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The Perspectives of African American Nonprofit Female Executives From the Northeastern Region of the United States About the Work-Family Balance

Tammy Evans-Colquitt
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Walden University

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

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Tammy Evans-Colquitt

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2012

Abstract

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Northeastern Region of the United States About the Work-Family Balance

by

Tammy Evans-Colquitt

MPA, Walden University, 2009

MS, Eastern University, 2006

BA, Eastern University, 2000

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

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Abstract

Although many studies have been conducted on the increased pressure and stress facing women who are trying to fulfill work and family demands, little is known about African American women in executive positions and their perspectives about work-life balance. A particular gap in the research literature exists on the lived experience of African American nonprofit executive women in maintaining work-life balance. The conceptual framework of this phenomenological study was the bidirectional frame of both work interfering with family and family interfering with work. Data were collected through semistructured telephone interviews of 12 African American women ages 30 to 45 and with children under the age of 18 who work as full-time executive directors for nonprofit organizations in the Northeastern US. The data from the transcribed interviews were stored, coded, reported in themes, and summarized by using the data analysis program HyperRESEARCH, followed by member checking with the participants. The participants included suggestions to improve the work-life balance for nonprofit executive women, such as exercising, networking and strong family support, delegating and scheduling work responsibilities, and utilizing flexible work schedules; however, it was clear from the interviews that the participants were not practicing the suggestions they provided to help balance work-life activities. The participants found it difficult to combine their own work-family responsibilities because of the time constraints at work. The implications for positive social change include informing organizations of the need to recognize the importance of family-friendly policies and flexible work arrangements, and to implement them in the workplace.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my sons, Willie III and Evan.

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I could not have pursued this degree without the support of my husband, Willie Colquitt, Jr., who never stood in the way of my efforts to be my best. I also have to acknowledge my sons, Willie III, and Evan, who gave up their “mommy time” for me to pursue this endeavor. Guys, this is the greatest gift that you could have given me.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background of the Study

The principal theory of marriage has changed significantly. Western society used to be a traditionally patriarchal system: The husband supported the family, and his spouse oversaw child care and household activities (Giele, 2008). Economic imperatives in the United States began to undermine the husband's privilege and role as the sole provider of the household. Since the 1970s, the number of women in the United States working outside of the home has increased significantly (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008b). Women are now the second source of income in many families, and in some cases, they are the only source supporting their household (Omori & Smith, 2010). Women who are working outside the home also continue to have the second job of assuming family responsibilities. As a result of women working outside of the home, a major paradigm shift in the United States has occurred in the family and work domains (Omori & Smith, 2010; Schneider, Hannah, & Keating, 2010).

From 1975 to 2000, women participating in the labor force with children under the age of 18 years increased from 47% to a peak of 73% (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). By 2004, the percentage of mothers participating in the labor force had receded to 71% of the total workforce, where it has since remained (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). The total proportion of women in the workforce is nearly equal to that of men. When the scope is narrowed to the nonprofit sector, women comprise two thirds of the working population, yet only 19% of the 400 largest charitable nonprofit organizations employ women as executive directors (Bronznick & Goldenhar, 2009).

When narrowing the scope of female executives, there is an even greater paucity (10%) of African American female nonprofit executives.

African American Women in the Labor Force and the Nonprofit Sector

African American women account for half (6.4%) of the entire African American (12.2%) population in the United States; in addition, African American women encompass a higher percentage (60%) of all women (58%) participating in the labor force (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Terhune (2008) stated that even though African American women comprise the majority of the labor force, research into the complexities of their lives has been insignificant. Over the next 40 years, the racial and ethnic composition of the United States will change dramatically. R. P. Halpern (2006) projected that approximately 30% of the workforce in the United States will be comprised of minorities. Although African American women are better educated and are working outside the home more often than before, their participation in the labor force will increase only from 6.1% as of 2009 to 6.4% by 2018 (Catalyst, 2010a). Hispanic American and Asian American women will actually become the fastest growing employment cohort (Cheung & Halpern, 2010; R. P. Halpern, 2006; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008b).

The nonprofit sector employs more African Americans than do either government agencies or for-profit businesses (R. P. Halpern, 2006). Although African American women work more hours per week (38.4) than European American (36.4) and Hispanic American (36.6) women (Omori & Smith, 2010), they are the most underrepresented population occupying positions of power and influence (R. P. Halpern, 2006). According to Peters and Wolfred (2001), between 75% and 84% of nonprofit organizations are led

by European American leaders, 10% by African Americans, 6% by Asian Americans, and 4% by Hispanic American Americans.

Within the next 10 years, a wave of retirements in nonprofit organizations will shift the demographics of leaders in the sector (Bronznick & Goldenhar, 2009). For example, more than 2,200 nonprofit organizations are expected to go through leadership changes as a result of the Baby Boomer generation retiring from the nonprofit sector (R. P. Halpern, 2006). As the demographically nonprofit landscape changes, the emerging EDs are aware that they will be challenged to maintain a healthy work-life balance while leading and managing effectively (Cornelius, Corvington, Ruesga, Murthy, & Turner, 2008).

The participation rate of women in the labor force, along with their educational advancement, has increased over recent decades. In 2008, 36% of working women between the ages of 25 and 64 years had college degrees, compared to 11% in 1970 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). As previously mentioned, although African American women are working longer hours than European American and Hispanic American women, 45% of their median income (\$50,000) is directed to their household and family responsibilities, which is significantly less than the incomes of their European American counterparts (Omuri & Smith, 2010). These working conditions have a direct correlation to stress-related physical and mental issues and illnesses (Bronznick & Goldenhar, 2009; Melchior, Berkman, Niedhammer, Zins, & Goldberg, 2007).

Women in Leadership

The term *glass ceiling* evolved from a 1986 article by Hymowitz and Schellhardt that defined the term as an invisible barrier that hinders women's ability to occupy executive leadership positions. For more than 2 decades, researchers have been studying this phenomenon and have come to realize that a glass ceiling exists for women in management (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007; Pollard, 2005). The Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (1995), created by Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, was an act passed to prevent discrimination against women; however, discrimination in the guise of wage gaps and lack of promotions remains in the workplace (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007).

D. F. Halpern and Cheung (2008), as well as the U.S. Department of Labor (2006), agreed that 50% of all management and professional positions are held by women and that only 2% of women in the United States are the chief executive officers (CEOs) of Fortune 500 or Fortune 1000 companies. Women currently stalled in management positions are learning from women already in higher positions that these positions come with added barriers and challenges that can impede the work-family balance (WFB) and upward career mobility (Pollard, 2005). For example, almost half (49%) of the women who have made it to executive leadership positions in corporations and universities, and who earn more than \$100,000 in annual income, do not have children (Dye, 2005; Hewlett, 2002). Researchers (Cheung & Halpern, 2010; Chugh & Sahgal, 2007; Jenner & Ferguson, 2009; Percheski, 2008) have conducted studies focusing on women in management and work-family conflict, but I failed to locate more than but a few studies on African American executive women and the work-family conflict.

The United States will experience a demographic change in the labor force because the European American male Baby Boomers are retiring from the corporate and nonprofit sectors (Ilies et al., 2007; Lee & Mather, 2009). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009), women comprise the majority in the labor force and that the demographic changes will result in an increased probability that women will occupy the executive leadership positions of their predecessors. Therefore, there is a need to explore work-family policies in an effort to retain not only African American women but also all other women in the workforce and allow them to maintain a healthy WFB.

Work-Family Balance

Families in the United States are trying to meet the demands of work and family activities within serious time constraints. Working women are stressed trying to arrange their schedules to accommodate time for work-related activities while supervising and caring for their children, as well as handling other family obligations (Schneider et al., 2010). The work-family conflict (WFC) is based upon the conflict theory of Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), who postulated that conflict occurs when

- (a) Time devoted to the requirements of one role makes it difficult to fulfill requirements of another, (b) strain from participation in one role makes it difficult to fulfill requirements of another, or (c) specific behaviors required by one role make it difficult to fulfill requirements of another. (p. 76)

For the past 2 decades, researchers have examined the work-family relationship by focusing on the bidirectional effects of work-to-family conflicts (Ilies et al., 2007). For example, role interference can occur when work activities, such as working late at the

office, can interfere with family time and obligations as well as family activities, such as taking time off to care for an elderly parent, which can interfere with work and hinder job performance.

Although researchers have supported the bidirectional relationship of the work-family relationship, it work interferences have been shown to conflict with family more frequently than family interferences with work (Slan-Jerusalim & Chen, 2009). This theory formulation, along with the many models that it has generated (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Hecht & Boies, 2009; Ilies et al., 2007; Slan-Jerusalim & Chen, 2009), has included mostly European American middle-class women, whose perspectives and experiences have become the universal standard (Collins, 1998; Gibson & Abrams, 2003).

Work-Family Policies

Heymann and Earle (2010), in a study on social rights, found that of 192 nations, the United States is the only country that does not offer paid maternity leave, paid parental leave, and payment for new parents unless it is unpaid leave guaranteed by the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. Congresswoman DeLauro Rosa introduced the Healthy Families Act of 2009 to the 111th Congress. This legislation would have mandated sick leave, particularly for working women, to meet recovery from routine illness or to care for a family member; keep a doctor's appointment; and spend time seeking help and services for victims of domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault. "Every worker should have paid sick days – it is a matter of right and wrong. Being a working parent should not mean choosing between your job, taking care of yourself, and

taking care of your family” (“DeLauro Introduces Paid Sick Days Legislation,” 2009, n.p.).

The Healthy Families Act would give the Secretary of Labor the authority and investigative provisions for employees covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 or the Government Employee Right Act of 1991 (Sherk, 2009). Although the majority of full-time workers (86%) in the United States have at least 7 days of annual sick leave, this time allotment represents a modest number of days when compared to those in other industrialized countries (Heymann & Earle, 2010). The members of Congress supported the bill because it would help minority women without sick leave to balance work and family without having to choose between coming to work sick or losing their jobs (Sherk, 2009).

Business representatives opposed this legislation. Lobbyists argued that mandating this labor standard would pose a threat to the sustainability of businesses because of the compliance costs already required by federal, state, and local regulators. In response to this mandated act, employers would be forced to lower workers' wages by the total cost of the sick leave (Heymann & Earle, 2010; Sherk, 2009). Heymann and Earle (2010) cited Freedman, director of labor law policy for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, who argued that “we view it as a costly mandate on businesses that would eliminate the flexibility employers require to design leave policies that meet their employees' needs while still preserving the employer's interest in having a reliable, stable workforce in place” (pp. 51-52). As of June 2009, the Healthy Families Act was

referred to the House subcommittee on workforce protection (Library of Congress Thomas, 2010).

Gap in the Literature

There has been a gap in the literature on WFC and balance issues for African American women. The challenges of recruiting African American individuals to participate in research could be related to their distrust of researchers' motives (Huang & Coker, 2010). According to Cheung and Halpern (2010), studies that have included women in executive positions have been limited, partly because of the insufficient number of female executives available to participate in such studies. I found little research that had included African American nonprofit executive women and their lived experiences of WFB.

Much can be learned from the experiences of African American women who have succeeded in the nonprofit sector. Such information will be useful in attracting African American women to and retaining them in the nonprofit sector while helping them to balance their work-family lives. I sought to identify the strategies used by African American women in nonprofit executive leadership positions in the northeastern region of the United States (New Jersey; New York; Delaware; Pennsylvania; and Washington, DC) to maintain the WFB. The methodology was a qualitative phenomenological approach to identify the contributing elements to the work-family barriers and obtain perspectives from the women about the WFB. Chapter 2 includes a discussion of the history of African American female executives in the nonprofit sector, the work-family

barriers related to cultural expectations, the balance between work and family, and the stress that accompanies positions of leadership experienced by African American women.

Statement of the Problem

The problem that I examined is the increased pressure and stress facing women who are trying to fulfill work and family demands. These demands are the result of current economic stresses and the increasing number of families requiring dual-income earners, single-parent families having only one income in the household, higher participation rates of women in the workforce, elder care responsibilities, and the substantial number of hours that women are working outside the home (Slan-Jerusalem & Chen, 2009). Although many studies have been conducted on women in management and WFB, little is known about African American women in executive positions and their perspectives about WFB (Cheung & Halpern, 2010; Chugh & Sahgal, 2007; Jenner & Ferguson, 2009; Percheski, 2008). By conducting this study, I sought to provide information and strategies that can be used in the development of best work-family practices.

