Not everywhere. It still is very male dominated campus, so when you are just clueless about [an] issue you are not necessarily going to do anything about it. So, I think an outcome of our [women's] project is just education. (Hannah)

- For example, the one male now that is working for us, and we had two, but his load is way lighter than any of ours, and you try to make him do something. He'll just say no, and he can say no without getting labeled a bitch or not helping or not contributing, not doing this or that. It's okay for him to say no. (Louisa)

Maternity Leave

Participants expressed feelings of discontent related to their conversations surrounding their maternity leave arrangements.

Online surveys.

Survey respondents wrote the following:

- I think it is unbelievable that a place that fosters learning, enlightenment, and the advancement of society, does not provide paid maternity leave and teaching support for faculty members. [Research Institution 1] is not unlike other institutions of higher education in this regard, but it could lead the way and become one of the humane institutions of higher education.

- Some people will get it paid, and some have to take unpaid family medical leave. Because [Research Institution 2] has no policy supporting childbirth, it is entirely up to the department chair to do as [he/she] pleases (Same is true of any hospitalization or medical leave. My department chairperson was given paid leave for three months that he took to get over a nervous breakdown while my family medical leave, taken a few years later was unpaid.). The result is bias and a complete lack of protocol in supporting medical leave for people who are sick or bearing children.

- Things have changed here – at least on paper as far as policy goes – but, I do not believe the university administration is really on board. I still hear certain department chairs/heads (now that I am one) talking about how maternity leave is unfair because it gives the mother "extra time" to do research (basically equating it to a leave of absence) pre-tenure. They make it clear that these women taking leaves make it hard on the department since they (the chairs) need to cover their classes somehow, and I am sure this pressure is not hidden from the women asking for leave.... This puts them in an uncomfortable position ("See what a pain you are for the department?") especially if they are pre-tenure. Basically, we are still not a women-friendly environment. This is also true post-return: I had to explain to my chair (at the time, after I gave birth) that I would be happy to have department meetings at 4:30 pm, but they could not be spur-of-the-moment as was tradition because I needed to make child care pick-up arrangements. Since I was the only person in my department, at the time, with small children, this was always pointed out in numerous ways – making me feel like I was asking for the moon when

I was simply asking for consideration of my situation to be taken into account.

- The classes that I was teaching were turned wholesale over [to] a (male) adjunct in the 9th week of the semester and I was told that the grades that I had given my students were no longer their grades and that this male adjunct, who would finish the semester would decide their grades by his own discretion. Talk about insulting! The department chairperson even blocked my access to my blackboard site (which I had set up for my classes and with my syllabus) for the remainder of the semester and even refused to grant me access to my course work when I was setting up blackboard for my classes the following semester. The dean and the university support such (very unpopular) behavior by the interim chair.

- If there is no policy to pay for Family Medical leave (for at least the sick/ injured/ birthing individual), than the default will be that women will be discriminated against. [Research Institution 2] is a famously sexist place, but the sexism is subtle and difficult to prove for the purposes of a court case. And most women do not have the deep pockets that the university has to fight cases of discrimination in court.

- No matter what relief we get through the system, there are still people who consider maternity leave as vacation. What has to change is the mentality and attitude towards family. Plenty times I saw expectations that the mother (almost derogatory) should stay at home.

Personal interviews.

Interview participants said this:

- But I know on campus there's still the feeling that well, if you're going to have kids, take care of it. Don't let it interfere. (Alice)

- Basically, I was told that they [the chair] was going to hear about it, and [the dean's] going to be frustrated, because now they have another situation to deal with, and you know, really wished that it would have been more convenient, or really would have been more convenient for it to have been planned. (Catherine)

- And that's the thing, you know, they [administrators] loved it in the days when either people went back to work right away and kept their mouth shut or generous colleagues offered to teach their classes for them, and they just want to keep it like that. (Karah)

- You're not a serious scholar [if you have children]. You're not serious about it. (Alice)

- The guys will take even a month [unofficial leave]. It's quietly handled. It is all internal because according to the university, it is between you and your chair. It's incredibly ambiguous. Because, in a different department, somebody might get an entire semester, and they might get full pay, or they might get three quarters paid and get an entire semester. (Alexandra)

- No never [Zoe took no official leave]. The thing that was the hardest is we have one colleague who's taken paternity leave and got 12 weeks of no contact, and we all worked. My department gave it to him because they felt they had to give it because they gave us leave, but his perception was no e-mail, no voicemail, no contact, nothing. So that caused a lot of resentment. (Zoe)

Theme 4 – Stress

Stress became a critical component to both interview participants and survey respondents. Most importantly, they felt stress related to three areas: maternity arrangements, pregnancy, and parenting.

Maternity Arrangements

Online surveys.

More than half (56.3%) of participants felt they had to make concessions concerning their maternity leave, which included additional statements like these:

- No paid leave offered; in fact, to lessen my load I had to pay for a duty buy out--over $2,000 at a time when money was very tight.

- My leave was paid but was not a true "leave" because I continued teaching online from home.

- The university did not pay additional salary; courses were covered by other faculty as a volunteer or in-kind.

- I did not have job security with the first and I worked myself into the ground and did a developmental leave with research requirements and a

final report. The second was a full and extremely generous leave but was not institution wide. Rather, it was a dean's decision.

- The classes that I was teaching were turned wholesale over a (male) adjunct in the 9th week of the semester and I was told that the grades that I had given my students were no longer their grades and that this male adjunct, who would finish the semester would decide their grades by his own discretion. Talk about insulting! The department chairperson even blocked my access to my blackboard site (which I had set up for my classes and with my syllabus) for the remainder of the semester and even refused to grant me access to my course work when I was setting up blackboard for my classes the following semester. The dean and the university support such (very unpopular) behavior by the interim chair.

- I taught all classes online, I did not have even 1 hour leave. I started back 2 hours after the birth of my daughter.

Part of the initial online survey asked respondents to indicate their levels of satisfaction with certain aspects of their experiences regarding being pregnant and working as a faculty member at the institutions participating in this study. Questions 18 through 22 of the online survey used a Likert scale to address levels of satisfaction with 1 being *very dissatisfied*, 2 being *dissatisfied*, 3 being *neither satisfied or dissatisfied*, 4 being *satisfied*, and 5 being *very satisfied*. Figure 2 displays respondent answers to Questions 18-22 from the online survey. Questions 18-22 were:

18. How satisfied were you with your maternity leave?

19. How satisfied with your universities maternity leave policies were you?

20. How satisfied were you with your colleagues acceptance and helpfulness in your maternity leave?

21. How satisfied were you with your administration's handling of your maternity leave?

22. How satisfied with the arrangements of your specific job duties (e.g. course teachings and student advising) were you with your maternity leave?
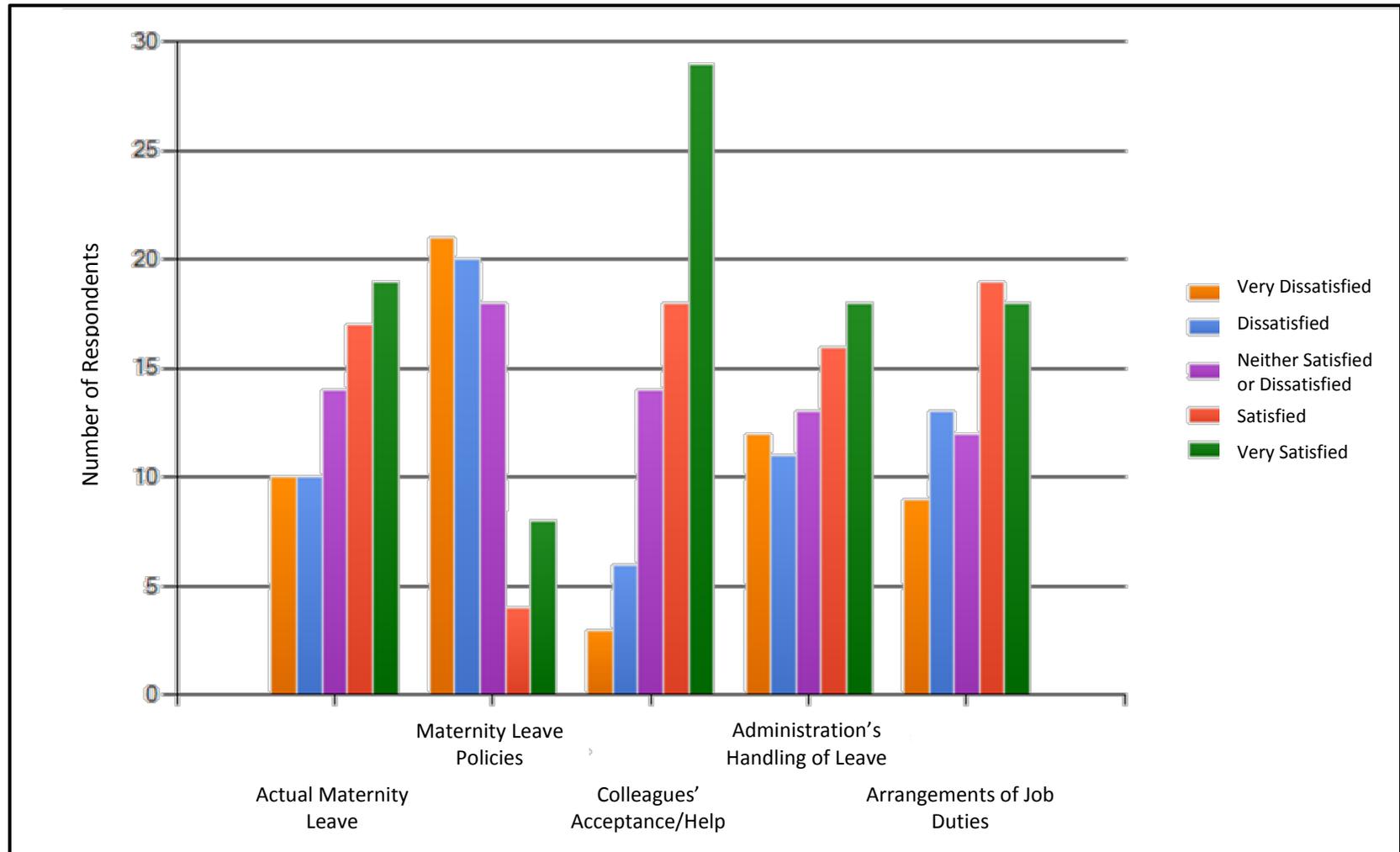
Figure 2. Levels of Satisfaction of Respondents on Selected Maternity Issues

Figure 2 highlights women's satisfaction with their maternity leave, policies, colleagues, administration, and arrangement of job duties. Upon further analysis of this data, it becomes significant; there were at least 115 responses that correlated to very dissatisfied or dissatisfied. This indicates a high level of dissatisfaction among survey respondents in all areas.