Purpose of the Study

I examined the work-family phenomenon of African American female nonprofit executive directors in the northeastern region of the United States (New Jersey; New York; Delaware, Pennsylvania; and Washington, DC) by exploring their perspectives of WFB. The purpose of the study was to provide techniques and strategies in balancing work-family roles that can be used not just by African American women but also by all

other women employed in the nonprofit sector. This study was designed to contribute to the literature by providing African American women's perspective about the WFB.

Various factors have led to the need to examine the WFB, namely, more female participation in the workforce, more dual earners, elder and child care responsibilities, and increasingly equalitarian roles in the family. Globalization and the expanding use of technology in the business sector are critical issues that have prompted the proliferation of research on work-family issues (Slan-Jerusalim & Chen, 2009). By pursuing a qualitative, phenomenological design, I explored the participants' experiences and perspectives on work-family issues. The in-depth, semistructured, one-on-one telephone interview protocol allowed me to explore and describe the lived experiences of African American women holding executive positions in the nonprofit sector.

Previous research on the WFB has focused on conflict and interferences between work and family responsibilities among European American women, a topic that is discussed further in Chapter 2. Studies measuring the WFB among African American female executive leaders in the nonprofit sector have been limited. I sought to identify the perspectives of a sample of female African American executives and the techniques that they used to balance work-family issues.

Nature of the Study

I used the traditional approach of hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry in a qualitative research design to describe the common lived experiences of the participants in regard to the WFB. According to Creswell (2007), a researcher collects the data by interviewing individuals who have experienced the phenomenon and then by developing

a textual description of the experienced phenomenon (i.e., what the participants experienced) and a structural description (i.e., how they experienced the phenomenon in terms of context or situation). Combining textual and structural descriptions can provide an understanding of the essence of the experiences. Therefore, the transcendental phenomenological approach was an appropriate methodology to understand the meaning of the lived experiences of the participants in my study in regard to their perceptions about the WFB.

Because studies of African American women in top leadership positions have not been representative of the norm, I relied on a personal networks and snowball sampling techniques in reaching African American nonprofit EDs. Two central research questions guided this study: (a) To what degree do African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States experience WFC? and (b) What strategies do they use to balance their work and family responsibilities? The qualitative, hermeneutic, phenomenological interview allowed me to have an interactive conversation with the participants. I asked a specific set of open-ended interview questions, and other open-ended probing questions capture the essence of the phenomenon. I summarized the data by using HyperRESEARCH, a Macintosh analysis program. HyperRESEARCH is a solid code-and-retrieve data analysis program that is used to code and retrieve data, identify themes, and conduct analyses of the data.

The approach allowed me to conduct a critical analysis of the subjective interpretation of the participants' experiences. The purpose was to identify strategies based upon the participants' perspectives that can help women in nonprofit executive

leadership positions to better manage their work-family obligations. I derived the sample from referrals from specific individuals within nonprofit organizations using the snowball sampling approach (Powell & Greenhaus, 2006).

The sample included 12 African American women between the ages of 30 and 45 years who are working for nonprofit organizations in the northeastern region of the United States (New Jersey; New York; Delaware, Pennsylvania; and Washington, DC). The participants had to meet the following criteria to participate in the study: (a) be female, (b) self-identify as African American, (c) be currently responsible for children under the age of 18 years, (d) be between the ages of 30 and 45 years, (e) be currently employed in a full-time position, (f) be working as the executive director of a nonprofit organization in the northeastern region of the United States, (g) agree to participate in an interview session, and (h) provide feedback and shared ideas. The data analysis focused on the conceptual themes that emerged from the study.

According to Creswell (2007), the one-on-one telephone interview is the best approach when the researcher does not have direct access to the participants. The transcribed interviews facilitated an exploration of the perceptions of a sample of African American females currently employed in nonprofit executive positions and are responsible for child or elder care. Creswell suggested that interviewing 12 individuals is sufficient to capture and describe the meaning of the phenomenon from the women who are experiencing it. The interview was framed using a conversational approach with two general questions and additional probing questions meant to capture the participants' lived experiences.

Research Questions

The research design focused on the meaning of the participants' experiences through a semistructured, in-depth, one-on-one telephone interview approach (McNabb, 2008). The open-ended questions were based upon Moustakas's (1994) psychological transcendental phenomenology approach. According to Creswell (2007), the transcendental phenomenology identifies

A phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon. The researcher then analyzes the data by reducing the information to significant statements or quotes and combines the statements into themes. (p. 60)

The purpose of the study was to determine the meaning of the participants' experiences in dealing with the WFC and identify the strategies used to balance work-family activities. As recommended by Creswell (2007), the study is reduced to an overarching question and several subquestions. As previously noted, the WFC theory (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) and other research (Cheung & Halpern, 2010; Chugh & Sahgal, 2007; Jenner & Ferguson, 2008; Percheski, 2008) were used to formulate the research question and subquestions.

Two central research questions guided the study: (a) To what degree do African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States experience WFC? (b) What strategies do they use to balance their work and family responsibilities? I asked these follow-up questions during the interview process:

1. How do you define work-family balance?

2. What role (work-family) requires more of your time?
3. To what extent does a nonprofit ED experience WFB?
4. What are the challenges that a nonprofit ED faces in finding WFB?
5. How would you describe your leadership style?
6. What strategies do you use to manage work obligations when your child is sick or has activities such as sports and doctor appointments?
7. What strategies do you use to manage family obligations when you have to travel or attend meetings after work hours?
8. To what extent do your husband/partner and/or other support share in family responsibilities?
9. How do you feel when you don't have enough time for yourself?
10. To what extent does work/family balance impact your behavior when balancing work/family activities?
11. To what extent does work/family balance impact your attitude when balancing work and family activities?
12. How does an ED maintain success in her career and still have work-life balance?
13. What work-family strategies can an ED provide to help future executives achieve WFB?

Conceptual Base

As more women have joined the workforce, their efforts to balance their family and work roles have become a struggle for them. As stated previously, Greenhaus and

Beutell's (1985) definition of the WFC has been widely accepted in the literature. However, Frone, Russell, and Cooper's (1992a, 1992b) research of work-family conflict introduced two distinct bidirectional phenomena, namely, work can interfere with family (WIF) and family can interfere with work (FIW), that are widely used by researchers (Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer, 2007; Slan-Jerusalim & Chen, 2009). Although researchers have consistently supported these bidirectional phenomena, they also have supported the contention that individuals experience WIF much more frequently than they experience FIW. Therefore, the research and open-ended interview questions in this study were derived from the WIF and FIW conceptual framework.

The research design was qualitative and phenomenological. In the qualitative research, I collected, examined, and interpreted the constructs of the work-family phenomenon. The research design included open-ended, semistructured telephone interviews to facilitate the exploration of the women's live experiences and identify emergent meanings (McNabb, 2008). Exploratory questions were based upon the existing literature of the conceptual WFC phenomenon (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

The absence of a conceptual phenomenon examining African American female executive nonprofit leaders and their perceptions of their WFB has hindered research because the literature has not captured a holistic perspective from African American women about the work-family conflict and balance. The goal of my study was to contribute to the literature on WFC and balance. In addition, I sought to produce findings that could offer examples and recommendations to attract and retain African American

female executive directors while they struggle to maintain their work-family responsibilities.

Definitions of Terms

Baby Boomers: A cohort of the American population born between 1946 and 1964.

African American: People of African descent. Used interchangeably with such other terms as *colored*, *African-American*, and *Black*.

Black feminist thought: A critical social theory aimed to resist oppression, race, class, and gender, and empower African American women by reclaiming their knowledge and experiences; discovering and reinterpreting existing works through new theoretical frameworks; and analyzing the ideas of subgroups within the larger collectivity of African American women (Collins, 2000).

Bracketing (epoche): Husserl's concept advising researchers to "set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination" (Creswell, 2007, pp. 59-60).

Executive director (ED)/chief executive officer (CEO): The ED/CEO is the leader of a nonprofit organization, visionary, information bearer, decision maker, manager, and board developer.

Family: Broadly defined, but not limited to, the traditional, nuclear family; is concentrated on the roles that a diverse type of family fulfills (O'Connor, 2005).

Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA): Legislation that requires employers to provide access to up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave every 12 months for events such as

the birth or adoption of a child or to care for a family member with a serious health condition (Heymann & Earle, 2010).

Glass ceiling: An invisible barrier that prevents women or minorities from obtaining upper level executive positions.

Healthy Act of 2009: Requires employers to offer a minimum of 7 paid sick days for full-time employees, allowing employees to care for themselves or an immediate family member with a short-term illness or injury.

Hermeneutical phenomenology: “A form of phenomenology in which research is oriented toward interpreting the “texts” of life (hermeneutical) and lived experiences (phenomenology)” (Creswell, 2007, p. 235).

Intentionality of consciousness: Consciousness is directed toward objects; reality of an object is related to consciousness. Moustakas (1994) described intentionality as “my intentional experience is a combination of the outward appearance of the tree and the tree as contained in my consciousness based on memory, image, and meaning” (p. 55).

Lived experiences: “This term is used in phenomenological studies to emphasize the importance of individual experiences of people as conscious human being” (Creswell, 2007, p. 236).

Nonprofit organizations: Organizations that are tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS, 2011) Code. A nonprofit organization must be operated exclusively for exempt purposes as a corporation or foundation.

Phenomenological study: The researcher describes the meaning of a phenomenon and reduces it to the essence of the experience.

Professional women: Women with a college degree (4 years of college) and an occupation classified as professional or managerial by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Work-family and family-work conflict: Conflict that exists when one role makes it difficult to fulfill the obligations of the other; identified as time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

For this study, I made three assumptions associated with the data collection process and the participants' responses: (a) The participants were experiencing FIW and/or WIF conflict; (b) the participants would be honest in their responses to the interview questions; and (c) the computer program HyperRESEARCH, which I used to store, organize, and analyze the data, was valid and reliable (Creswell, 2007; Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

The study had seven limitations: (a) The study was limited only to African American women EDs employed in the nonprofit sector, (b) the interviews could not grasp and depict all WFB issues in a single interview, (c) the sample was homogeneous by including only African American mothers who were EDs, (d) the participants' leadership styles may have affect their ability to balance conflicts; (e) the demographic was limited to African American female nonprofit EDs, (f) the study was limited to a geographical focus to the northeastern region of the United States, and (g) this study was limited to working women between the ages of 30 and 45 years.

The scope of this qualitative, phenomenological study included telephone interviews with 12 African American female EDs working for nonprofit organizations in

the northeastern region of the United States (New Jersey; New York; Delaware; Pennsylvania; and Washington, DC) who also were responsible for minor children living at home. The study was delimited to an exploration of the participants' perspectives of the experiences and knowledge of their WFB.

Significance of the Study

In recent years, researchers have begun to examine the nonprofit workforce and human resource issues more closely because of executive turnover rates, the retirement of some Baby Boomers, the continuing presence of other Baby Boomers in the workforce, and intergenerational leadership transition and development (R. P. Halpern, 2006). R. P. Halpern (2006) cited a study by Light supporting the assertion that human capital is the most valuable resource in the nonprofit sector. Light (as cited in R. P. Halpern, 2006) suggested that although nonprofit employees tend to be the most committed, highly motivated, and hard working, they also are the most stressed, have a high level of burnout, and do not receive adequate training and staff to succeed in their careers. To sustain a healthy and diverse nonprofit workforce, there is a crucial need to examine the effects of the WFB (R. P. Halpern, 2006). This study on the lived experiences and perspectives of the work-family balance from a sample of African American female EDs will help to close the gap in literature.