Personal interviews.

Interview participants said this:

- It wasn't like I took a leave; They never had to hire an adjunct. (Zoe)

- I came in and taught my genetics class [Interviewer: While you were in labor?] While I was in labor – had to sit on a stool. I wanted to get through one more day. And I wasn't trying to be a hero. I was just trying to minimize the time that other people had to take over for me. And I was going directly from here to the hospital. (Charlotte)

- To feel that it's not okay to have a baby – your job – is a really awful feeling. (Charlotte)

- Yeah, and the [Graduate Director] still uses a manual typewriter, refusing to learn a computer, and he apparent – He supposedly told my department chair, when he found out that I was pregnant, that the semester I was pregnant I shouldn't be in the classroom because I was in a delicate condition; and so, therefore, perhaps I could instead spend that semester doing computer work that he didn't know how to do. (Myllie)

- It was very stressful [on her final arrangements, working from home]. (Elizabeth)

- I was absolutely exhausted that semester because I was teaching three courses, and I was also trying to do the administrative work I had agreed to do during my leave. In theory, I had the semester to do it, but in reality, the paperwork was due February 1st or something – and so, basically, I was trying to have that done before the baby came so that I wouldn't be trying to do that with new baby. And I had also gone to like three conferences that fall. (Myllie)

Pregnancy

Pregnancy contributed to the stress women felt due to complications, long hours prior to delivery, miscarriage, C-sections, typically older-than-average pregnancy ages, and overall physical stress.

Online surveys.

Survey respondents wrote the following:

- I had a caesarian section, so not so traditional, with more healing, mind fog from drugs, etc.

- Two weeks off following a complicated pregnancy and a preemie infant is too short.

- What was as bad or worse for me was actually the sickness I had with my first, pre-tenure pregnancy. I was intensely sick for months and had no clear way to get any help with anything.

- With a high risk pregnancy like mine, maintaining my health seemed to negatively impact my career progress.

- I would like to have another child, but given the policies here and what it might do to my P&T timeline- I am going to take the risks associated with being pregnant at an older age and wait until after tenure.

- I had had some medical complications with my first pregnancy.

Personal interviews.

Interview participants said this:

- Gestational diabetes and high blood pressure. (Pearl)

- High-risk pregnancy, hypertension, and Type 2 diabetic. (Alexandra)

- I had placenta previa. (Charlotte)

- It [C-section] was debilitating. (Josephine)

- I had two miscarriages that year. (Myllie)

- I had Preeclampsia when I was in labor and at first they tell you that the cure is birth, except it didn't work in my case. So I continued to have high blood pressure and proteins and that sort of thing. So they put me on an anti-seizure medicine which was terrific [sarcasm] and just made me feel awful and yucky and whatever. And then I was having to time feedings around when I was taking medication and that sort of thing. So it was just really exhausting. (Julia)

- I still don't feel like I have my body back. Plus I had mastitis and other things happened at that time. (Hannah)

Parenting

Becoming a parent made women feel stress in general, but first-time moms were especially likely to express stress related to doubt, physical recovery, breastfeeding, new routines, child care, and balance.

Online surveys.

Survey respondents wrote the following:

- I was getting the work done, but I was exhausted.

- When I came back to work and did not have infant child care, I asked to teach at night so that I could be at home with the baby during the day when my husband worked - my chair acted like I was asking for one of his limbs. This was also frustrating because there are many people that teach at night, but for some reason, it was a big deal when I wanted that as an option until a spot in daycare opened up.

- So my colleagues agreed to cover my classes until I came back, three weeks after giving birth. My mother cared for my baby while I taught, and I ran home (literally - we picked an apt [apartment] close to campus for this very reason) to feed and care for my child in between my teaching, office hours, and committee work, etc.

- I brought my baby to work when I could. My husband, who is also a professor at [Research Institution 1], also brought our baby to his office when I couldn't. We arranged day care as quickly and early as we could (very difficult and expensive in [city]) because we had no other options. We do not have any family in the area. We could not afford for one of us to take family leave without pay. It was a very stressful time and played a big part in our decision not to have more children.

- Day care on campus was not available during my first year. If daycare was nearby, my situation would be so much less stressful.

Personal interviews.

Interview participants said this:

- But I was so sleep deprived that I would be teaching on three hours of sleep, and I would teach great big lecture classes with 200 people, and I would say things, and I would see myself saying these things in kind of like this out of body experience. (Alexandra)

- In between the two little kids at home and breast feeding and everything, I'd tell everybody, "I'm on auto-pilot." I was exhausted all the time. (Hannah)

- Now coming back teaching the semester afterwards was really hard the first time. I think I did my worst teaching of my life that first semester after I had my son. I wasn't able to plan like I wanted to. I just felt like I was always 80 percent prepared for class instead of being fully prepared. I was not able to quite keep on top of things. (Emma)

- I was probably blanking out the six months after, and when my son turned six months, I was like I didn't remember a lot of the things I remembered with my other two where I didn't feel quite as – I mean I felt overwhelmed at times. (Liberty)

- To be fair, my department did everything they could, . . . (Pearl)

- I got lucky, my first one had RSV at four-months, but she got sick over spring break, but I remember not taking her to the doctor until that Monday of spring break because I knew if I'd taken time off and your child is sick, but I have class. (Zoe)

Zoe is the only interview participant to explain herself as "lucky" that her child had RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus). Although as a health professional, she was not referring to the illness, but rather the timing because otherwise she would have been challenged to make a choice between work and a sick child.

- If they were really pro-family, they would have a day care on campus that they fund. They'd subsidize that. That they could have the early

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childhood education program, that they are trying to get off the ground, - that could staff it. But, they need to put a building up. And there would be groups that would be willing to run it. But, uh, you know, the will has to be there, and it's not a money making enterprise. It has to be because you think it is important. (Josephine)

- They [administrators] don't like that; they don't like it when you play the kid card. But just the comments that we get from other instructors, like "well you better have a back-up for your day care then." They act like they have never gone through it themselves. They are mothers; they shouldn't be saying that. I am not even playing the kid card. I am just saying I don't have day care. I am going to try to work it out the best I can. (Delia)

To summarize the last theme, women expressed multiple forms of stress as working career academics. For these participants, making their maternity arrangements, pregnancy, and parenting played a significant role in their mental and physical stress.

Textual Analysis

Faculty Handbooks

A textual analysis of faculty handbooks at all six institutions was completed in order to assess maternity leave policies. This analysis provided a clear picture of what documentation a pregnant or adoptive faculty member might encounter in her pursuits of maternity arrangements.

At the time of this research, only one of the six participating institutions offered a maternity specific leave policy, see Appendix E. This policy not only provided six weeks paid leave for women giving birth, but six weeks paid leave for adoptive parents as well. It does not provide any coverage for paternity leave.

Through analysis and discussions with on-campus faculty at Research Institution 1, it became clear that the faculty proposed and president authorized 2009

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maternity policy was currently "on-hold" in legal counsel. At the time of this

research, current faculty had reintroduced the 2009 proposed policy to the faculty

senate in hopes of passage and adoption by December 2012. The proposed policy is

located in Appendix F.

A textual analysis of the two policies revealed both advantages and

disadvantages. The advantage that appears in both policies is clear work boundaries

in terms of time away from work. Both policies provide for six weeks paid leave,

commencing upon the birth of a child. The language in the policies also indicates

additional leave may be taken in accordance with the FMLA, a clear advantage for

women who have the economic backing to take unpaid leave. Only one of the two

policies covers adoption; this is seen as a disadvantage. One policy (appendix E)

classifies the leave as a 'medical disability.' It is unclear yet if this language is an

advantage or disadvantage. The dearth of legislation and policy on disability would

appear to be advantageous for maternity. However, the term disability in relation to

maternity sends a message of inability on behalf of the mother, in both mental and

physical capacities. Only one of the two policies (appendix E) states that the benefits

begin upon hiring, a clear advantage for this policy. Lastly, it seems the predominant

disadvantage to both of these policies is the lack of flexibility that is inherent in

maternity, childbirth, and adoption. Another disadvantage is the lack of policy at four

of the six institutions.

All six participating institutions offered a stop-the-clock policy for maternity

situations. None of the stop-the-clock policies were automatic, but rather a request

and approval format was mandatory.

Economics

Salary data was provided by all six participating institutions, including a breakdown by gender. On average, a woman working in this upper Midwestern state can expect to earn $8,643 less than her male counterpart. The largest discrepancy can be noted at the research institutions. A woman working for a research institution in this state can expect to earn around $15,000 less than a man. Institution provided data can be found below in Table 3.

The economic impact of large salary gaps are not only egregious personally to individual faculty, but when shown on a large scale across six public universities, it becomes abhorrent. Women are systematically paid less at these institutions, but charged with the same professional rigor of promotion and tenure as their male counterparts. Additionally, women are the bearers of children and must provide for their families on less income. This is representative of Figart, Mutari, and Power's (2002) thoughts: "we argue that wages are a means of establishing and reinforcing what men and women should be doing and how they should live" (p. 63). Large pay gaps continue to support the "hegemonic model of full-time homemaking supported by male breadwinner" (Figart, Mutari, & Power, 2002, p. 62). This type of privileged agenda supports the research regarding classism, "an oppressive social practice" (Hennessy, 2003, p, 59).