Summary

Chapter 1 served as an introductory chapter of African American women in executive leadership positions who are integrating their professional and personal lives. Working women struggle to arrange their schedules to accommodate work-related

activities while also supervising the needs of their children and fulfilling other family obligations (Schneider et al., 2010). People who work in the nonprofit sector know that the workload often is heavy and emotionally draining, and provides modest compensation (Haley-Lock, 2009). The dilemma in the nonprofit sector is that although employees are pursuing meaningful work, they are jeopardizing their personal lives and health (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010). There is a need to recognize and remove the work-family barriers for female professionals on their career trajectories (Bronznick & Goldenhar, 2009). The literature review in Chapter 2 is an examination of current studies identifying WFC and barriers related to the career advancement of women. Chapter 3 is an overview of the methodology used to conduct the study. Chapter 4 presents the findings, and Chapter 5 provides a summary, conclusion, and recommendations based upon the six themes that emerged.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The position of African American women in the workforce has changed over the past half century. For the first time, large companies began to hire African American women during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s (Lee & Mather, 2009; Pollard, 2005). African American women continue to enter the workforce in growing numbers while struggling to balance their work obligations with their family needs and activities. Women comprise nearly half of the labor force and work more than 40 hours per week (Percheski, 2008). They are faced with many challenges trying to combine work and family responsibilities while dealing with limited public policies for paid leave and supportive family policies (Percheski, 2008).

Employment in the nonprofit sector has expanded. As of 2007, there were 1.64 million nonprofits in the United States employing over 8.7 million workers, or 5.9%, of all workers in the labor force (Butler, 2008). The nonprofit sector employs more African Americans than government agencies and private businesses do, and the African Americans who are employed in the nonprofit sector are working longer hours (R. P. Halpern, 2006; Omuri & Smith, 2010). There is a need to better understand how African American executive females employed in the nonprofit sector in the northeastern area of the United States are managing to overcome work-family barriers by identifying the strategies that they use to balance their work-family responsibilities.

Included in this chapter are a literature review and explanation of the theories of work-family balance relevant to women, particularly African American female leaders in

the nonprofit sector. The resources pertaining to the work-family balance provide a historical perspective of working women, current family and medical laws, theories, and emotional and stress outcomes. The literature was obtained from the libraries of Walden University and Rutgers University, as well as the EBSCO and ProQuest databases. Some of the key words used in the search were *work-family balance*, *work-family conflict*, *African-American women*, and *nonprofit*.

Historical Overview

Traditionally, marriage has been a patriarchal social institution and a biological relationship (Kellogg & Mintz, 1988): The husband had the family authority and paternal control, and the wife was expected to take on supportive, gentle, and cooperative roles in the family and the community (Giele, 2008; Rosener, 1990). The traditional family paradigm has always been problematic for African American women because of the need for these women to seek paid employment while meeting unpaid family responsibilities.

Historically, African American women did not have the option of staying at home. In 1913, 90% of the African American population lived in the South, and women in particular worked as servants in private homes. Working outside of the home to support the family profoundly affected African American family life (Collins, 2000). At the turn of the 20th century, only 19% of all women were employed, and only between 2% and 3% of married women participated in the labor force (Kellogg & Mintz, 1988). During the 1950s, 25% of women in general worked outside the home, and by the 1980s, that percentage had increased to almost 60%, half of whom had school-age children (Kellogg & Mintz, 1988). It was during the 1960s that the women's movement in

America began to impact the family structure. Several factors played a role in the significant shift to personal growth and self-actualization, such as fewer jobs for males in the manufacturing sector and an increase in service jobs for females, as well as the fact that women were having fewer children and seeking more education (Giele, 2008).

Two main economic factors changed the labor force, namely, growth in the population and an increase in the number of women, particularly Baby Boomers, in the labor force (Lee & Mather, 2009; Percheski, 2008). During this time, Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 was significant for African American female workers because the legislation outlawed discrimination in hiring on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin. For the first time in history, companies began to hire African American women, even if only to comply with federal mandates (Lee & Mather, 2009; Pollard, 2005). This act was significant for African American women because many were the sole providers for their families. Over the next few decades, the workforce will continue to see greater growth in the minority population, and by 2050, approximately 30% of the U.S. population is predicted to comprise minority workers (R. P. Halpern, 2006).

During the 1970s, the participation rate of women in the labor force accelerated from 43% to 60%, and it continued at a pace of 2.6% each year (Ilies et al., 2007; Lee & Mather, 2009). Women's earnings have increased faster than those of their male counterparts since 1975, and women have contributed significantly to America's economy because of their higher education and participation in occupations traditionally

dominated by women. Women are sharing the employment power and becoming equal partners in family responsibilities (Giele, 2008).

By 2007, working women represented 49% of the labor force and were working more than 40 hours per week. By the 1980s and 1990s, the last of the Baby Boomer generation had entered the workforce. As the first decade of the 21st century has passed, employment opportunities for women are beginning to appear bleak (Ilies et al., 2007; Lee & Mather, 2009). Since the 1980s, the labor force has seen a regression from 1.8% to 1.1%, partly because Baby Boomers are retiring and leaving the labor force (Ilies et al., 2007; Lee & Mather, 2009). Women's labor participation rate has peaked, and their growth in the labor force is expected to stagnate (Lee & Mather, 2009).

As the result of women entering the workforce and the evolving roles of women as they struggle to balance work and family lives, researchers have been interested in studying the relationship between work and family domains. Studies have emphasized the importance of distinguishing the directions of work-family conflict and their different pattern of consequences with WIF, such as working late, and FIW, such as time required to stay home with a sick child (Giele, 2008; Goldsmith, 2007; Gordon, Whelan-Berry, & Hamilton, 2007; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Grice, McGovern, & Alexander, 2008; Heponiemi, Elovainio, Pekkarinen, Sinervo, & Kouvonen, 2008; Ilies et al., 2007; Judge, Ilies, & Scott, 2006; Mitchelson, 2009; Omori & Smith, 2010; Slan-Jerusalim & Chen, 2009).

African American professional women in management and higher positions find it difficult to combine their work-family responsibilities because of the time constraints at

work (Judge et al., 2006). African American professionals put more of their time and emphasis on finding the right jobs, changing jobs, obtaining higher graduate degrees, and working more hours than required to advance their careers (Crawford & Smith, 2005) while trying to balance their work and family lives.

According to Allen and Boykin (1992), people learn cognitive skills based upon culturally specific contexts that become their cues to activate particular cognitive tasks and behaviors. Based upon Allen and Boykin's theory, all cultural experiences provide the baseline for the development of cognitive skills and behaviors. Collins (2000), a distinguished African American feminist scholar, introduced the concept of intersectionality. According to Collins, intersectionality is an "analysis claiming that systems of race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, and age form mutually constructing features of social organization, which shape Black women's experiences and, in turn, are shaped by Black women" (p. 299). Collins stated, "U.S. Black women's experiences in the center of analysis without privileging those experiences" (p. 228), meaning that African American women sit at a theoretically interesting point in society and that others can learn from their knowledge and experiences.

Creating a "safe space," which Collins (2000) identified as "social spaces" (p. 100), allows African American women to be comfortable in speaking freely. The "safe spaces" allow African American women to mentor and empower other African American women by passing on knowledge and experiences that are essential to the survival of other African American women (Collins, 2000). According to Collins, a safe space provides self-definition, which is the first step to empowerment. If African

American women are not defining their experiences, then others in the larger culture are defining the image and ideas about African American women

It is important to identify the values and barriers that women believe to be an influence in their career choices. The work-family conflict has a negative spillover behavior effect in the home, particularly if women are exposed to high levels of work stress and family demands (Culbertson, Huffman, & Alden-Anderson, 2010; Goldsmith, 2007). The work-family conflict could be the result of stress and fatigue, both of which influence women's mood and emotional state in the home (Goldsmith, 2007; Ilies et al., 2007; Livingston & Judge, 2008). In addition, stress has a direct correlation with sickness and other mental health problems (Melchior et al., 2007). In contrast, if women have a positive influence at work, this influence is likely to spill over into the home, especially if women have the opportunity to exercise and enjoy some leisure time (Ilies et al., 2007).

Traditionally, women in the labor force were able to keep work and family responsibilities separate, but because of a paradigm shift in America's economy, the workforce has changed. Although women have enjoyed educational opportunities and more egalitarian gender-role norms (Percheski, 2008), they are being challenged by the high job demands of technology and globalization while having low job control in balancing their work-family obligations (Heponiemi et al., 2008).

Women's advancement in leadership has been underrepresented in top-level positions when compared to men in executive positions. Very few women, less than 2%, have made it to top leadership positions in the corporate, political, or academic sectors (Cheung & Halpern, 2010).

Women now have college and graduate degrees, which rose to 73% in 2008, and they have experience in the labor market. In addition, passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it costly for companies to discriminate against women (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007; Jenner & Ferguson, 2009; Percheski, 2008; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008a). Despite these advances, women in the workforce are still faced with the challenges of combining work, parenting, and life responsibilities while receiving limited public policies for paid leave and family support (Percheski, 2008).

Family Medical Leave Act of 1993

Eight years after the bill was first considered to mandate that employers provide parental leave to their employees, Congress enacted the FMLA of 1993. The FMLA gives employees the right to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year to care for a newborn, a newly adopted child, a seriously ill family member, or personal health issues. To be eligible, an employee must have worked 1,250 hours in the previous year for an employer who employs at least 50 workers within a 75-mile radius of where the employee works (Grossman, 2004). The FMLA provides job protection, the right to receive continued benefits throughout the leave, and the right not to be penalized for taking an authorized leave of absent (Grossman, 2004). Prior to the enactment of the FMLA, empirical data had supported two facts: Women who are the majority caretaker will take time off from work for childbirth and new parenting, regardless whether the employer guarantees employment, or not, and men will rarely take time off for new parenting, even if the employer guarantees their employment (Grossman, 2004).

The Council of Economic Advisers (2010) reported that over one half of employers allow at least a few of their workers to periodically change to flextime schedules to accommodate family issues. In addition, the study reflected that less than one third of full-time workers are given the opportunity to have flexible hours. The employers stated that the reason for not adopting flexible arrangements was limited funds. The benefit for a company to adopt a workplace flexibility arrangement exceeds the cost by actually reducing worker absenteeism, reducing turnover, improving mental and emotional health, and increasing productivity. The Council of Economic Advisers did state that there is a gap in literature and that further understanding is needed on the prevalence of workplace flexibility arrangements and the influence of workers' job satisfaction.

According to Heymann and Earle (2010), of the workers in 192 UN nations that were the focus of their investigation on the status of economic and social rights, only 30% of U.S. workers receive paid sick leave to care for their children, and even fewer for adult care of a sick family member. As a result, approximately 86 million working individuals, half of whom are women, are without workplace support. The United States is the only country that does not offer paid maternity leave, paid parental leave, and payment for new parents, unless it is unpaid leave that is guaranteed through the FMLA of 1993 (Heymann & Earle, 2010).

As of May 2, 2008, only New Jersey; California; and Washington, DC, had voted into law the Family Leave Insurance (FLI), A-873, which is funded completely by workers through a small payroll deduction of \$33 per year. The workers are entitled to

receive two thirds of their salary, or up to \$524.00 a week, to care for a sick relative, an adopted child, or a newborn (“New Jersey Lawmakers Approve Paid Leave for Workers,” 2008). The objective of the current study is to provide information to labor leaders, policymakers, and scholars about the work-family culture in order to facilitate a social change that will benefit not only African American professional women but also all working women who are caretakers.

Nonprofit Leadership and Work-Family Balance

For decades, management styles have been categorized as two contrasting leadership types: transactional and transformational. Each leadership style represents a unique set of leadership behaviors. The goal of transactional leadership is to monitor and control subordinates with rules and laws to achieve the expected outcomes (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007). The goal of transformational leadership is to empower, encourage self-efficacy, motivate, and mobilize people for change (Burns, 2003). Traditionally, a leadership challenge for women who have aspired to executive positions has been the need to adopt masculine qualities to be accepted by their male counterparts.

Today, more women are assuming leadership positions and are displaying more feminine leadership mannerisms and qualities in achieving effective outcomes (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007). However, despite higher education, more work experiences and skills, and even more executive positions, women sometimes hinder their own career development by what Kiamba (2008) called the “success-avoidance” problem--that is, women will sacrifice and avoid success professionally in order to care for their families.

To support this theory, CompassPoint (as cited in Cornelius et al., 2008), a nonprofit service organization that provides consulting, research, and organizational training, surveyed 5,754 entry-, mid-, and senior-level nonprofit staff members. In addition, the research design included six focus groups. The purpose of the study was to gain insight into the disadvantages and benefits of leading a nonprofit organization and to determine whether younger respondents aspired to become EDs, and if not, what might change their minds and what attracted them to charitable work initially. The sample represented different aspect of nonprofit leadership; male (22%) and female (77%); age group ranging from under 20 to over 60, with 42% under the age of 29; and race/ethnicity: 72% European American, 9% African American, 8% Asian, 8% Hispanic American, 1% Middle Eastern, and 2% Native American. Cornelius et al. identified several major indicators:

- One in three (32%) respondents aspired to be an ED one day.
- The higher percentage of respondents who definitely aspired to become EDs comprised people of color.
- Of the respondents who aspired to become EDs, 40% reported that they were ready or would be ready within 5 years.
- The pipeline consisted of many highly educated and committed individuals who were gaining the skills and experiences necessary to successfully lead nonprofit organizations.
- People interested in social change viewed the nonprofit sector as a desirable place to work and to seek future employment.

- Most respondents working in the nonprofit sector felt that they had meaningful and satisfying work.

In addition, two of the top five reasons for not pursuing an ED position were related to the work-life balance. The respondents' average age was over 46, and 84% of the respondents were women. Serious deterrents to not pursuing ED positions were the long working hours, the need to send midnight e-mails, and the need to juggle the pressures of work and family. The respondents indicated that they did not want to compromise their personal lives: instead, they wanted to have meaningful careers and healthy personal lives (Cornelius et al., 2008).

Theories and Models of Work-Family Balance

As women move laterally into senior executive leadership positions, they are bringing their own management styles to their companies, which is why there is a growing trend toward WFB flexibility in the workplace (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007). Work and family roles are no longer considered disconnected domains. Work and family are now concentrated as a bidirectional construct: Work can be viewed as WIF, and family can be viewed as FIW (Culbertson et al., 2010; Goldsmith, 2007; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Iles et al., 2007).

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work-family conflict as

[A] form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect this is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role. (p. 77)

The “Opting Out” Phenomenon

Despite the high participation rate of women in the workforce, the rate of growth has declined slightly, dropping 2% since 2000 (Cheung & Halpern, 2010). As a result of this slight decline, Percheski (2008) conducted a quantitative study to determine whether women were maintaining employment in professional and managerial occupations or were deciding to opt out of their professions to stay home to care for their families. Percheski investigated two cohorts of women who were college-educated professionals and managers. The cohorts comprised college-educated women between the ages of 25 and 54 years who were in professional or managerial occupations. The results were based upon cross-sectional data and provided an aggregate-level picture of how professional women’s employment behaviors varied by cohort. One limitation of the study was that the data could not indicate how the women in the study made decisions or transitioned into and out of the labor force over the life course. Further research is needed to better understand how professional women and their partners make decisions about employment behaviors and family formation. In conclusion, the study did not support an “opting out” phenomenon among the professional women.

Giele (2008) cited three studies (i.e., Steiner, 2006; Stone, 2007; Warner, 2005) supporting the supposition that women who held professional jobs and left their lucrative careers for motherhood actually grieved for their jobs and resented leaving the workforce to become homemakers (Livingston & Judge, 2008; Percheski, 2008).

Emotional and Stress Outcomes

Few researchers have investigated the relationship between the emotion of guilt and the WFB, and even fewer researchers have focused on African American women. Everyone deals with stress and pressure differently, but women are more likely than men to be at risk of stress and depressive symptoms (Cambron, Acitelli, & Pettit, 2009; Dempsey & Sanders, 2010; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Judge et al., 2006). Dempsey and Sanders (2010) cited Wood's assertion that the WFB is a "series of calculated trade-offs from the traditional family life to more intrinsic rewards such as feeling self-worth and a commitment to a cause greater than the self" (p. 450).

Judge et al. (2006) defined guilt as an inward-focused moral emotion associated with what one should have done. Studies have supported the contention that guilt arises from a feeling that one's values or norms have been violated. Livingston and Judge (2008), who identified a gap in the work-family literature related to emotional responses to conflict, conducted a quantitative study to investigate the effect of WFC on the emotional response of guilt and the effects of gender role orientation. The researchers' hypothesized that FIW and WIF are positively related to guilt and that traditional or egalitarian gender role orientation influences FIW and the WIF-guilt relationship. Livingston and Judge's (2008) quantitative research supported two types of gender role orientation. One is the traditional gender role, that is, the household activities are expected to be the sole responsibilities of the woman because she does them better. The other is the egalitarian gender role, in which household activities are shared responsibilities among family members. The researchers suggested that FIW has a

positive correlation to the emotion of feeling guilty and an indirect correlation to work interfering with family. A woman with traditional family values will experience guilt when family activities interfere with work. Women who are involved in egalitarian relationships experience a stronger feeling of guilt when WIF. The researchers concluded that gender role orientation is important when predicting reactions to conflict. The results from the study were based upon a small proportion of participants who had partners and an even smaller proportion of participants who had young children at home.

Although the level for feeling guilty is relatively low, heavy workload and long hours affect mood and trigger a negative mood reaction in female employees because they feel withdrawn from family and social activities, are exhausted, have poor sleep patterns, and experience reduced job satisfaction (Heponiemi et al., 2008; Ilies et al., 2007; Judge et al., 2006; Mitchelson, 2009). This would add to another pressure, namely, the pressure of being a good mother by being a stay-at-home mom, an image that is promoted by the media (Guendouzi, 2006; Ilies et al., 2007).

A woman's self-worth is usually defined by her family or work, whichever she values more. When conflict occurs, she will experience helplessness, which becomes dysfunctional by overwhelming her individuality (Cambron et al., 2009; Guendouzi, 2006). Women who value traditional gender roles are more likely to experience guilt when family obligations interfere with work. In contrast, when the family formation is more egalitarian, women are likely to feel less guilty when work responsibilities interfere with family activities. Women will feel more guilt when FIW (Livingston & Judge, 2008). In addition, when women have high work demands and low control at work, the

result can be an increase in WFC, with the result being health-related issues (Heponiemi et al., 2008).

There has been a gap in the literature to develop work-family policies in all business sectors, including the nonprofit sector. According to Jarrett (2010), senior advisor to the president and chair of the White House Council on Women and Girls stated:

Two thirds of American families with kids are headed by two working parents or a single parent. Women now make up half of all American workers. Women and men are facing demands from work, education demands, childcare and elderly parent care demands, and retirement demands. We need a 21st century workplace to meet the changing needs of the 21st century workforce. (p. 1)

Work-family policies are needed by all working women, including African American women employed in the nonprofit sector, so that they can become better workers and leaders in the business sector (Fisher, Bulger, & Smith, 2009; Livingston & Judge, 2008).

Behavioral Spillover

WFC also has a negative spillover into behavioral manifestation (i.e., withdrawal, anger, and depression) in the home. Such behavioral conflict can result in being fatigued from working long hours or being responsible for a heavy workload (Ilies et al., 2007; Livingston & Judge, 2008). If individuals are having a positive experience at work, it is likely that this behavior will manifest in the home domain, especially if they are able to be involved in stress-reducing activities such as exercising, reading, and working on hobbies (Ilies et al., 2007). Reducing WFC by participating in non-work-related activities

can reduce levels of stress, which have a direct correlation with sickness and absence resulting from depression and other mental health problems (Melchior et al., 2007).

Hecht and Boies (2009) made several contributions to the literature by providing an understanding how nonwork and nonfamily activities such as volunteering, sports, exercising, and so on, can interfere with well-being and behavior at work. The researchers hypothesized that participating in nonwork and nonfamily activities could result in positive spillover behavior at home. The researchers examined the relationship between nonwork and nonfamily participation and well-being such as burnout, somatic complaints, and life satisfaction.

Hecht and Boies (2009) conducted a quantitative study to survey 293 staff and faculty members from a large Canadian university. They argued that volunteering is associated with increased well-being and work satisfaction, Based upon the volunteering experience, it also can create positive or negative emotional and behavioral spillovers. Involvement in sports, recreation, and fitness are associated with improved well-being and positive emotional spillover. The data supported that negative spillover is associated with negative outcomes.

History of African American Working Women

European American and African American women have distinct perspectives on work-family qualities (Giele, 2008; Omori & Smith, 2010). Historically, African American women came from a generation that expected them to focus on their careers (Giele, 2008). It rarely has been an option for African American women to stay at home and take care of their own children after caring for their employers' families on a full-

time basis. Although African American women would have preferred to stay home and care for their own families, they were not given the same option as European American mothers. The limited employment opportunities for African American men made it impossible for their families to survive solely on the males' wages (Collins, 2000; Giele, 2008); the women had to work outside the home.

Even if African American mothers had been given the option to stay at home, they would have wanted to return to work, even on a part-time basis. African American women's household wages are not affected when they have children because they will continue to work outside of the home and be major contributors to the household income (Blair-Loy & DeHart, 2003). When African American homemakers make the deliberate decision not to work, they are taking on a secondary role in building their spouses' egos by allowing them to have the authority and responsibility of being the sole providers for their families (Giele, 2008).

Not all African American women who sacrifice their careers to stay at home are content to do so, partly because of the cultural expectation and pressure from family and peers to work (Collins, 2000; Giele, 2008; Kiamba, 2008). Culturally, African American homemakers see their choice to stay home and care for their families as a purposeful and time-limited decision, whereas European American women see staying home and caring for their families as more of a natural expectation and choice that allows them to either significantly reduce their hours at work or make their timetable to return to work indeterminate (Giele, 2008; Omori & Smith, 2010).

African American Women and the Number of Hours Worked

Omori and Smith (2010) employed quantitative research to study the number of hours that married African American, Hispanic American, and European American women spent on family responsibilities. Two questions were explored: (a) How do family responsibilities affect married women's work hours for difference racial and ethnic groups, and (b) Do family characteristics affect African American, Hispanic American, and European American women differently? The sample excluded women over the age of 65, women who were currently in school or the military, and women who were self-employed. According to Omori and Smith, of the married women, "European American women are the most educated, more likely to have managerial or professional occupations, and have higher family income with their husbands in managerial and professional occupations" (p. 47).

Omori and Smith (2010) concluded that African American women work longer hours (38.4) than European American women (36.2 hours) and Hispanic American women (36.6 hours) and that 40% of European American women, 31% of African American women, and 18.5% of Hispanic American women have earned a college degree. The study further proved that across all racial and ethnic groups, married women in managerial jobs work longer hours than women in professional occupations do. For the African American women in the study, the mean income was \$50,000, of which 45% contributed to the family income. The mean income of the European American women was \$65,160, of which 40% contributed to the family income (Omori & Smith, 2010).

The researchers found that regardless of the women's race or ethnicity, family income and spouses' work hours influenced the women's work hours.

Omori and Smith (2010) reported that for the married European American women, the number of hours worked was significantly affected by children in the family. For the African American and Hispanic American married women, when they decided to continue working, children barely affected their work hours. Finally, the researchers cited three groups of researchers (i.e., John & Shelton, 1997; Kamo & Cohen, 1998; Orbuch & Eyster, 1997) who had examined household division among racial groups. They noted that the African American husbands in the studies spent more hours on household responsibilities, including child care, than the European American husbands, a finding that could have been attributed to a more egalitarian relationship in Black families.

African American Women and Education

Although married African American women are working longer hours (Omori & Smith, 2010), African American women in general are obtaining college and graduate degrees. According to Catalyst (2010a), a nonprofit, New York-based women's research organization, African American women have achieved the following educational levels:

- Bachelor's degrees in 2006-2007: 6.4% (96,968).
- Master's degrees in 2006-2007: 7.4% (44,667).
- Doctoral degrees in 2006-2007: 4% (2,445).

African American Women in the Labor Force

Catalyst (2010b) reported that in 2009, women in general comprised 13.5% (697 of 5,161) of Fortune 500 CEO positions, and 15.2% of memberships on corporate boards.

In 1998, African American women represented 6% (8.4 million) of the labor force, but in 2009, the percentage of African American women participating in the labor force was still 6% (9.3 million). The Catalyst (2010a) report indicated that African American women represent only 5% (2.7 million) of all people who are employed in management and professional occupations.