Table 3. Salary Data by Institution.

Institution	Number of Men (Percentage of Employees)	Number of Women (Percentage of Employees)	Male Salaries Average Per Year (as Percentage of Total Payroll)	Female Salaries Average Per Year (as Percentage of Total Payroll)	Difference in Average Salary Per Year of Male and Female Employees
Research 1	417 (58%)	305 (42%)	$90,139 (62%)	$74,693 (38%)	-$15,446
Research 2	346 (71%)	142 (29%)	$90,851 (74%)	$75,969 (26%)	-$14,969
Regional 1	90 (51%)	88 (49%)	$62,133 (53%)	$53,846 (47%)	-$8,287
Regional 2	46 (55%)	37 (45%)	$47,070 (56%)	$46,645 (44%)	-$425
Regional 3	52 (54%)	45 (46%)	$59,462 (58%)	$49,780 (42%)	-$9,682
Regional 4	28 (68%)	13 (32%)	$48,980 (70%)	$45,930 (30%)	-$3,050
Totals Across Six Participating Institutions	979 (61%)	630 (39%)	$398,635 (53%)	$346,863 (47%)	-$51,772

Summary

In this chapter, support was provided for the four themes that emerged from the data analysis describing female faculty members' experiences with maternity leave. Support came from online survey respondents and personal interview participants, totaling 151 women in this upper Midwest state.

Four themes emerged from the analysis of the data: there was a lack of information on maternity leave at all six institutions involved in this study; female faculty members experiencing maternity leave often felt a lack of power in their work environments to do what was best for themselves and their children; female faculty felt there were gender beliefs within their work setting concerning pregnancy, maternity leave, and how that related to their overall status at their institutions; and female faculty in this study felt stressed when becoming a parent in combination with fulfilling their faculty roles.

At the beginning of this chapter, Alexandra, an interview participant was quoted as saying, "I will have it all, I just won't have it all at the same time." Her confidence is contagious and admirable, especially considering the battles with maternity, sexism, and age discrimination she has already encountered in her early career as an academic. She went on to tell me, "I just decided that I was never going to be a million dollar researcher and that's just the way it's going to be" and although she seemed resolved in her statement, she indicated some disappointment, "My advisor raised me to be at a big school and to have this really killer research program and I don't—." She stopped there and didn't expand on the frailty of her situation. A deeper reflection on this statement underscores the need for attention in this area.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS WITH RESPECT TO THE LITERATURE

What are the experiences of female faculty members with maternity leave in higher education at one upper Midwest state? In Chapter II, the methodology used to gather data was defined. After responses from the online survey were gathered and participant interviews were transcribed and coded, the condensing of more than 100 codes produced four significant categories: lack of information, lack of power, gender beliefs, and stress.

These categories produced four significant themes: there was a lack of information on maternity leave at all six institutions involved in this study; female faculty members experiencing maternity leave often felt a lack of power in their work environments to do what was best for themselves and their children; female faculty felt there were gender beliefs within their work setting concerning pregnancy, maternity leave, and how that related to their overall status at their institutions; and female faculty in this study felt stressed when becoming a parent in combination with fulfilling their faculty roles.

These four themes led to two final assertions in this study. Female faculty members who had children while employed by these universities experienced several hardships related to lack of information, lack of power, and perceived gender beliefs. These female faculty members, who became parents while employed by these

universities, also experienced stress associated with pregnancy, adoption, and child care responsibilities.

Findings were reported in Chapter III and will be reviewed in this chapter in relation to current literature. At the time of this report, there was a lack of empirical literature surrounding maternity leave (Peterson & Albrecht, 1999). That being said, what empirical research exists will be presented. However, theoretical literature that surrounds a feminist framework provides the most insight into participants' points of view, especially considering the modern workplace. Feminist scholars know, "Not inert, organization—like gender identity—is a constant process of organizing, brought to life, sustained, and transformed by interaction among members" (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004, p. 13). Interactions such as those described in Chapter III make the organization, "Socially constructed and problematize the bureaucratic and organizational structures that shape these gendered constructions" (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004, p. 45).

Theme 1 – Lack of Information

Participants expressed feelings of doubt and insecurity due to the lack of maternity leave policy at their institutions. They used channels of communication within their institution to make reasonable arrangements and at times received no communication or direction. Discussion of this theme will focus around two topics: a lack of defined criteria and a lack of communication.

Lack of Criteria

Criteria for institutional norms are necessary to provide members a basis of structure in which to participate. The lack of maternity leave policy at all six

institutions left women who became pregnant or chose to adopt to navigate a path with which they were unfamiliar. Typically, these women were also relatively new employees and had not established themselves from a scholarly point of view or a professional sense. A lack of criteria associated with a natural life process, such as procreation, begins to approach a larger form of marginalization within higher education.

This marginalization left participants to regularly hide and speak indirectly about pregnancy, maternity arrangements, and family. Some felt there were different rules for different people. This left participants feeling, "That hidden networks and relationships could be running through and behind the visible ones in the institution" (Kerman, 1995, p. 139). Not only might there be hidden networks at play, but inequity between employees can reproduce rapidly, whereas open and available guidelines can help to eliminate discrimination (Evans, 1995; Scholnick, 1998). From a feminist communicological perspective this represents a broader issue associated with, "(a) how macro-level institutional agents (and the cultural and political discourses on which they draw) articulate certain gendered identities; and (b) how social actors reproduce and/or resist these articulations at the level of everyday praxis and interaction" (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004, p. 122).

Specifically, a lack of criteria within this study negated the participants own beliefs that one university had a maternity leave policy. One participant stated:

> Well it makes me sad to think that people don't even know it [maternity leave policy] exists – and it's not actually available anywhere – because we worked pretty hard on it. I assumed when we met in that three-person committee that, that was it. So that's just one reflection.

Another one is that I wish now that we had pushed harder to make it broader in its inception. But the people on the committee; again, it was me and maybe somebody else as a faculty member or maybe somebody that didn't come very often but there were a lot of university people saying it was coming down to the money, and so weren't able to be as progressive as I would've liked to have been with the way the policy is put together. (Emma)

After a great deal of searching, Emma and the principal investigator came to find out the policy Emma's committee had worked so hard to craft, had been signed by the president, but was still in legal counsel and had never been added to Research Institution 1's faculty handbook. Thus, at the time of this report, the policy had been on hold for three years after the faculty and president passed it. Yet, the entire faculty interviewed from that institution believed there was a policy in place. This is a representation of a "de facto policy" (Lingard, 2003), a policy the members believe is current, but in reality does not exist.

Since this study began, Research Institution 2 has passed and instituted a maternity leave policy beginning in the spring of 2012 (Appendix E). Research Institution 1 is likely to pass their maternity leave policy December of 2012 (Appendix F). None of the regional universities have a maternity leave policy, nor are there current discussions of creating one. The participants' dilemmas relating to a lack of policy matriculated into a lack of communication.

Lack of Communication

Communication can be seen as a key issue in these participants' experiences when attempting to arrange maternity leave. Female faculty members attempted communication with both their human resources personnel and chairs. Understanding the chain of command in higher education is an important aspect to employee

participation. However, in most of the participants' experiences, they lacked feedback related to maternity leave. Faculty appointments do not fall under the umbrella of the human resource offices and with no clear criteria; chairs are left to craft maternity leave arrangements.

This situation left women navigating a work environment that seemed oppressive and uncommunicative (Modaff, DeWine, & Butler, 2008); which can lead to disengaged employees (Miller, 2006). Examples include Amelia's continued one-way e-mail communication with her human resource office, her chair, and her dean. The lack of response she received from all three administrators left her frustrated and stressed. Charlotte also jokingly mocked, "That her human resource [personnel] would actually have to be in their office to answer the phone." All of these administrators made the process of arranging maternity leave difficult due to the lack of communication. Both chairs, even though they had adequate advance notice, waited until the last minute to contact replacement instructors. This was especially painful in Charlotte's case, because her chair's lack of communication left her and her colleagues in a state of disarray upon her departure and for one colleague, lingering resentment toward Charlotte.

Communication can then be thought of as, "Deeply entangled with the emotional lives and concrete circumstances of real people, who come to experience in their own bodies the 'authenticity' of particular discourses with a power to which most of us can attest" (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004, p. 176). Even more so, communication can be the process for discursive struggles (Mumby, 1996), and in relation to organizations, "The constitutive role . . . in shaping organizational reality and with

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examining how communication serves the interests of some organizational interest groups more than others" (Mumby & Stohl, 1996, p. 57). Communication, as a vehicle for career development and institutional participation, can be seen as the vital component to an employee's necessity and overall job satisfaction (Modaff, DeWine, & Butler, 2008).

Theme 2 – Lack of Power

Participants spoke in great numbers about the confusing nature of maternity leave in higher education. As it has been shown, many lacked communication from their chairs, deans, or human resource offices; that left them to ask other women for suggestions on what to do or craft arrangements themselves that might be plausible. This can be described as, "Socialization is a set of communicative processes that produce and reproduce the relationships through which domination, subordination, and marginalization occur" (Bullis & Rohrbauck Stout, 2000, p. 59). However, because faculty lack the power to make administrative decisions concerning replacements and pay, women were more likely to ask for favors, overextend themselves, and ultimately feel indebted to those around them. In the words of one interview participant, this process is then "skewed against the mother."

Participants have unique insight surrounding their maternity experience, because as standpoint theory notes: "subordinate or less powerful members of society have a more complete view of the world than the dominate groups" (Humm, 1995, p. 276). Buzzanell (2003) used standpoint theory to analyze maternity leave for women with disabilities and found organizational policies lacked attention to women who

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were different and stated: "To ignore these standpoints means that power relations in women's situated experiences will continued to be silenced" (p. 62).

It is noted, that feminist research has contributed to understanding power that influence women's lives, because power is critical to feminists' research and analyses (Holvino, 2007; Buzzanell & Liu, 2005; DiPalma & Ferguson, 2006). Discussions of this theme will focus on women's lack of support and boundary setting.