Gaps in the Literature

Research on the WFB has made considerable progress over the past 25 years (Judge et al., 2006). The body of knowledge has increased with regard to the antecedents of WFB its and consequences, such as that women are more likely than men to be at risk of stress and depressive symptoms (Cambron et al., 2009; Dempsey & Sanders, 2010; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Judge et al., 2006). Women are challenged trying to combine work and parenting responsibilities (Percheski, 2008); and a heavy workload and working long hours can trigger a negative mood reaction, affect sleep patterns, reduce job satisfaction and social activities (Heponiemi et al., 2008; Ilies et al., 2007; Judge et al., 2006; Mitchelson, 2009). The literature has failed to focus on African American women and the WFB. African American professional women have been vastly understudied and underrepresented in studies largely because of the challenges of recruiting and retaining African American women to participate in research.

According to Huang and Coker (2010), African American individuals are apprehensive to participate in research because of distrust and institutional racism, such as in the Tuskegee syphilis study. The Tuskegee syphilis experiment was a clinical study conducted from the early 1950s to 1972 to examine the natural progression of syphilis by

withholding penicillin treatment to poor, rural African American males in Tuskegee, Alabama. In addition to this historical experimental abuse, Huang and Coker identified other reasons why African Americans are hesitant to participate in research, such as the “lack of information and understanding of research studies and informed consent, insufficient recruitment efforts by researchers, social stigma, and financial considerations” (p. 620).

Moynihan (1965) and Murray and Herrnstein (1994) also discussed the unwillingness of African Americans to participate in research. Moynihan negatively reflected African Americans as a race, particularly the African American female head of the household, and Murray and Herrnstein argued that African Americans are less intelligent than the European American and Asian populations, a conclusion that added to the historical mistrust of African Americans toward research. African Americans are likely to participate in a study only if there are perceived benefits to the welfare of their families or communities, and if they are fully informed of the research (Huang & Coker, 2010; Napoles-Springer et al., 2000).

Review of Conceptual Framework and Methods

The conceptual framework of this study provided textual and structural descriptions to understand the essence of the participants' WFB experiences. As previously stated, I used the traditional approach of hermeneutic, phenomenological inquiry in a qualitative research design. According to Creswell (2007), this is the best approach in interviewing individuals who have experienced the phenomenon and then developing a textual description of the experienced phenomenon (i.e., what the

participants experienced) and a structural description (i.e., how they experienced the phenomenon in terms of context or situation). In this study, the exploratory questions were based upon the existing literature of the conceptual WFC phenomenon (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). I used the qualitative, phenomenological approach and relied on interviews to contextualize the phenomenon that facilitated the exploration of the participants' WFB experiences and perspectives.

The majority of the literature reviewed in this study (Culbertson et al., 2010; Goldsmith, 2007; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Hecht & Boies, 2009; Ford et al., 2007; Heponiemi et al., 2008; Judge et al., 2006; Livingston & Judge, 2008; Omori & Smith, 2010; Percheski, 2008; Slan-Jerusalim & Chen, 2009), used quantitative methods to examine the interrelationship between work and family based upon the theoretical foundation of Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) WFC. Although much literature has been written on WFC, a significant gap in the literature exists about the lived experiences of professional African American women in regard to WFC and WFB (Gibson & Abrams, 2003; Huang & Coker, 2010). When the population does not represent the norm, such as women in top leadership positions, or when there is a small representative sample, such as African American nonprofit executive leaders, but represents a gap in literature, a qualitative approach and snowball sampling technique is typically used to reach the target population (Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

However, I found little research that had included African American nonprofit executive women and their lived experiences of WFB. If African American women were included in WFC and WFB research, they represented a very small segment of the study.

Thus, the absence of a conceptual phenomenon examining this population has hindered research because the literature has not captured a holistic approach of African American nonprofit female EDs' perspective of work-family experiences. In addition, if a quantitative research method were used to measure raw numerical data, it would not allow their personalized perspectives. Chapter 3 provides a stronger justification for the usage of a qualitative methodology.

Summary

Chapter 2 provided a historical perspective of women entering and participating in the workforce, particularly African American women who are underrepresented in nonprofit executive leadership positions. More research and new theories are needed to address the gap in the literature to develop strategies to attract and retain African American women in nonprofit executive roles. Because of the limited research pertaining to African American women and the work-life balance, I undertook this study to explore the patterns of the lived phenomena as well as the barriers that have resulted in a paucity of African American women in nonprofit leadership positions. Included in Chapter 3 is a description of the qualitative methodology and phenomenological design of the study on the experiences of African American female leaders in the nonprofit sector.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The intent of the study was to examine the work-life phenomena of African American nonprofit female executives in the northeastern region (New Jersey; New York; Pennsylvania; Delaware; and Washington, DC) of the United States by exploring WFB and WFC. Nonprofit female EDs are committed to many roles, including those of employee, boss, mother, partner, and caretaker, all of which require time, energy, and commitment to fulfill. Conflict occurs when the responsibilities of the work and family roles are incompatible, making the time to be involved in one role more difficult to participate in the other role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The research was conducted to provide information about WFC and the WFB that affects African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States.

- To help nonprofit organizations to acknowledge and recognize the importance of having a family-friendly workplace environment and policies.
- To contribute to the knowledge and body of literature in this area.
- To suggest strategies in balancing work-family roles that can be established in the nonprofit sector.

Although much literature has been written on WFC, a significant gap in the literature exists about the lived experiences of professional African American women in regard to WFC and WFB (Gibson & Abrams, 2003; Huang & Coker, 2010). I sought to compare the findings with past research to provide information to labor leaders, policymakers, and scholars about the work-family culture in order to make social change

that will benefit not only African American women employed in the nonprofit sector but also all working women who are caretakers.

African Americans have been underrepresented in studies because of their distrust about the purpose and objective of research (Gibson & Abrams, 2003; Huang & Coker, 2010). As a result of African Americans' unwillingness to participate in research, included in Chapter 3 are strategies that I used to engage, recruit, and interview the African American women who participated in this study. Chapter 3 also documents the research tradition of phenomenological methodology, research design, population setting and sample, data collection, data analysis, and ethical controls for this study.

Research Design and Approach

I used a qualitative, hermeneutic, phenomenological approach to explore African American female nonprofit EDs' perspectives of work-family issues and balance (McNabb, 2008; Trochim, 2001). The hermeneutic phenomenological design enabled the participants to use their knowledge within the context of their subjective experiences through a one-on-one, audiotaped telephone interviewing approach (Gibson & Abrams, 2003).

As previously stated in Chapter 1, the central research question was asked to determine the degree to which African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States experienced WFC and what strategies they used to balance their work and family responsibilities. The qualitative, hermeneutic, phenomenological interview called for interaction with the participants in which I asked specific open-ended questions. I used probing questions, such as, "Tell me more about

that experience” or “Really, how did that experience make you feel?” to gain a deeper depth of the phenomenon.

Justification of Qualitative and Phenomenological Design

Quantitative research follows a structured, statistical, theory-driven design. The statistical tests include, but are not limited to, measures of tendency and variability, charts and graphs, hypothesis and correlation tests, and regression analysis (McNabb, 2008). Each design (qualitative, quantitative, and combined) supports a variety of methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data. Moreover, they have the common underlying objective of “understanding of the event, circumstance, or phenomenon under study” (McNabb, 2008, p. 99). I gave careful consideration to other research designs, particularly grounded theory and ethnography.

I did not consider grounded theory appropriate because the design is meant to develop an explanatory and predictive theory about social life and expected behavior based upon theoretical sampling and continual comparisons (McNabb, 2008). In addition, although ethnographic research describes and interprets shared values, behaviors, and beliefs, according to Creswell (2007), it involves the analysis of the “culture-sharing group” through an extended observation over time (p. 71). The researcher is completely immersed in the day-to-day activity of the participants. However, I did not conduct this study to develop new theory or to study the behavior and interaction among participants; rather, I conducted it to explore African American nonprofit female EDs’ perspective of work-family experiences. Therefore, a hermeneutic, phenomenological research design was deemed appropriate for this study to understand the meaning of the participants’

experiences of how they managed work and family responsibilities (Creswell, 2007; McNabb, 2008).

Transcendental phenomenology “derives a general description of really feeling understood” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 12) and holds promise as a viable procedure for phenomenological research because of its systematic procedure to analyze data, and strategy for collecting the textual and structural descriptions (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research is best understood when a researcher can identify and understand the participants’ viewpoints and be prepared to deal with the multiple dynamics of recruiting, engaging, and conducting the research with African American women (Gibson & Abrams, 2003).

Qualitative Research and Positive Social Change

This study contributes to the literature by exploring African American women’s perspectives on the WFB. Traditional research methods have attempted to prove or disprove a theory-or research-driven issue and have not really focused on problem-driven research aimed at large systems, such as changing laws or policies. This is partly because researchers from different cultures have a limited understanding of the participants’ culture, which often results in biased interpretations of the phenomena being studied (Huang & Coker, 2010). Therefore, this qualitative, hermeneutic, phenomenological design will provide a deep understanding of the WIF and FIW phenomena of African American nonprofit female EDs and how they manage work and family responsibilities. This study contributes to positive social change by informing the development of policies

to support women in leadership roles and encouraging organizations to recognize the importance of family-friendly policies and flexible work arrangements.

Justification of Interpretive Rather Than Descriptive Phenomenology

Descriptive studies are designed to describe a snapshot in time with a large sample, which is called a cross-sectional design. According to McNabb (2008), descriptive designs “provide a description of an event or define a set of attitudes, opinions, or behaviors that are observed or measured at a given time and environment” (p. 97). Descriptive statistical computations summarize a set of observations and describe them in a sensible and statistical way (McNabb, 2008; Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

In contrast, the researcher and the participants should have a strong connectedness that goes beyond describing or explaining the phenomena (McNabb, 2008; Rubin & Babbie, 2011; Terhune, 2008). Stivers (2000) described interpretive research in the following way:

To me, interpretation entails sense-making: taking a more or less inchoate bundle of events and processes-what might be thought of as a situation or group of situations-and putting a frame around them based on more or less conscious assumptions about what is likely to be important, significant or meaningful.
(p. 132)

The primary goal of interpretive research is to achieve understanding and meaning of human experiences by or bracketing the researchers’ own experiences with the phenomenon to best understand the experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2007; McNabb, 2008).

Sampling Strategy and Participant Selection

Sample

The purposive sample included African American female nonprofit EDs from the northeastern region of the United States. The study was limited to the northeastern region because of the probability that the referring participants would know colleagues within their areas or neighboring communities. Creswell (2007) suggested that the process in a phenomenological study should include collecting information through in-depth interviews with as many as 10 to 12 participants. I interviewed 12 participants who were experiencing the work and family responsibilities. I used a nonprobability snowball sample approach to identify individuals willing to participate in semistructured, in-depth, phenomenological interviews (see Figure 1). After the ninth interview, the data became repetitive, indicating that the study had reached saturation.

According to Rubin and Babbie (2011), the snowball sampling approach “refers to the process of accumulation as each located subject suggest other subjects” (p. 358). The snowball approach was appropriate for this study because obtaining a sample of African American female executives of nonprofit organizations in the northeastern region of the United States who also had caregiver responsibilities at home was difficult. The snowball sampling technique began with a few relevant participants whom I had identified, and the recruitment expanded based upon these participants’ referrals.

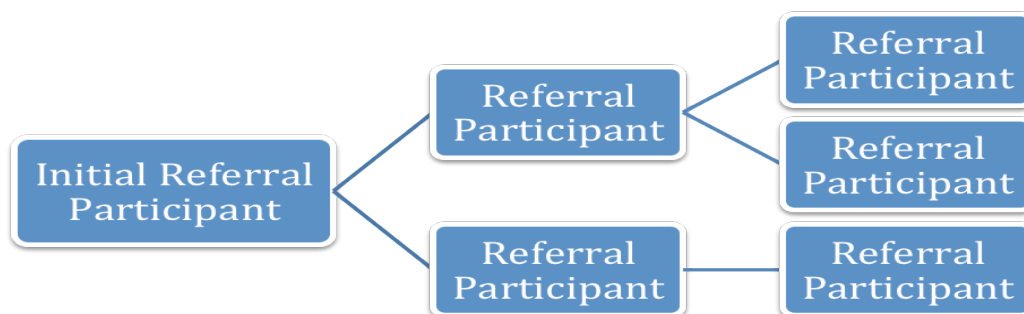


Figure 1. Snowball sampling approach.

Participation Process

The first recruited participant was an African American mother and ED of a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. This participant referred and introduced me to other African American female EDs who met the criteria to participate in the study.

Criteria for Participation

As previously stated, the participants had to meet the following criteria: (a) be female, (b) self-identify as African American, (c) be currently responsible for children under the age of 18 years, (d) be between the ages of 30 and 45 years, (e) be currently employed in full-time positions, (f) be working as EDs of nonprofit organizations in the northeastern region of the United States, (g) agree to participate in an interview session, and (h) provide feedback and share their ideas.

Informed Consent and Ethical Considerations

According to Huang and Coker (2010) regarding the issues influencing African Americans' willingness to participate in research, African Americans have a fear of participating in studies because of their lack of knowledge and understanding about the

informed consent process and feeling that if they consent to participate in research, they are relinquishing their autonomy to be protected against any negative outcomes. In addition, the language in the consent documents may sometimes be too technical, which perpetuates this distrust. African Americans are more likely to participate in research if they understand the benefits of their contribution to the community or to the welfare of the family (Huang & Coker, 2010).

Therefore, as part of the recruitment strategy, the informed consent form and Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval were included. I also made follow-up e-mail contact and/or telephone calls after the consent form had been sent to the referred participants to address any questions and concerns about the study and process (Gibson & Abrams, 2003). If the referred participants did not meet the criteria, I mailed them a letter of thanks and an explanation for their exclusion.

McNabb (2008) outlined four essential components of informed consent: (a) The person has the capacity to consent to participation, (b) the participant is free to give consent, (c) the participant voluntarily agrees to consent, and (d) the consent provides the participants with information and knowledge about the research. The consent form further ensured that the participants understood the benefits to be gained by participating in the study, the purpose and process of the study, how the findings would be used, and their right to confidentiality (Huang & Coker, 2010; McNabb, 2008). In addition, I reiterated the following information to them:

1. The interview would last approximately 60 to 90 minutes.
2. The interview would be audiotaped.

3. They would have an opportunity to review their own transcripts for clarity and accuracy.
4. I would maintain field notes.
5. The importance of their contribution to the study.
6. To guarantee the participants' confidentiality, I did not use their real names or the name of their nonprofits or cities.

The desire to nurture emphatic and authentic relationships with the participants stemmed from the ethics of caring, which has two moral standards: (a) The researcher should “preserve and nurture the valuable relationships they have with others; [b] they must care for those with whom they are related by attending to their particular needs, values, desires, and well-being” (McNabb, 2008, p. 17). Following completion of the study, I will provide the participants with an executive summary of the findings.

Research and Interview Questions

Two central research questions guided the study: (a) To what degree do African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States experience WFC? (b) What strategies do they use to balance their work and family responsibilities? I conducted audiotaped telephone interviews with the participants, and I asked them two central questions: (a) What have you experienced in terms of WFB? (b) In what context or situations have influenced or affected your experiences to balance work and family activities? I asked open-ended probing and follow-up questions to capture the essence of the phenomenon:

1. How do you define WFB?

2. What role (work-family) requires more of your time?
3. To what extent does a nonprofit ED experience WFB?
4. What are the challenges that a nonprofit ED faces in finding WFB?
5. How would you describe your leadership style?
6. What strategies do you use to manage work obligations when your child is sick or has activities such as sports and doctor appointments?
7. What strategies do you use to manage family obligations when you have to travel or attend meetings after work hours?
8. To what extent do your husband/partner and/or other support share in family responsibilities?
9. How do you feel when you don't have enough time for yourself?
10. To what extent does work/family balance impact your behavior when balancing work/family activities?
11. To what extent does work/family balance impact your attitude when balancing work and family activities?
12. How does an ED maintain success in her career and still have work-life balance?
13. What work-family strategies can an ED provide to help future executives achieve WFB?

Data Collection

Interview Techniques

The purpose of the study was to identify strategies based upon the participants' lived experiences that can help women in nonprofit executive leadership positions to better manage their work-family obligations. According to Creswell (2007), the interviewing approach has its challenges, such as requiring the researcher to say little and allow the participants to discuss the meaning of their experiences in their own words. As mentioned previously, because the participants were identified through a snowball approach, they were potentially from anywhere in the northeastern region of the United States. Recruiting 12 participants for the study from the northeastern region of the United States allowed me to expand my outreach of African American female nonprofit EDs. The disadvantage of the one-on-one telephone interviewing approach was that I did not have the opportunity to observe informal, nonverbal communication. Creswell asserted that the one-on-one telephone interview is the best approach to use when access to the participants is prohibited. Each telephone interview was expected to last 60 to 90 minutes.

Field Notes

I used field notes to record my thoughts, reflective passages, reminders, and other subjective reporting while interviewing the participants (McNabb, 2008). I used a predesigned interview protocol form for each interview (see Appendix A) that included the open-ended questions and space between the questions to record field notes, which

were ongoing and ended with the completion of the final report. I transcribed and summarized the field notes for a preliminary interpretive analysis.

Transcriptions and Member Checking

A disinterested third party transcribed the audiotaped telephone interview responses, which were then combined with the field notes to be summarized and organized for coding. At the conclusion of each interview, I asked the participant seven demographic questions. The answers from the interview and anonymous demographic survey were reviewed and reported in the aggregate. I validated the participants' responses through member checks. The individual transcribed interviews were sent to the participants to review them for accuracy and authenticity. No major corrections needed to be incorporated into the final writing of the description.

After transcribing the raw data, I e-mailed each participant the member check transcript with the following message:

Please see attached the member checking document for your review. If you could, review the document and check for any statements that were not clearly stated and/or incorrectly transcribed. Please make your comments in a contrasting color. Thank you for taking the time out to be interviewed and to review and validate the accuracy of the transcript. Please e-mail the document back to me as soon as possible.

Creswell (2007) contended that it is almost impossible for researchers to be completely separated from the text. With this assertion in mind, I did not intend to

interpret the data with my preconceived work-family framework or experiences, but to approach and analyze the participants' interview responses as freshly as possible.

Recording Procedures

For the coding procedures, I used computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). The qualitative software package HyperRESEARCH allowed me to store, organize, and analyze the text materials (Creswell, 2007; Rubin & Babbie, 2011). HyperRESEARCH also allowed me to code, retrieve, and analyze the text. The interviews were coded with fictitious names in alphabetical order in order to provide consistency of the research findings. The findings are based upon the responses to the 13 interview questions and are categorized according to six thematic patterns:

1. Definition of WFB (Interview Question 1).
2. Conflict in achieving WFB (Interview Questions 2, 3, 4, & 8).
3. Leadership style (Interview Question 5).
4. Behavioral and attitude changes (Interview Questions 9, 10, & 11).
5. WFB strategies (Interview Questions 6 & 7).
6. Recommendations (Interview Questions 12 & 13).

Data Storage

The approach to handling and storing the qualitative data included using high-quality tapes for the audio recorder used during the interviews. In addition, all audio and written documents were stored in my locked file cabinet, to which only I had access. All materials relevant to the study will be destroyed after 7 years.

Researcher's Role and Biases

Moustakas's (1994) transcendental phenomenology focuses on one of Husserl's concepts, namely, epoch, or bracketing. Epoche allows researchers to suspend judgment, as much as possible, in order to obtain a fresh perspective about the phenomenon being studied. Transcendental means "in which everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 34); therefore, one of the challenges of conducting a phenomenology study is for a researcher to bracket his or her own background, experiences, history, and prior understanding. Hence, for an interpretative inquiry, it is almost impossible for a researcher to become completely separated from the text (Creswell, 2007).

It was my responsibility to avoid the major sources of biases by conveying the purpose of the study, providing the consent form, and ensuring that any information provided by the participants would remain confidential and that they will not be harmed in any way because of their participation (McNabb, 2008). In qualitative research, when using African Americans as participants, researchers should be aware of and understand their sociocultural context, that is, the needs, values, desires, and well-being of the participants, all of which will help the researchers to capture the totality of the participants' experiences (Gibson & Abrams, 2003; Huang & Coker, 2010; McNabb, 2008; Tillman, 2006). A critical step in researchers' self-examination is to understand their motives for conducting research and whether they can demonstrate authentic concern to improve the African American community as a result of the study (Huang & Coker, 2010). In addition, by identifying commonalities such as race and gender, and by

treating the participants with respect and manners, researchers' connectedness to the participants will increase (Gibson & Abrams, 2003).

An interpretive phenomenology approach requires that researchers have some knowledge and common experiences of the phenomenon experienced by the participants (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) contended that it is almost impossible for researchers to be completely separated from the text. With this assertion in mind, I did not intend to interpret the data with my preconceived work-family framework or experiences, but to approach and analyze the participants' interview responses as freshly as possible. Using the bracketing approach recommended by Moustakas (1994), I was aware of and bracketed my preconceived judgments with the intent of analyzing the responses with an unbiased presence. In addition, member checking gave the participants the opportunity to review the transcripts and to provide clarity and accuracy, feedback that I incorporated into the findings.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I documented the research tradition of phenomenological methodology, research design, population setting and sample, data collection, data analysis, and ethical controls for this study. The hermeneutic, phenomenological design enabled the participants to use their knowledge and their subjective experiences through a one-on-one interviewing approach (Gibson & Abrams, 2003). The one-on-one audiotaped telephone interviews served as conversations using open-ended questions that allowed the participants to express their own perspectives about work-family barriers and work-family balance. I present the findings of the study in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

Introduction

I examined the work-life phenomena of African American nonprofit female EDs working for nonprofit organizations in the northeastern region of the United States (New Jersey; New York; Delaware, Pennsylvania; and Washington, DC) by exploring the ways in which they perceived WFB and WFC. I used a qualitative, hermeneutic, phenomenological design and approach to explore their perspectives of work-family issues and WFB. WFC occurs when the responsibilities of work and family roles are incompatible, subsequently making the time to be involved in one role more difficult to participate in the other role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Key to this study were the experiences and insight offered by the participants on WFB. Equally important were explanations of the techniques and strategies in balancing work-family roles that can be used not just by African American women but also by all women in the nonprofit sector. Two central research questions guided the study: (a) To what degree do African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States experience WFC? (b) What strategies do they use to balance their work and family responsibilities?

Processes for Data Gathering

Interview Context

I employed transcendental phenomenology, which “derives a general description of really feeling understood” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 12). The purpose of the study was to obtain the participants’ perspectives within the context of their subjective experiences by

conducting one-on-one audiotaped telephone interviews. As previously stated, I conducted this qualitative research to collect, examine, and interpret the constructs of the work-family phenomenon.

A nonprobability snowball sampling technique identified 12 participants for the semistructured, in-depth, phenomenological interviews. Although I interviewed all 12 participants, it was evidenced that after the ninth interview, the data became repetitive, indicating that the study had reached saturation. The participants were represented from the following states: four participants from New Jersey, six from Pennsylvania, and two participants from the Washington, DC area. The snowball sampling approach did not identify participants from Delaware and New York. All of the participants were EDs, and two participants also were the founders of their organizations. Interviews commenced after I received IRB approval on September 12, 2011, and continued through October 20, 2011 (IRB approval #09-12-11-0059054).

The initial participant was an ED and founder of a nonprofit organization in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The initial participant referred three prospective participants by providing me with their e-mail addresses and telephone numbers. I introduced the objective of the study by e-mailing each of them. Of the three prospective participants, two responded and expressed an interest in participating. I e-mailed the consent form; the participant provided an electronic signature and returned the form via e-mail. I then e-mailed the participants to schedule the interviews. The participants chose the days and times of the interview sessions. The interviews initially were scheduled to last approximately 60 to 90 minutes, but they averaged 30 to 45 minutes.

Interview Process

Establishing researcher-participant rapport. My objective was to establish an emphatic and authentic relationship with the participants prior to the interviews. I engaged in small talk with them, reiterated the purpose of the study, and explained how this study will contribute to scholarship and to the knowledge African American leaders in the nonprofit sector. The purpose was to establish a connection with the participants and to put them at ease before they began to share their experiences. In addition, I was flexible and scheduled the interviews when they were convenient for the participants. Following completion of the study, the participants will receive an executive summary of the findings. I also collected demographic information (see Appendix B) from the participants prior to asking the interview questions about their ages, highest levels of education, length of time employed in the nonprofit sector, length of time in a senior capacity position, marital status, length of marital status, and ages of minor children (see Table 1).