Lack of Support

Women in this study expressed an overall lack of support at the chair level and above. Repeatedly, women compromised their maternity arrangements to suit the needs of higher education. In almost all instances, women expressed reflexive dissatisfaction with their maternity arrangements; if they had it to do over again, they would have negotiated for more time away. Negotiating in a work environment, contrary to women's ways of knowing, may leave women's voices unheard in the overall organizational experience (Mumby, 1996). Academia can be a "double-edged sword" (Rassool, 1995, p. 27) both for progressive thought and simultaneously stuck in past traditions (Evans, 1995; Morley & Walsh, 1995; Davies & Holloway, 1995).

Some examples of gender beliefs were expressed by participants like Louisa who felt penalized for starting a family. As an adoptive parent, her institution did not officially recognize her need for approved maternity leave. She was told by her human resource representative that she did not qualify for leave; this left her negotiating with colleagues and ultimately giving up a true leave experience. Zoe also knew that an official leave from her institution would not be granted, and without tenure, she was reluctant to stop any of her job duties. Although, when a male

colleague's wife in her department had a baby, he was unofficially given 12 weeks

leave without having to maintain any contact with the university.

Lack of Boundaries

Boundaries, as was shown in Chapter III, came in many forms. Women put

their health and the health of their children aside in order to satisfy work requirements.

This lack of power is built upon a lack of information, and as Liu and Buzzanell

(2004) stated, "The denial of ready access to information can make it difficult for

women to exercise control over their leave taking process" (p. 339). Some examples

include participants' willingness to take on additional duties in lieu of traditional

teaching methods during their maternity leave. Many women were willing to shift

their work environments from the classroom to their homes with newborn infants in

their arms. They saw this shift in work as an advantage and ultimately gave way to,

"authority over personal decision-making, . . . retained in the 'expert' and removed

from the individual" (Bullis & Rohrbauck Stout, 2000, p. 59). Women were willing to

work from home, in part, because they were unwilling to take a reduction in pay, as

current FMLA law authorizes.

From an organizational standpoint, "Childbirth can thus be viewed as a

'critical juncture' at which the issues of employer support and employee control

become more salient than usual" (Glass & Riley, 1998, p. 1404). This critical juncture

left some women angry and frustrated with their employer. Examples from this study

include when administrators asked women to return earlier than arranged and when

faculty or adjuncts were not compensated for their substitution.

Women's power can be diminished not only by the verbal intonations, but also by the hidden practices within the organization's setting and communication associated with everyday practices. These covert practices include women like Josephine, who swapped teaching a graduate course for administrative duties during her maternity leave. Josephine took additional leave beyond the typical 6 weeks, but continued to do an administrative assignment even though her pay had been garnished. She was satisfied with the arrangement, because after a difficult C-section and recovery, she did not want to be in the classroom every day. However, since her pay was reduced and she continued to do her administrative assignment, it seems the organization used covert processes to assign Josephine additional workload.

Ultimately, women in this study did not have the power to make decisions for themselves and their families. Their overall status within the organization became (de)valued because of perceived gender differences (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004). For example, one dual academic couple employed at the same institution were treated differently. The pregnant faculty member was given limited maternity leave and during her leave brought the baby with her to work and felt somewhat shortchanged. On the other hand, her husband, employed in another department, was told to take as much time as he needed. This (de)valuation of women needing maternity leave is harmful to them. The lack of power women experience in the decision making process is built upon lack of information concerning maternity leave; Theme 3 contributes further to this topic.

Theme 3 – Gender Beliefs

Gender has been a discussion point for many disciplines throughout the ages. Only within the last few decades have scholars conducting organizational research begun to understand the depth gender plays in the workplace.

It has been well established that organizations typically operate as gendered entities (Mumby, 1996; Crompton, 2006). Gender can be defined as society's creation of biological sex and, "How we take biological differences and give them social meaning. In the process, we create a set of practices and norms for interpersonal behavior, roles for individuals to perform, ways of being, ways of knowing, standpoints and worldviews" (Duerst-Lahti & Kelly, 1995, p. 6). Understanding that academia is no different than other work environments and women are not yet at full participation (Martinez Aleman & Renn, 2002) is key to understanding women's maternity leave experiences. More specifically, this theme focuses on gender beliefs in regard to women (in general) and maternity leave.

Women

Broadly, bias against women can be thought of as a power imbalance between the sexes, usually called sexism. This can be defined as, "Including negative or ambivalent attitudes toward women (prejudice); widely shared beliefs about women's capacities, interests, and ways of behaving (stereotypes); and actions or norms that exclude, distance, or undermine women (discrimination)" (Lott & Rocchio, 1998, p. 254). The Civil Rights Act of 1972 did much to combat sexist oppression, but in the 40 years since this legislation, changes have been slow on all fronts, including higher education (Modaff, DeWine, & Butler, 2008).

Participants in this study expressed forms of sexism within their workplace in higher education. Isabel knew other female faculty members who received far less in terms of money and accommodations, and thought to herself, "If you only knew how good my chair was." She told a story of a colleague who took a few weeks off during the spring semester to have a child and was made to teach during the summer session with no pay to make up for it. Rachel, an interview participant, was told by her chair when it was time to talk about career goals, "Just go work for Job Corps; do not get a degree [Ph.D]." That might seem off the cuff to some, but when asked why her chair said that, she responded: "His best friend had lost his tenure-track position, and he wanted him to get to get my track." These experiences seem to represent the well documented research that men hold more full professor positions and, "Not only are full-time male faculty more likely to be tenured, but men have held tenure longer than women on average" (Conley, 2005, p. 27).

Amelia's conversations with her chair, dean, and human resource representative were strained at best. She expressed wanting to include a woman in these conversations as she felt that having a women included might mean someone understood her perspective better. Amelia's wishes for a female administrator are appropriate, but current literature notes the lack of women in management positions in higher education, even when some claim equality has been achieved in today's work environment (Wisker, 1996, p. 90; Kerman, 1995). A study by Peterson and Albrecht (1999) examined maternity leave policy within organizational structures and concluded that organizations still have gendered divisions and inequities; a sexual division of labor. These findings support Theme 3.

Maternity Leave

Participants in this study acknowledged their universities' stagnant policies, and overwhelmingly, felt that impeded them. One example of this came from Catherine, who experienced a miscarriage after her second child. Deeply disappointed by this miscarriage, she felt excited to learn she was pregnant for what would be her third and final child. Although her department chair was excited for her, she verbally expressed concerns about pushback from those above her concerning accommodations.

It has been well established that women's biological clocks do not always tick in rhythm with the academic calendar (Rhoads, 2004; Valdata, 2005; Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2003). Many participants felt this was to their disadvantage considering the world of education. Alexandra's chair even noted, "You made a decision, and you have to live with the consequences of your decision." Alexandra felt penalized, ashamed, and confused at how her chair reacted; a few weeks later, she had a miscarriage. Not only do women worry about their biological clock, but also, "the tenure clock often ticks simultaneously with the biological clock" (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2003, p. 119; Stockdell-Giesler & Ingalls, 2007). This struggle was noted by several participants, but it was especially highlighted by Alice, a mother of two, when she thought about going up for promotion to full professor and tenure. Her fear was that her peers would judge her for taking longer than the minimum of seven years and look at her as, "not a serious scholar."

Theme 4 – Stress

Stress was a common thread in all 30 interviews as well as overwhelmingly in the survey responses. Stress, in particular for women, is critical to the conversation about maternity and higher education. Researchers have noted a focus on women is because, "The challenges they face are exacerbated by such factors as the biological clock coinciding with the tenure clock, the physical demands of pregnancy and childbirth, the historical exclusion of women in academe, and societal expectations about motherhood" (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2005, p. 68). Stress in this theme will be discussed with respect to three areas: maternity arrangements, pregnancy, and becoming a new parent.

Maternity Arrangements

The average "time-off" interviewed participants took was 4.8 weeks. However, it is important to note that, although these women may not have been in the classroom during this time, they were still completing 100% of their contractual obligations to the university. None of the interview participants completely stopped their work duties. They continued to engage in tasks such as advising, online teaching, e-mail corresponding, negotiating departmental assignments, grading, coordinating service work, and overseeing student teaching. Only one woman reported taking a reduction in pay per her FMLA request. However, she exchanged a graduate course for administrative work during her leave, so that it would not include a reduction in actual work. These brief, rearranged work conditions contradict literature that encourages 12 weeks leave or more. In particular, Feldman, Sussman,

and Zigler (2004) concluded that women who took less than 12 weeks were more likely to have strained relationships.

Because there was a lack of criteria associated with maternity leave at all six participating institutions, women felt pressure to make accommodations that first satisfied their employer and secondarily, satisfied themselves. The lack of communication made participants feel anxious about their arrangements, including the students' well-being. Catherine noted her students' anxiety in having to navigate between professors during the same semester. Charlotte had prepared class lecture notes, but because the chair was lax in making arrangements, she never had the chance to talk with her colleagues about course content.

In some cases, women found it stressful to communicate their needs. By Catherine's third child, she understood her need for time to recuperate. She said, "So the doctor was protecting me and my health." Catherine's reliance on her doctor's orders for five weeks leave is supported by research that found women often rely on (co)agents of their maternity leave and become passive participants in their experience (Meisenbach, Remke, Buzzanell, & Liu, 2008; Peterson, 2010).

Short maternity leaves might be seen by some as a benefit; in hindsight, nearly all women who were interviewed would have negotiated for more time. Not only is this leave necessary for medical reasons, but researchers of short maternity leaves have found that middle class families have difficult adaptation periods, and those from lower economic standing may suffer more consequences after a short leave (Feldman, Sussman, & Zigler, 2004). Sarah, an interview participant concurred; she said her short leave "strained our [marital] relationship."

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Pregnancy

Pregnancy related stress played a part in many of the conversations with interview participants. Pregnant women have often found themselves in a new category in an organizational environment. Their status may change in the eyes of their employer due, in part, to the physical presence of a maternal body as "other" and not "normal," especially when male workers are typified as the standard worker (Buzzanell & Ellingson, 2005). Pregnancy in its infancy is a private matter, only, for the woman experiencing this shift in body and mind.