Minimizing researcher bias. As noted in Chapter 3, because the interpretive phenomenology approach requires that researchers have basic knowledge and common experiences of the phenomenon experienced by the participants, it is almost impossible for researchers to completely separate from the data collected (Creswell, 2007). I asked the interview questions with an unbiased presence in order to obtain fresh perspectives from the participants.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Characteristic	<i>M</i>	Range
Age	41	37-44
Education		
High school	0	
Undergraduate	2	
Master	8	
Doctorate	2	
Postdoctorate	0	
Length of time employed in the NP	11.5	3-20
Length of time working at senior level	8.5	3-15
Marital status		
Single	1	
Married	7	
Living with partner	0	
Separated	1	
Divorce	3	
How many years		
Married	10 years	5-20 years
Separated	1 month	1 month
Divorced	5 years	1 month-9 yrs
Number of children		
Age of children	10 years	2-16 years of age

Interview Techniques

The data collected in the study sought to identify the work-family phenomenon and strategies based upon the participants' experiences in an effort to help women in nonprofit executive leadership positions to manage their work-family obligations more efficaciously. The semistructured interviews held open-ended questions with follow-up probing questions to encourage additional details from the participants. The following interview techniques were detailed in the following process:

Step 1. The first recruited participant was an African American mother of minor children, and the ED and founder of a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Upon completion of the interview, the participant referred and introduced

other participants who met the criteria to participate in the study, which began the snowball sampling approach.

Step 2. *Consent Form:* The informed consent form and Walden University's IRB approval were e-mailed to each participant for review and electron signature.

Step 3. I made a follow-up e-mail and/or telephone call after sending the consent form to the referred participant to address any questions or concerns about the study/process, and schedule date and time for the telephone interview. I reiterated that all sources and data were confidential.

Step 4. I e-mailed or called to remind each participant of the scheduled interview.

Step 5. Demographic and interviewing data collection: One-on-one audiotaped interviews were conducted via the telephone. I asked other open-ended probing and follow-up questions were asked to capture the essence of the phenomenon.

Step 6. I repeated Step 2 by continuing the snowball sampling technique to gain more participants until 12 interviewed participants had been achieved.

Step 7. Transcribe data: Upon the review and signature of the confidentiality agreement from a disinterested third-party transcriber, the data from the audiotape telephone interview were transcribed verbatim in order to capture the lived experience from the participants' perspective. The answers from the audiotaped interviews and information from the field notes were summarized and organized for coding.

Field notes and reflections: Directly after each interview, I used a predesigned interview protocol form to record notes, reminders, and reflective passages that I could not capture during the interviews. I coded the participants' names alphabetically using

pseudonyms. I transcribed the field notes and stored them on my personal computer, which is password protected.

Step 8. Member checking: After transcribing the raw data, I e-mailed each participant the member check transcript with the following message:

Please see attached the member checking document for your review. If you could, review the document and check for any statements that were not clearly stated and/or incorrectly transcribed. Please make your comments in a contrasting color. Thank you for taking the time out to be interviewed and to review and validate the accuracy of the transcript. Please e-mail the document back to me as soon as possible.

No major corrections needed to be incorporated into the final writing of the description.

Step 9. Processing data: To better organize and code the data, I used CAQDAS. I used the qualitative software package, HyperRESEARCH, to store, organize, and analyze the text materials (Creswell, 2007; Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The HyperRESEARCH allowed me to code, retrieve, and conduct an analysis of the text. Appendix C provides the master codes List that resulted from the interviews. As stated, I coded the interviews anonymously for privacy by providing the participants with pseudonyms in alphabetical order in order to provide consistency of the research findings.

Step 10. I sent e-mail thank-you notes to all of the participants for their participation in the study.

Central Research and Interview Questions

Two central research questions guided the study: (a) To what degree do African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States experience WFC? (b) What strategies do they use to balance their work and family responsibilities? I conducted audiotaped telephone interviews with the participants, and I asked them two central questions: (a) What have you experienced in terms of WFB? (b) In what context or situations have influenced or affected your experiences to balance work and family activities? I asked open-ended probing and follow-up questions to capture the essence of the phenomenon:

1. How do you define WFB?
2. What role (work-family) requires more of your time?
3. To what extent does a nonprofit ED experience WFB?
4. What are the challenges that a nonprofit ED faces in finding WFB?
5. How would you describe your leadership style?
6. What strategies do you use to manage work obligations when your child is sick or has activities such as sports and doctor appointments?
7. What strategies do you use to manage family obligations when you have to travel or attend meetings after work hours?
8. To what extent do your husband/partner and/or other support share in family responsibilities?
9. How do you feel when you don't have enough time for yourself?

10. To what extent does work/family balance impact your behavior when balancing work/family activities?
11. To what extent does work/family balance impact your attitude when balancing work and family activities?
12. How does an ED maintain success in her career and still have work-life balance?
13. What work-family strategies can an ED provide to help future executives achieve WFB?

Findings

Defining Work-Family Balance

This question referred to the participants' definition of WFB. Table 2 identifies the participants' responses and frequencies to the interview question.

Table 2

Responses to Interview Question 1

Question: How do you define WFB?	
Code	Frequency
Accommodate family obligations	2
Enjoying your family while doing a good job at work	1
Balance of responsibilities between family and work activities	12
Plan out your day	1
Prioritize	1
Time management	2

Conflict in Achieving WFB

Interview Questions 2, 3, 4, and 8 referred to the participants' lived experiences, conflicts, and perspectives on WFB. Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 identify the participants' responses and frequencies to the interview questions.

Table 3

Responses to Interview Question 2

Question: What role (work-family) requires more of your time?	
Code	Frequency
Family requires more of my time	8
Both family and work requires my time equally	2
Work requires more of my time	2

Table 4

Responses to Interview Question 3

Question: To what extent does a non-profit ED experience WFB?	
Code	Frequency
Minimum WFB is experienced	6
Imbalance of WFB is experienced	5
Balance can be achieved if activities are prioritized	3
There is no WFB	1
Work and family responsibilities overlap	2
Overwhelmed with both work-family responsibilities	2

Table 5

Responses to Interview Question 4

Question: What are the challenges that a nonprofit ED faces in finding WFB?	
Code	Frequency
High turn-over rate at work	1
Minimum work-family incentives	1
Establishing a process so you are not overwhelmed	1
Managing board members	2
Board development	1
Maintaining a passion for your work	1
Accommodating family obligations	5
Finding time for yourself	2
Being tired all the time	1

Table 6

Responses to Interview Question 8

Question: To what extent does your husband/partner and/or other support share in family responsibilities?	
Code	Frequency
Husband helps with family obligations	8
I am responsible for family obligations	2
Family members	4

Leadership Style

Interview Question 5 referred to how the participants described their leadership styles. Table 7 identifies the participants' responses and frequencies to the interview question.

Table 7

Responses to Interview Question 5

Question: How would you describe your leadership style?	
Code	Frequency
Team Player	7
Motivator	2
Leadership style changes depending on situation	2
Delegator	3
Charismatic	1
Authoritative	2
Trainer	1
Participative	1

Behavioral and Attitude Changes in Balancing Work-Family Obligations

Interview Questions 9, 10, and 11 referred to the participants' behavior and attitude related to WFB. Tables 8, 9, and 10 identify the participants' responses and frequencies to the interview questions.

Table 8

Responses to Interview Question 9

Question: How do you feel when you don't have enough time for yourself?	
Code	Frequency
Frustrated	2
Stressed	1
Overwhelmed	4
Tired	2
Unproductive	1
Lack of patience	2
Irritated	2
Get sick	2
Forget about self	1

Table 9

Responses to Interview Question 10

Question: To what extent does WFB impact your behavior when balancing work-family activities	
Code	Frequency
Short temper	2
Irritable	6
Don't let it change my behavior	3
Don't want to be bothered	2
Evil	1

Table 10

Responses to Interview Question 11

Question: To what extent does WFB impact your attitude when balancing work and family activities?	
Code	Frequency
Short temper	2
Relaxed	1
Frustrated	3
Don't let it change my attitude	3
Confident and conquering	1
Don't want to be bothered	2

Work-Family Strategies

Interview Questions 6 and 7 referred to the participants' strategies to balance work and family responsibilities. Table 11 and 12 identify the participants' responses and frequencies to the interview questions.

Table 11

Responses to Interview Question 6

Question: What strategies do you use to manage work obligations when your child is sick or has activities such as sports and doctor appointments?	
Code	Frequency
Have a plan	7
Bring children to work	3
Time management	3
Being organized	1
Prepare in advance	2
Balance by prioritizing	2
Delegate	2
Work from home	3
Use technology to balance	2

Table 12

Responses to Interview Question 7

Question: What strategies do you use to manage family obligations when you have to travel or attend meetings after work hours?	
Code	Frequency
Husband help with family obligations	4
Bring children to work	2
Hired caregiver	1
Children travel with parent	1
Family member assist with responsibilities	7

Recommendations to Balance Work-Family Activities

Interview Questions 12 and 13 referred to suggested recommendations to balance work and family activities. Tables 13 and 14 identify the participants' responses and frequencies to the interview questions.

Table 13

Responses to Interview Question 12

Question: How does an ED maintain success in her career and still have WFB?	
Code	Frequency
Time management	4
Being organized	2
Bring children to work	2
Delegate	2
Balance by prioritizing	2
Build a strong team	2
Self-care	2

Table 14

Responses to Interview Question 13

Question: What work-family strategies can an ED provide to help future executives achieve WFB?	
Code	Frequency
Network with other women with children	3
Have a mentor	1
Work from home	2
Flex schedule	2
Communicate expectations	2
Self care	2
Use technology to balance	2
Exercise	2
Have a passion for your work	3
Delegate	2

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings are based upon the responses to the 13 interview questions and are categorized according to six thematic patterns:

1. Definition of WFB (Interview Question 1).
1. Conflict in achieving WFB (Interview Questions 2, 3, 4, & 8).
2. Leadership style (Interview Question 5)
3. Behavioral and attitude changes (Interview Questions 9, 10, & 11)
4. WFB strategies (Interview Questions 6 & 7).

5. Recommendations (Interview Questions 12 & 13)

To protect the anonymity of the respondents, I identified them with pseudonyms (in alphabetic order):

Participant 1: Audrey Anderson.

Participant 2: Beverly Butler.

Participant 3: Carol Coleman .

Participant 4: Denise Daniels .

Participant 5: Ethel Eastman.

Participant 6: Fran Franklin.

Participant 7: Grace Goodman.

Participant 8: Helen Harris.

Participant 9: Iris Ice.

Participant 10: Jessica Jackson.

Participant 11: Kate Kamp.

Participant 12: Lillian Lawrence.

Defining WFB

Question 1: How do you define WFB? The purpose for this question was to obtain the participants' perspectives of how they defined WFB. All of the participants defined WFB as finding a balance between work and family responsibilities, especially managing their time to accommodate family activities. In addition to defining WFB as balancing work and family activities, Carol Coleman, Fran Franklin, and Grace Goodman

added that WFB means time management, prioritizing, planning out the day, and accommodating family obligations.

Conflict in Achieving WFB

Question 2: What role (work-family) requires more of your time? Eight participants stated that family required more of their time. Audrey Anderson shared a very similar viewpoint of most of the participants by noting that “family requires more of my time, because I cannot clock out, the tasks are not optional.” Two participants stated that family and work required their time equally, and two participants stated that work required more of their time.

Question 3: To what extent does a nonprofit ED experience WFB? The purpose for this question was to obtain their perspectives to what degree they experienced WFB. The majority of the participants stated that there was minimal or no balance in achieving WFB. They expressed not having enough time in the day to get everything completed. For example, Audrey Anderson and Lillian Lawrence stated that it is a major challenge for the nonprofit EDs to find a balance because the nonprofit industry is stressful and demanding. Audrey Anderson stated that not many workplace incentives exist to help balance work and family life. However, Kate Kemp and Jessica Jackson stated that balance could be achieved if the EDs prioritized their activities.