Many participants said their students and peers noted their physical and familial changes. Some students and colleagues were noted as giving the pregnant women gifts for the baby. On the surface, this eased some of the stress these mothers were feeling; but their health, and the health of their unborn child weighed heavy on participants' minds.

Many women have high-risk pregnancies, which include, but are not limited to: diabetes, obesity, high-blood pressure, over 35 years of age, and conditions concerning both the woman and the fetus (Riviello, Ottanelli, Di Tommaso, & Mello, 2010). These conditions were especially stressful for women in this study. Women felt obligated to continue their work; and in one example, Zoe was put on bed rest. Instead of actually resting, Zoe had her husband bring work back and forth from the office. She had her son five weeks early, and supervisors quickly began asking when she would be back to work. She felt like, "It wasn't my choice." Zoe knew she was not tenured. They could ask her to come back right away, and she was not willing to pursue a leave without pay. FMLA does not, "include wage replacement" (Monahan

Lang & Risman, 2006, p. 296). Few institutions offer paid maternity leave as research

by Hollenshead, Sullivan, Smith, August, and Hamilton (2005) found: higher

education organizations do not want to offer women anything more than all employees

receive. Moreover, their findings point to more gender-neutral policies and reliance

for maternity leave on sick leave or medical policies.

Parenting

Becoming a parent at any stage is stressful. The routines one has developed

must now change; women in this study were no different. All participants noted the

lack of sleep, total exhaustion, and living in a blur following the birth of their children.

Emma commented that she did the worst teaching of her life the semester after her son

was born. Alexandra felt like she was having an out of body experience when she

resumed teaching after the birth of her child. Many women described "going through

the motions" of their new lifestyle, and being so tired, as Bridget recalled, "so when

you get a chance to get rested, you forget that is what it feels like."

Research that examined maternity leaves shorter than six weeks noted that

parents are only through stage one of parental acclamation out of four stages

(Feldman, Sussman, & Zigler, 2004). Bonding within families was brought up by

several women who wished they had spent more time focusing on their child instead

of work. For example, Abigail remembered leaving to have her baby and thinking

primarily about the transition for the students, but later noted, "I know students come

and go, but I have the memories; the students don't have those memories."

Childbearing and child-raising has been studied at great lengths within

organizational and societal constructs. One study concluded that leave policies and

child care policies are directly related to one another and can be deemed complimentary (Garrett, Wenk, & Lubeck, 1990). From a societal perspective, caretaking is still thought of as a predominately female responsibility and may limit women's contact with the outside world (Crompton, 2006; Kellerman & Rhode, 2007). In particular, the United States fails to "guarantee paid parental leave, and only about a tenth of those eligible for the largely unpaid options currently available take advantage of them" (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007, p. 14).

From an organizational perspective, workplaces are not designed to account for dependent children, but rather shaped to the ideal worker and ultimately immune from family responsibilities (Crompton, 2006; Glass & Riley, 1998; Kellerman & Rhode, 2007). This ideal male worker then puts the female worker at a disadvantage; Crompton (2006) noted, "Family responsibilities, particularly for child care, mean that most women do not actively pursue an upwardly mobile occupational career, even when relatively well qualified" (p. 261). Women are also likely to start and stop their career paths compared to men, due to pregnancy, child rearing, and furthering the career of a spouse (Conley, 2005). Additionally, women are made to choose between work and family. If they are seen as devoting more time to family, they may be perceived as less valuable employees (Peterson & Albrecht, 1999).

These implications translate to the profession of higher education. The structures underlying higher education are specifically male, or built upon a male path assuming freedom from family responsibilities, thus cumulatively disadvantaging women (Grant, Kennelly, & Ward, 2000; Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2003). Alexandra, an interview participant, noted this disadvantage when she received her chair's

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evaluation the year after she had given birth. In all previous years, she received an "exceeds" in service, but this time around, she did not. She also failed to receive a merit pay increase because of this drop in evaluation. Merit pay increases are from departmental discretionary money to use as the chair sees fit. A study by Schulz and Tanguay (2006) supported the notion that merit pay can be rewarded unequally among employees. This might seem only marginal, to forgo one merit pay, but as Scholnick's (1998) findings note, raises in higher education are typically based on percentages, and if inequities are found in the beginning of a career, those inequities will continue through one's span in the workforce, widening the wage gap with each passing year.

To summarize the last theme, women expressed stressful situations and emotions related to the construction of their maternity arrangements, pregnancy, and becoming a parent. For these participants, their newfound routines, lack of sleep, and ongoing work duties, played a critical role in their physical and mental health.

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Textual Analysis

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Textual analysis of faculty handbooks and economic data further explored existing maternity leave dimensions. The following sections include a discussion of faculty handbooks and salary data that were evaluated for this study.

Faculty Handbooks

Faculty handbooks are an explanation of policies and processes for employees of an organization. Textual deconstructions of maternity leave policy have been studied and found to be a worthy scholarly pursuit (Peterson & Albrecht, 1999). Faculty handbooks, at the time of the participants' maternity leaves, contained no language that addressed leave related to child birth or adoption. This finding

substantiated the participants' perceptions of a lack of information related to maternity leave. This lack of information contributed to, but does not condone, the lack of two-way communication between those in supervisory roles and female faculty members.

The lack of information in faculty handbooks contributed to this study's final assertion, which revealed discursive struggles associated with the material environments of tangible and economic imperatives (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004). Women, without these "tangible backings," are left to navigate an organizational environment that is unequal and may contribute to women's struggles to "break the glass ceiling" at universities in the United States (May, Moorhouse, & Bossard, 2010). Emma, an interview participant, who served on the faculty committee charged with crafting maternity policy at Research Institution 1 (see Appendix F) reflected on her experience:

> I wish now that we had pushed harder to make it broader in its inception. There were a lot of university people saying it was coming down to the money, and so we were not able to be as progressive as I would've liked to have been. (Emma)

Economics

Nationally, salary data for women in higher education shows that even when controlling for variables such as seniority, experience, and educational level, men are still paid significantly more than women; specifically, around $10,000 more or approximately 22 percent (Christman, 2010; Hollenshead, Sullivan, Smith, August, & Hamilton, 2005). The national status of women's wages combined with a family leave policy (FMLA) that nationally is considered by some to be the beginning of the end of family policy making (Mencimer, 2008) leads most researchers to believe FMLA is:

IT is negative, however, in that we found that some campuses do nothing else but offer FMLA provisions to new parents, which means the grant of unpaid leave. It is negative as well in that the presence of FMLA can exonerate the conscience of higher education intuitions from doing more to help faculty negotiate the combination of work and family. (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2003, p. 68)

Throughout the analysis of faculty handbooks and discussions with female faculty members, data supported Wolf-Wendel and Ward's (2003) prediction that higher education institutions will do nothing in the near future to implement maternity leave for women. Garrett, Wenk, and Lubeck's (1990) study concluded that if national legislation existed, women would be more likely to make different decisions and wholly behave differently regarding maternity leave.

Salary data at the upper Midwestern state in this study mirrored the national statistics reported. Wolf-Wendel & Ward (2003) concurred, "Recent studies conducted on basic wage differences between men and women all show that the gendered wage gap still exists" (p. 120). Considering the research institutions in this study, male salaries were, on average, approximately $15,000 more than female salaries. In terms of the regional institutions, male salaries were $7,521 more than female salaries. Combined, men in this upper Midwest state make, on average, $11,260 more per year, slightly higher than the national statistics. Scholnick (1998) noted that evaluating faculty salaries can gauge, "fairness in treatment at any point in one's career" (p. 95).

A 2004 statewide report, conducted by the Institute of Women's Policy Research and covering this upper Midwestern state, further highlights the economic challenges women in this state face. Considering seven states surrounding the state

studied, it ranks 6th in reproductive rights and last in social and economic autonomy (Caiazza & Shaw, Eds., 2004, p. 5). In terms of businesses owned by women, this state ranks 49th nationally (p. 21). This state ranks last among the 50 states for women aged 16 and older in poverty in 2002 (p. 21). The Institute of Women's Policy, with a ranking of A+ to F, assign this state a D+ in terms of women's social and economic autonomy and an F in reproductive rights (p. 5). These numbers are alarming and cause for major social, economic, and reproductive overhauls in this state.

Summary

In Chapter IV, four themes that emerged from data analysis of this study were discussed with reference to the related literature. The thematic categories were: lack of information, lack of power, gender beliefs, and stress. Overall, this research on women in higher education related to maternity leave has suggested similar patterns: women felt unsure when making leave arrangements; they had a loss of power related to decision-making; experiences of gender beliefs occurred at multiple levels, and stress was a mitigating factor to their overall mental and physical well-being.

The first theme was a lack of information on maternity leave at all six institutions involved in this study. Women in this study expressed a desire for guidelines that would give all participants equal access to the same privileges. Women's lack of information played a critical component in the other three themes, as a lack of information launched the problematic process of women arranging maternity leaves for themselves. Studies in the literature supported this theme that there is a lack of information regarding maternity leave policy at higher institutions.

The second theme indicated female faculty members experiencing maternity leave often felt a lack of power in their work environments to do what was best for themselves and their children. Women in this study often felt powerless to arrange their maternity leave around their own needs rather than the confines of higher education (the needs of their employers). Having little to no power during a critical juncture of their employment, women lacked the ability to create boundaries. They were inextricably tied to the institution in terms of low rank, low wages, non-tenured, and demanding teaching schedules. Studies in the literature supported this theme.

The third theme explored gender beliefs within female faculty members' work settings concerning pregnancy, maternity leave, and how that related to their overall status at their institutions. Women experienced many forms of sexism at their institutions, including the overall beliefs against women in higher education. Women were equally satisfied and dissatisfied with their collegial relationships, some garnered support and others lacked support. Studies in the literature supported this theme, the idea that a gender beliefs still exists at higher institutions.

The fourth theme recognized female faculty members' stress associated with becoming a parent in combination with fulfilling their faculty roles. Women expressed both mental and physical stress related to maternity arrangements, pregnancy, and becoming a parent. Their utter exhaustion left participants feeling as if they were in a blurred state for some time after childbirth; thus, continuing to juggle work and family life immediately following childbirth proved to be a difficult time for most participants. Studies in the literature supported this theme that women in

professional roles often experience stress relating to opposing needs of employers and family, specifically children.

A textual analysis of faculty handbooks and salary data supported current literature revealing a lack of university attention to maternity leave from an official standpoint and supporting the notion that underpaid female academics still exist. In Chapter V, a summary of the study is presented followed by conclusions and limitations. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CLOSING STATEMENT

Summary

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate maternity experiences of female faculty members at six institutions in one upper Midwestern state. A feminist framework was used as a guide in designing the methodology and in data analysis. An overview of the study and higher education was provided in Chapter I. Mixed methods design, including survey methods, qualitative interviews, and textual analysis was described in Chapter II. Exactly 121 women participated in the online survey, and 30 women volunteered to be interviewed. The interview audio recordings were transcribed and open-ended survey responses were used; both were analyzed for codes, categories, and themes.

In Chapter III, the four themes that emerged from data analysis were presented with support from survey and interview participants. In Chapter IV, the themes were referenced with respect to the current literature. In this chapter, a summative discussion of the themes is offered; first describing the findings of the current study and then relating them to current literature. The summary is followed by limitations, conclusions, and recommendations.

Theme 1 – Lack of Information

Participants' lack of information concerning their approaching maternity leave increased their level of frustration and impeded their ability to navigate maternity decisions. Participants looked to administrators and human resource offices for information, policy, and criteria, but they were often met with a lack of communication. Both parties lacked sufficient experience and guidelines in making decisions about maternity leave.

Specifically, the lack of official criteria precipitated a culture of imbalance between women, departments, divisions, and institutions in this upper Midwest state. Women talked to each other, and in some cases, set departmental precedents for acceptable leave situations. However, being a trend setter was not always advantageous; in some cases, it created additional workload the semester after the baby arrived.

Moreover, the lack of two-way communication left participants to navigate their situations without guidance. Open dialogue surrounding maternity leave was at times non-existent; instead, participants spoke quietly with colleagues about their impending births until they were certain arrangements could be finalized. Participants clearly expressed dissatisfaction with human resource offices, because their faculty contracts are not governed by those offices. Nonetheless, discussing a maternity leave with a departmental chair was not always advantageous.

An article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* by Joseph Untener (2008) noted the abundance of articles stipulating the need for solid maternity leave policies, and highlighted the overall lack of university maternity leave policy in the United

States. He also pointed out that maternity leave is a sensitive topic, because it carries

a price tag that few institutions are willing to incur (Untener, 2008; Vahratian &

Johnson, 2009). Additional literature in the field supported this theme (Evans, 1995;

Kerman, 1995; Modaff, DeWine, & Butler, 2008; Mumby, 1997; Scholnick, 1998).

Theme 2 – Lack of Power

Participants lacked power to make decisions at this critical juncture in their

employment status with their institutions. Because participants lacked support, they

felt ill-equipped to make personal and professional decisions regarding their maternity

arrangements.

Participants also lacked an ability to clearly define their leave arrangements.

The boundaries of their leave blurred as their work continued during their negotiated

leave. Participants continued to answer e-mail, attend faculty meetings, grade papers,

perform service, and research. Most participants accomplished these activities from

home; however, many also brought their babies to campus, along with pack and plays

or bouncy seats. Many participants noted how exhausted they were during these

weeks, which is not surprising, considering the fact that they were not only recovering

from childbirth and major surgery (in some cases), but also continuing to perform

work duties, and care for newborn babies.

Participants lacked power in this situation, because often the maternity

arrangement details were a process of negotiation. Furthermore, most women who

choose to have children experience childbirth before they have tenure. This

circumstance places women at a disadvantage when negotiating time off in a time-

driven career.

A study by Buzzanell and Liu (2005) of women's discursive constructions of their workplace maternity experience found women are situated in a subordinate role when accounting for their feminine interests and bodily needs. Furthermore, through a poststructuralist feminist lens, they concluded that maternity leave is not a neutral organizing process (Buzzanell & Liu, 2005). Additional literature in the field supported this theme (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004; Bullis & Rohrbauck Stout, 2000; Liu & Buzzanell, 2004).

Theme 3 – Gender Beliefs

Gender beliefs emerged as a theme in this study as women described their work arrangements during their maternity leaves. At times, women felt at odds with their employers because of the lack of information and their lack of power in the process. Women, in this study, felt a lack of support from their chairs and administrators when crafting their maternity leaves. They compromised many of their needs during this stressful time to accommodate the needs of students and the demands of a profession in higher education. In some cases, participants felt their chairs were accommodating; however upon reflection, most wished they had negotiated for more time. This theme summarized the experiences of women in higher education as a gendered workplace, specifically, as indicated by economics; see textual analysis in this chapter for salary specifics.

Researchers studied 21 non-managerial women who took at least one maternity leave and concluded their participants experienced communication which ultimately supported organizational motives over the women's needs (Meisenbach et al., 2008). Additional literature in the field supported this theme (Ashcraft & Pacanowsky, 1996;

Davies & Holloway, 1995; Mumby, 1996; Peterson & Albrecht, 1999; Quina, Cotter, & Romenesko, 1998; Ropers-Huilman, 2003; Wisker, 1996; Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2003).

Theme 4 – Stress

Stress was associated with the maternity leave experiences of the women in this study. All participants expressed a range of feelings (e.g., fatigue, strained relationships, blurred cognitive processes, and feelings of being overwhelmed).

Because women lacked information and official university guidelines associated with maternity leave, they incurred additional stress in making arrangements for their temporary absence. Women, in large part, did not want to ask for favors of colleagues who would not be financially reimbursed. This situation caused women to feel anxious, and in many cases, leaves were finalized a few weeks prior to an impending birth or adoption.

Women in this study expressed stressful physical and emotional feelings associated with pregnancy. Many of them experienced additional challenges (e.g., gestational diabetes, existing type II diabetes, preeclampsia, high blood pressure, caesarian sections, obesity, over 35 years of age, and placenta previa). These conditions exacerbated their stress related to maternity leave.

Becoming a new parent or caring for additional children such as a newborn was stressful for many participants. Participants all experienced extreme exhaustion associated with the arrival of their babies and the subsequent weeks and months after childbirth or adoption. A few expressed bouts with depression and loneliness; a

majority of participants said they were "just going through the motions" until they physically and mentally felt well again.

Child care accompanies pregnancy and working parents. All participants discussed child care related to their maternity arrangements. Women are often thought to be the primary caregivers and culturally responsible for child care duties. Women in this study did a tremendous amount of child care; despite having partners who were supportive, their physical recovery and job duties made child care even more tiring. Many participants did work from home while caring for a new baby and recovering from childbirth. Others brought their new babies to campus to continue their work.

Buzzanell and D'Enbeau (2009) explored one woman's struggle and beliefs associated with caregiving in higher education. This woman recounted her experiences of ambivalence in caregiving, colleague's critiques of her caregiving, gender conceptions, guilt, and caregiving bias in the Ivory Tower. This research supported the theme of stress and the hidden bias against caregiving in higher education. Additional literature in the field supported this theme (Buzzanell & D'Enbeau, 2009; Buzzanell & Ellingson, 2005; Feldman, Sussman, & Zigler, 2004; Meisenbach et al., 2008; Peterson, 2010).

Textual Analysis

An analysis of faculty handbooks and salary data supported national research about maternity leave, low wages for women in higher education, and underlying gender beliefs.

Nationally, family friendly policies at universities are still not widely found. The six institutions in this study had no official policy located in their faculty

handbooks. When compared with national statistics (Christman, 2010; Hollenshead, Sullivan, Smith, August, & Hamilton, 2005), the six institutions in this study had larger pay gaps between average salaries of male and female faculty members than pay gaps at the national level. The most glaring discrepancy was found at the two participating research institutions, over a $15,000 gap between men and women's salaries per year. In total, men in this upper Midwest state make, on average, greater than $11,000 more per year than women, slightly higher than the national average.

Women's experiences revealed latent gender structures within the organization of higher education at these institutions (Buzzanell & Liu, 2005). Women in this study, for the most part, knew that they lacked power in negotiating maternity arrangements. This shift in power placed women at the peripheral, rather than the center of their experience. Literature in the field supported this theme (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004; Christman, 2010; Garrett, Wenk, & Lubeck, 1990; May, Moorhouse, & Bossard, 2010; Meisenbach, Remke, Buzzanell, & Liu, 2008; Mencimer, 2008; Peterson & Albrecht, 1999).

Limitations

This study focused on female faculty members experiences with maternity leave at six public four-year universities in one upper Midwestern state. Participants were recruited through convenience and snowball sampling and were all women who had either given birth or had adopted. These births and adoptions ranged from 25 years ago to within the past year. The universities were either research one institutions or regional universities. The universities varied in size from over 14,000 students to just under 1,000 students.

Recommendations

Female faculty members' experiences with maternity leave at six four-year institutions in an upper Midwest state were vastly different when compared with one another. Women experienced leaves as short as two hours and as long as twelve weeks; most were paid, some were unpaid, and nearly all continued their faculty contracts at 100%. Participants experienced a number of unknowns associated with criteria, a lack of power in decision making, gender beliefs, and overall mental and physical stress.

If higher education, as an organizational work place, is to continue to attract the best and brightest minds, it must recognize employees are at the center of great academic cultures. Newman (1995) noted, "According to organizational theorists, the structure and behavior of institutions is determined, at least in part, by the character of the institution itself, its predominate culture; and the characteristics of the policies they administer" (Newman, 1995, p. 144). When higher education recognizes that it is facilitating a gender-biased environment that creates inequities between male and female employees, major strides are made (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004).

The values and interests of all involved in higher education can be served. Reflection on this study and the participants' experiences makes clear the need to shift power through policy to support all employees and to combine work and family in accepted ways (Powney, 1997; Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2003).

Recommendations for Higher Education

The beauty of the Midwestern Universities studied is in their ability to navigate self-governance through faculty involvement. This is the single defining feature of

university culture that makes its freedoms with academic content so advantageous; the same can be said for the accommodations of its faculty. Understanding that the value of an institution is in its satisfied employees, Hollenshead et al. (2005) reminded us that:

> Having a formal policy on the books increased goodwill among existing faculty and was seen as a recruitment tool for attracting new faculty. It also improved the climate for faculty by acknowledging that most faculty will have a family need to manage at some point during their career, whether for young children, a dying parent, or an ill spouse or partner. (p. 58)

This attention to goodwill may ensure a higher education profession that is attractive to both men and women (Brown, 1997). A nationwide lack of paternity leave policy fails to include fathers in child care conversations, thus perpetuating the belief that nurturing and care giving is strictly women's work (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007; Peterson & Albrecht, 1999). Ultimately, "Family-friendly policies can benefit the entire university mission" (Quina et al., 1998, p. 232).

Recommendations for Future Research

Additional research is needed related to women and maternity leave. As more women continue on an academic path and join the ranks of faculty, it will be increasingly important for institutions to become family friendly environments. Pregnancy and child care are aspects of employment that will forever be a part of society and organizations.

Continued recognition and understanding of questions surrounding family friendly environments is a critical component to academia's success. What types of maternity arrangements are possible? What unique pedagogical methods might be employed? How might maternity arrangements be personalized for each woman?

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How might boundaries be better defined prior to the leave? How do organizations become inclusive of gender complexities? How might maternity arrangements be placed more aptly within a woman's control?

Closing Statement

Becoming a mother is a unique experience for each woman. That experience will only be known to her; the pains of childbirth or adoption may fade over time as some women have reflected, but ultimately her memories are hers alone. The period of postpartum in the United States is so short and when coupled with stress, this makes for a challenging period. At the end of this study, I wish to share a statement by Ropers-Huilman (2003):

> Higher education is one of the primary institutions that shape culture. While those of us who participate in that institution cannot take the blame, credit, or responsibility for current gender relations, we can insist that gender discrimination will not be perpetuated in the very institution that hold promise for developing both knowledge and people—a development that is certainly stymied by gender discrimination. (p. 9-10)

This gives those of us involved in higher education the ability to change. Both personally and professionally, I am excited to be a part of that change.

APPENDICES

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT

TITLE:	*Experiences of Female Faculty with Maternity Leave at Four Year Universities in an Upper Midwest State*
PROJECT DIRECTOR:	*Audra D. Myerchin*
PHONE #	██████████
DEPARTMENT:	*Teaching & Learning*

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH

You are invited to be in a research study about female faculty in higher education, because you are employed as a faculty member and you had a baby during your employment at an institution in ██████████.

A person who is to participate in the research must give her informed consent to such participation. This consent must be based on an understanding of the nature and risks of the research. This document provides information that is important for this understanding. Research projects include only subjects who choose to take part. Please take your time in making your decision as to whether to participate. If you have questions at any time, please ask.

As a participant in this research your identity will only be known to the principal investigator. In all published materials, you will only be known by pseudonyms. Attention to confidentiality makes this research low risk.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

The purpose of this study is to better understand how academic women navigate maternity leave(s) in higher education in ██████████.

As more women are pursuing advanced degrees in higher education, it is reasonable to consider policies in higher education that would support a more diversified faculty. The principal investigator hopes to better understand experiences with higher education maternity leave policies and how women might be better served. In order to bridge the gap in higher education and move women into an equal status in terms of rank, we must first understand their experiences with policies in higher education.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?

The principal investigator hopes approximately 200 women may complete the survey component of this study (it is unknown how many women have completed maternity leave time at four-year universities in ██████████ at this time). Approximately 2-12 women may take part in the interview portion of this study. This study will be completed at six four-year institutions in ██.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?

The survey portion of this study will take around 15 minutes. For the interview portion of this study, your participation will be approximately 20 minutes. There could potentially be a follow-up interview at a later date, should the researcher need additional information. This interview can take place wherever the participant wishes, an on-campus office would be sufficient.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?

1. You will be contacted through public information (published university e-mail addresses). You may read and accept this informed consent. You may decline at any point.
2. You may choose to complete the linked survey. After the completed survey, you may choose to self-nominate for a one-on-one interview.
3. You agree to an in-person interview at a chosen date, time, and location. The principal investigator is happy to meet on your campus or at a neutral location.
4. The principal investigator will ask for your informed consent and explain the research study. You may choose at anytime to withdraw without any ramifications. If you consent to this study, you will be asked to sign the informed consent.
5. This interview will be tape recorded for transcription purposes only. Audio recordings will only be accessible by the principle investigator and will be destroyed by August 30, 2013. Any published material from this research will conceal your identity.
6. During the interview the principal investigator will have a prepared set of questions, but all participants are encouraged to guide the interview in the way they feel fit. Participants may choose to skip any interview question.

7. This interview will last approximately 20 minutes. No participants will be paid or compensated in any way.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE STUDY?

There may be some risk from being in this study. There are possible emotional or psychological risks from discussing your leave situation. There is always a risk of legal or privacy issues. The principal investigator will try to mitigate any privacy issues by keeping recorded material under lock and key. This study may make you feel uncomfortable and you are free to skip any question you want. There is no such thing as a "risk free" study; however, there are no foreseeable risks to participating.

You may experience frustration that is often experienced when completing surveys. Some questions may be of a sensitive nature, and you may therefore become upset as a result. However, such risks are not viewed as being in excess of "minimal risk."

If, however, you become upset by questions, you may stop at any time or choose not to answer a question. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings about this study, you are encouraged to contact, your campus counseling center.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

You will not benefit personally from being in this study. However, we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because this study has the potential to aid higher education in crafting new, more inclusive maternity leave policies. Compensation/extra credit is not a benefit and should not be listed as a benefit.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?

You will not have any costs for being in this research study. The only cost incurred by the participant is their time and potential costs to drive to the meeting location for the interview.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

WHO IS FUNDING THE STUDY?

The ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ and the principal investigator are receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The records of this study will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. In any report about this study that might be published, you will not be identified. Your study record may be reviewed by Government agencies, and the ███████████████ Institutional Review Board.

Any information that is obtained in this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of coding data, data kept under a password secure database and in a locked office. Only the principal investigator will have access to your identifying information.

If we write a report or article about this study, we will describe the study results in a summarized manner so that you cannot be identified.

This interview will be audio recorded and stored digitally on the principal investigator's secure database. The participant has the right to review and/or edit the recordings. Only the principal investigator will have access to the original recordings. The recordings will be used for educational purposes, potential journal articles, and conference presentations. The recordings will be erased on August 30, 2013.

IS THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with your institution.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS?

The researchers conducting this study are Audra D. Myerchin, principal investigator. You may ask any questions you have now. If you later have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research please contact Audra D. Myerchin at ███████████. My advisor on this research project is Myrna Olson and she can be reached at ███ ███████.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, or if you have any concerns or complaints about the research, you may contact the ████████████████ ██████ Institutional Review Board at ███████████. Please call this number if you cannot reach research staff, or if you wish to talk with someone else.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Subjects Name: _____

_____   _____
Signature of Subject   Date

APPENDIX B

E-MAIL ADVERTISEMENT

Hi,

My name is Audra Myerchin and I am a PhD. student at the ███████████

████. My dissertation research focuses on female faculty who have had a baby or

adopted a child while employed by the ██████████████████████. This

research spans 6 public universities across ██████████. I'm interested in how you

arranged your maternity leave (or non-leave) situations with your university. Please

consider taking this short survey. Once you click the link directions, IRB approval

numbers and potential risks are listed. I appreciate your voluntary participation and

look forward to better understanding women's maternity leave experiences. Here is

the link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/leave_in_higher_education.

Have a great summer!

Audra

APPENDIX C

ONLINE SURVEY

Experiences of Female Faculty with Leave Policies at Four Year Universities in an upper Midwest State

Survey Introduction Information

Thank you for showing interest in this study. My name is Audra Myerchin and I am a PhD student at the ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ in the Department of Teaching and Learning and a faculty member at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ in the Department of Communication Arts. I am conducting a survey for my dissertation titled, Experiences of Female Faculty with Maternity Leave at Four Year Universities in ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. You were solicited for this survey because you are employed by a public university in ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. This survey is completely confidential and no identifying information will be collected unless you choose to provide it.

As a female faculty member at a four year university in ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ who has had a baby or adopted a child, I am seeking your voluntary participation in this study. I appreciate you taking the time (no more than 15 minutes) to complete this survey about your maternity leave experience. The ▮▮▮ IRB approval number for this study is #201205390 (which covers: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮). ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ IRB approval number for this study is #1248. All questions are voluntary and you can quit this survey at any time. Participation in this survey will in no way affect your relationship with your institution or the ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮.

Should you want to contact the principal investigator or the student advisor for this study, contact information is listed below.
Principal Investigator: Audra Myerchin, M.A. audra.myerchin@▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
7012400600
Doctoral Student Advisor: Dr. Myrna Olson
Department of Teaching and Learning
College of Education and Human Development University of ▮▮▮▮▮▮
myrna.olson@▮▮▮▮▮▮
7017721342

Again, thank you for participating in this voluntary study, your input is essential to furthering the discussion about women in higher education.

Survey Questions

1. **Have you ever taken a maternity leave of absence from a university in ███████?**

    Yes

    No

2. **Please pick the answer below that best describes why you did not pursue a leave of absence while experiencing a significant life change (e.g. having a baby or adopting a child). Select more than one if the options below fit your situation.**

    My situation (e.g. birth of a child) happened during the summer months

    I felt I could manage the birth of a child (or adoption) while also employed fulltime and did not need a leave

    My spouse/partner took time off to care for the child

    My workload was moved online so I could continue working

    Other (please specify)

3. **If you did not pursue a maternity leave, is it because there was a lack of administrative assistance in organizing your leave?**

    Yes

    No

    Other (please specify)

4. **If you did not pursue a maternity leave, did you feel any of the following? Select all that apply.**

    Pressure from your colleagues NOT to take a leave

    Pressure from your department chair to NOT take a leave

    Pressure from your administration NOT to take a leave

Pressure about tenure and promotion guidelines

Pressure from students

Pressure about finding adjuncts to cover your daily duties

Pressure about money and health care accommodations if you were to take an unpaid leave of absence

I felt no pressure from my colleagues, department, or university administration

I felt no pressure about money or health care concerns if I took a leave of absence

Open-Ended Questions

5. **Can you explain any other reasons why you choose not to pursue a maternity leave?**

6. **Is there anything about your maternity situation that you would have changed?**

7. **Is there anything else about your situation that you would like to share?**

8. **Which box below best describes your maternity situation?**

Traditional Child Birth

Adoption

You Served As A Surrogate

Foster Care

Miscarriage

Other (please specify)

9. What is your current academic rank at your institution?

Instructor

Assistant Professor

Associate Professor

Full Professor

10. Which of the following best describes your current employment contract?

Tenured

Tenure-track, but not yet tenured

Non-tenure track contract

Clinical

Special contract

Adjunct

Other (please specify)

11. Currently, in what academic department is the majority of your workload completed?

12. What is your marital status?

Single

Married

Divorced

Long Term Partner

Other (please specify)

13.   **What is your current age?**

0-25

26-30

31-35

36-40

40 +

14.   **Even though you did not take a formalized maternity leave, were you gone for any period of time because of the birth or adoption of a child?**

0 weeks

1-2 weeks

3-4 weeks

5-7 weeks

8-10 weeks

11-13 weeks

14 + weeks

15.   **Even though you did not take a formal maternity leave, was your leave time, paid, unpaid, or partially paid?**

Paid

Unpaid

Partially Paid

Other (please specify)

16. **If your maternity leave was paid or partially paid, what was the funding source?**

Your University

Another University

Government Agency

Insurance

Spousal Benefits

Other

Not Applicable

Explain (optional)

17. **During your maternity leave period, were you tenured or non-tenured?**

Tenured

Non-tenured (working towards tenure)

Other (please specify)

Likert Scale Questions

For the next questions, please answer on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very dissatisfied, 3 being neither satisfied or dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied.

18. **How satisfied were you with your maternity leave?**

19. **How satisfied with your universities maternity leave policies were you?**

20. **How satisfied were you with your colleagues acceptance and helpfulness in your maternity leave?**

21. **How satisfied were you with your administration's handling of your maternity leave?**

22. **How satisfied with the arrangements of your specific job duties (e.g. course teachings and student advising) were you with your maternity leave?**

23. **Did you feel like you had job security before, during, and after your maternity leave?**

    Yes

    No

    Sometimes

    Explain (optional)

24. **Do you feel like you had to make concessions concerning your maternity leave arrangements.**

    Yes

    No

    Sometimes

    Explain (optional)

25. **Did you continue to perform any job duties while on maternity leave?**

    Yes

    No

    Explain (optional)

26.   **Were any of your job duties moved online while you were on maternity leave (e.g. student advising, email contact, or courses taught online).**

Yes

No

Explain (optional)

27.   **If you could have changed one aspect of your maternity leave, what would it have been?**

Yes

No

Explain (optional)

28.   **How do you think maternity leave policies in ████████ could change to better serve women? If you believe leave policies are adequate, skip this question.**

29.   **Is there something about your maternity leave experience that I have not asked you, that you would like to share?**

30.   **Would you be willing to do a short follow-up interview about your leave? This interview could be face to face, through email, or over the phone and will take less than 20 minutes of your time.**

Yes

No

If yes, please include your name and email or phone number.

Survey Complete
Your participation is complete at this point. Here is the contact information of the principal investigator and the doctoral student advisor.

Principal Investigator: Audra Myerchin, M.A. audra.myerchin@ ███████████
███████

Doctoral Student Advisor: ███████████
Department of Teaching and Learning
College of Education and Human Development ███████████████

███ ██████████████

Again, thank you for participating in this voluntary study, your input is essential to furthering the discussion about women in higher education.

APPENDIX D

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What are the possible topics that relate to each research question?	What do you want to know about this topic?	Notes
Grand tour	Describe your most recent leave at your institution. Tell me more…	
Mini tour	Tell me more about how you initiated that leave. Tell me who you first approached about your leave. Were they helpful? How were your next steps guided? Please explain how your job duties were accommodated during your leave.	
Process question	How did you go about transitioning into a leave? How did you transition back into work? What made that transition easy or difficult?	
Hypothetical questions	Do you think your universities current leave policy was supportive of your endeavors? Why or Why not. Can you tell me more about that?	

Devil's advocate	Some might say university leave policies lack an attention to women, do you feel that way? Why or why not.	
Role-playing	What would you tell a woman about pursuing a university leave? If you had to negotiate your leave again, would you change how you approached it…why or why not??	
Specific examples	Tell me about your job duties while you were on leave?	
Follow up-clarifiers	Are you on a tenure-track position or a non-tenure track position? Where in the process of tenure are you?	
Follow up-probes		
Closing	Is there anything I should know about your situation that I didn't ask you?	
Notes:		

APPENDIX E

RESEARCH INSTITUTION 2 – MATERNITY LEAVE POLICY

5. Childbearing Leave

Academic appointees (tenured and tenure-track faculty, professors of practice, and senior lecturers) with less than twelve-month appointments who give birth are eligible for childbearing leave during the period of medical disability. This is a temporary leave from all duties without reduction in pay during the time the faculty member is temporarily disabled because of pregnancy and childbirth. Childbearing leave begins on the actual delivery date and ends six weeks after (including university breaks), although individual circumstances may require extending this period. Any extension beyond six weeks (before and after delivery) shall require medical certification from the attending physician or midwife and is approved by the Provost. Unpaid leave that extends beyond the period of medical disability is available through FMLA. Eligibility for childbearing leave begins upon hiring.

6. Modified Duties

6.1. Who is eligible: An academic appointee (tenured and tenure-track faculty, professors of practice, and senior lecturers) who: 1) becomes a parent through childbirth, adoption, or foster placement of a child (as defined by the Family Medical Leave Act – FMLA); 2) has a health condition that makes them unable to perform their regular duties but does not necessitate a reduction in workload; or 3) who will be

caring for a child, spouse/partner or parent who has a serious health condition (as defined by FMLA). Additional modifications for longer-term conditions may be made in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and ███ Policy 100.1.

6.2. Definition: "Modified duties" means a change to duties and goals without reduction of salary for a limited period of time. A person taking "modified duties" will still be at a 100% workload and 100% salary; however, the nature of the responsibilities for this time period will be adjusted. Modified duties will include a revision of workload for up to the equivalent of a semester (e.g., release from or reassignment of teaching courses, committee assignments, advising, or alteration of research duties). When a period of modified duties immediately follows childbearing leave, the modified duties may be extended to the end of a semester to accommodate teaching schedules as necessary. Modified duties must conclude within 12 months of a birth or adoption.

6.3. Process: Modified duties, goals, and duration will be negotiated by the individual requesting modified duties with the department chair/head and approved by the dean. If agreement cannot be reached between the faculty member, the department chair/head, and the dean, the negotiation will advance to the Provost.

6.4. Performance evaluation: Faculty members who use the modification of duties and goals must still submit an annual report when it is due in their department. The time period in which duties were modified, as well as the specific modifications in place, must be included in the annual report. The report must also include the agreed upon goals and a statement about how those goals were accomplished, but must not disclose confidential medical information. Those reviewing and evaluating the document

should take this into account and adjust expectations accordingly. Acceptance of modified duties does not change the candidate's responsibility for meeting the department's PTE standards by the end of the probationary period, whether that period has been extended or not. A period of modified duties is not a necessary condition for an extension of the tenure probationary period. A period of modified duties also does not require that the individual extend the tenure probationary period.

RESEARCH INSTIUTION 1 – PROPOSED MATERNITY LEAVE POLICY

Faculty Maternity Leave Benefits Policy

Benefited members of the faculty giving birth are entitled to maternity leave benefits. Maternity leave benefits shall release the faculty member from all employment-related duties for up to six (6) weeks from the date of delivery. During any portion of those six weeks for which the faculty member is under contract, this benefit consists of a leave with full payment of the faculty member's base salary for that portion of the contract.

The faculty maternity leave benefit is distinct from any other benefits provided by ████ or guaranteed under federal or state law. Application of the maternity leave policy shall not diminish such other benefits.

Illustrations
#1
- 9 month contract
- birth on October 1

6 weeks maternity leave begins on date of delivery

#2
- 9 month contract
- birth on May 1

maternity leave begins on date of delivery and extends to end of contract – May 15

#3

- 9 month contract
- birth on August 1

maternity leave begins on first day of contract – August 16 – and extends until September 12 (6 weeks from August 1)

#4

- 9 month contract plus summer contract

maternity leave period could *extend into* summer contract period or *begin in* summer contract period

#5

- 9 month contract
- birth on October 1

maternity leave from October 1 to November 12

- mother's medical condition prevents return to work

sick leave benefit (if available: short term up to 13.5 days at 100% pay, then long term for up to 5 months at 75% pay) begins on November 12

#6

- 9 month contract
- birth on October 1

maternity leave from October 1 to November 12

- child's medical condition prevents return to work, or
- mother wishes to remain with child after November 12

federal Family Medical Leave Act benefit (unpaid leave) begins on November 13 and extends for up to 12 weeks

#7

- 9 month contract
- birth on October 1

maternity leave from October 1 to November 12

- return to work on November 13 but not assigned responsibility for teaching during that semester

faculty member's assignment of responsibilities for the contract period may be adjusted with full pay without teaching responsibility for all or part of the contract period

2/5/09, Approved by University Senate
3/26/09, Approved by ██████████
Currently with General Counsel for Faculty Handbook location and language

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