Audrey further stated that there were times when she did not have the flexibility to reschedule family obligations, such as attending school performances and teacher-parent conferences. Beverly Butler stated that if a volunteer does not complete a task, it

falls back on the ED to get it done, so that “when a normal day ends, yours continue, because you are balancing your work, someone’s else work, and your family.”

Question 4: What are the challenges that a nonprofit ED faces in finding WFB? This question enabled the participants to identify the challenges they experienced in finding WFB. The responses to the question fell into two categories: challenges related to the nonprofit sector and challenges that affected the EDs.

The challenges related to the nonprofit sector to find WFB were identified as high turnover in staff and volunteers, minimal work-family incentives to help balance work and family obligations, and board management and development. Jessica Jackson stated, “We have a new board chair every year, so when our year feels like it is winding down, it is time to start up again with the new incoming chair person and board members.”

The participants identified challenges related to themselves in finding WFB, such as finding very little time for themselves, being exhausted all the time, and trying to accommodate family obligations. Beverly Butler stated that the challenge the ED faces is finding the balance between work and family.

Question 8: To what extent does your husband/partner and/or other support share in family responsibilities? This question was asked to determine whether the participants were receiving any help in balancing family obligations. Responses identified eight participants who stated that their husbands assisted with family obligations and two who identified family members and friends as providing support in assisting with their WFB. Denise Daniels stated that good friends and family members were willing to share the household responsibilities, including caring for the dog. Denise

said that it was a little easier before her separation because her husband would step in and make sure that everything was taken care of; however, Denise said she had a core of good friends and family members who stepped in to share the household activities after she separated from her husband. Helen Harris stated that she could not manage her nonprofit without the support of her husband to get the children off the bus, start homework, and prepare meals.

Two participants stated that they were responsible for family obligations. For example, Audrey Anderson stated that her husband's role was provider, and her role was caretaker of the family. Audrey has been married for 9 years and stated that their arrangement worked well for them. In addition to working for the nonprofit organization, of which she is the founder and ED, Audrey has three retail stores that her husband manages. Audrey said that most of the children's activities fall on a Saturday and that she is responsible for arranging and managing their activities.

Leadership

Question 5: How would you describe your leadership style? This question was asked to determine the participants' leadership style as either transactional or transformational and how they viewed themselves as leaders in the nonprofit sector. Seven participants saw themselves as team players. Carol Coleman said, "I jump in with everyone else to get a task done." The other participants who shared the same leadership style as a team player expressed that they tried to create a team approach by macromanaging and delegating tasks.

However, two participants stated that their leadership styles would change according to the situation and task. For example, Jessica Jackson stated that she hires individuals who are motivated and self-sufficient, and who need little managing in getting the task completed. She stated that she is not a micromanager, but very driven toward the goals. Jessica stated, “Right now the goal is funding, so I am a transactional leader when it comes to funding, but a transformational leader on the approach in how they go after the funding.”

Behavioral and Attitude Changes

Question 9: How do you feel when you don’t get enough time for yourself?

This question referred to how the participants felt about to WFB. All of the participants identified having negative feelings or attitudes when they did not get enough time for themselves. The participants described their feelings as overwhelmed, frustrated, stressed, tired, unproductive, lack of patience, and irritated. Audrey Anderson stated that she has been fully committed to her nonprofit for the past several years and is at home with the children on the weekends. Audrey stated that her husband does not understand her need for “me time” because she is at “home” on the weekends with the children, which he considers a stress-free obligation. Ethel Eastman felt accustomed to being tired all the time. She stated, “It’s been going on so long [imbalanced schedule] that I think after a while your body becomes accustom to it and you do what you have to do.”

The majority of the participants acknowledged the importance of having time for themselves, and they identified strategies that they used when they were feeling out of balance. Denise Daniels and Iris Ice stated that they would call up friends to spend time

together, such as getting a massage or going to a show. Iris Ice stated that she got her inspiration at the hair salon, where she enjoys the conversation with the girls. Fran Franklin admitting taking mini spa vacations to rejuvenate her energy. Fran said, “I was frustrated and needed to get away, so I got away, which was very productive, and now I feel like I can go another 2 months.”

Question 10: To what extent does WFB impact your behavior when balancing work-family activities? This question referred to the participants’ behavior related to WFB. Six participants stated that they felt irritable, were short tempered with their children and family, and did not want to be bothered. Three participants stated that they did not let their negative behavior affect their work and family. Grace Goodman stated that although she could get really cranky, she no longer took it out on her children. She had to learn not to do that because she recognized that it was not her children’s fault that she was not organized enough to complete deadlines. She had to learn to leave work responsibilities in the workplace rather than bring them home.

Question 11: To what extent does WFB impact your attitude when balancing work and family activities? This question was similar to Question 10 in that the participants identified the positive and negative impacts of their attitude. For example, while balancing work and family activities, seven participants stated that their attitude was short tempered, frustrated, and did not want to be bother; two participants stated that they did not let their work and family activities affect their attitude negatively, and three participants stated that while balancing work and family, their attitude was relaxed, they felt confident, and had a conquering attitude.

WFB Strategies

Question 6: What strategies do you use to manage work obligations when your child is sick or has activities such as sports and doctor appointments? Seven participants agreed that having a plan as well as a backup plan was necessary to balance work obligations. Audrey Anderson's daughter has a chronic disease and sometimes needs emergency care at any time. Although no strategies are in place when this occurs, she did state that another team member at work can answer any questions or manage volunteers when she cannot physically be on site. Audrey stated that she would just be out of her work role for that day.

Helen Harris stated that other than caring for her sick daughter, she manages by using a calendar. Helen stated she has calendars all over the place, noting that "I have a calendar on my desk, my planner, my phone, and a calendar at home to schedule all activities." Other strategies identified were working from home, delegating work activities, using technology such as smart phones and e-calendars, and bringing the children to work.

Question 7: What strategies do you use to manage family obligations when you have to travel or attend meetings after work hours? Eleven stated that their husbands and/or other family members assisted with family responsibilities, and one participant stated they she had hired caregiver to assist her. Audrey Anderson and Denise Daniels stated that if they had to attend meetings after hours or on weekends, they would bring their children to work so that they could spend some quality time with them, and

Beverly Butler stated that when her daughter was not in school, she would arrange for her to travel with her.

WFB Recommendations

Question 12: How does an ED maintain success in her career and still have WFB? This question suggested recommendations to balance work and family activities. For nonprofit EDs to maintain their careers and balance work and family responsibilities, the participants provided several suggestions, including understanding the importance of time management, being organized, delegating work activities, prioritizing work and family activities, building a strong team of support at work and home, bringing the children to work when possible, and taking time to care for themselves. Ethel Eastman stated, “If my home life becomes affected by my work, especially where they are unhappy, I would find another job.” Fran Franklin stated something very similar. Fran’s perspective regarding balancing family was to reevaluate the family’s needs. She stated that executives get so caught up in being successful that they miss the little things that their families needed.

Denise Daniels suggested that building a strong team would aid in managing the tasks at work, even if it meant outreaching to volunteers, such as senior and college students, who were seeking volunteer opportunities. However, Carol Coleman used an analogy of a bicycle in describing the importance of building a strong team:

You can try to do things on your own, but I use the example of a bicycle. You can try and ride the bicycle, but you can’t ride it if the chain is broken, or the tire does not have air in it. If some other mechanism on the bicycle is not running smoothly

the entire system of the bicycle is not going to function well. The person can sit and peddle until they are exhausted, but the bike has to be functioning properly.

Question 13: What work-family strategies can an ED provide to help future executives achieve WFB? In response to Question 13, the participants provided various work-family strategies for future EDs, some of which were identified in Question 12. However, additional suggestions included networking with other women with children, having a mentor, using flex schedules, communicating expectations to staff and family, exercising, and having a passion for the work. Lillian Lawrence stated, "An ED should be certain that nonprofit work is really what you want to do as a career; otherwise it will feel like you are robbing from your family to go to work." Ethel Eastman stated that the work should not define the person and what goes on in the household. Finally, Fran Franklin said that her perspective of balance was to have a holistic approach, health and wellness, being connected with the family, and continuing success at work.

Conclusion

The study was based upon a phenomenological design, which enabled the participants to convey their subjective experiences through one-on-one audiotaped telephone interviews. The interview was framed as a conversational approach with two central questions, followed by interview and probing questions, to capture the participants' lived experiences and perspectives on WFB. In Chapter 5, I provide a summary, conclusion, and recommendations based upon the six themes that emerged. I also interpret how the findings can influence and have positive social change for African American female EDs in the nonprofit sector.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Study Overview

I conducted this study because of the insufficient research on the complexities of African American female EDs in the nonprofit sector, particularly in relation to WFB. As previously stated, the nonprofit sector employs more African American women than do either government agencies or for-profit businesses (R. P. Halpern, 2006), and African American women are working more hours per week (38.4) than European American (36.4) and Hispanic American (36.6) women (Omori & Smith, 2010).

The United States is experiencing a demographic change in the workforce as European American male Baby Boomers begin to retire from the nonprofit sector (Ilies et al., 2007; Lee & Mather, 2009). As more women continue to enter the workforce and change the demographic landscape, much can be learned from the experiences of African American women who have succeeded in the nonprofit sector. There is a need to explore and understand WFB in an effort to retain not just African American women but all women in the workforce and allow them to maintain a healthy WFB.

I employed a traditional approach of hermeneutic, phenomenological inquiry in a qualitative research design to describe the common lived experiences of the participants as they experienced work-family issues and balance (McNabb, 2008; Trochim, 2001). The qualitative, hermeneutic, phenomenological design enabled the participants from the northeastern region of the United States to use their knowledge within the context of their subjective experiences through a one-on-one audiotaped telephone interview. I asked

each participant specific-ended interviewing questions and open-ended probing questions to capture the essence of the phenomenon.

Interpretation of the Findings

Research Question 1: To what degree do African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States experience WFC?

Interview Question 1: How do you define WFB?

To understand WFB, WFC also must be understood and defined. As noted previously, WFC is based upon the conflict theory of Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), who postulated that conflict occurs when

(a) time devoted to the requirements of one role makes it difficult to fulfill the requirements of the other, (b) strain from participation in one role makes it difficult to fulfill the requirements of the other, or (c) specific behaviors required by one role make it difficult to fulfill the requirements of the other. (p. 76)

All of the participants overwhelmingly defined WFB as finding a balance between work and family activities by accommodating family obligations, prioritizing, and understanding time management.

Interview Question 2: What role (work-family) requires more of your time?

Interview Question 3: To what extent does a nonprofit ED experience WFB?

Interview Question 4: What are the challenges that a nonprofit ED faces in finding WFB?

Interview Question 8: To what extent do your husband/partner and/or other support share in family responsibilities?

Eight participants indicated that family obligations required more of their time, two stated that work required more of their time, and two stated that work and family obligations required their time equally. This finding supports the theory that African American professional women in management and higher positions find it difficult to combine their work-family responsibilities because of the time constraints at work (Judge et al., 2006). The findings also support the conceptual framework that WIF more with FIW.

As stated in the literature review, Allen and Boykin's (1992) theory posits that all cultural experiences provide a baseline for the development of cognitive learning and behaviors. Collins (2000) also referred to the concept of intersectionality, an "analysis claiming that systems of race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, and age form mutually constructing features of social organization, which shape Black women's experiences and, in turn, are shaped by Black women" (p. 299).

Historically, African American women come from a generation that expected them to focus on their careers (Giele, 2008) because higher education meant a higher socioeconomic status. As stated in Chapter 2, African American women rarely have had the option to stay at home and take care of their own children after caring for their employers' families on a full-time basis. Although they would have preferred to stay home and care for their own families, they were not given the same option because the limited employment opportunities for African American men made it impossible for their families to survive solely on the males' wages (Collins, 2000; Giele, 2008); the women had to work outside the home. Therefore, although African Americans are continuing to

focus on their careers by obtaining higher education, working longer hours, and continuing to be the primary caregivers for their children, the findings show that they are continue to struggle to find a balance in their work and family lives.

The challenges related in the nonprofit sector to find WFB emerged in two categories. The participants expressed high turnover in staff and volunteers in the nonprofit sector, minimal work-family incentives to help balance work and family obligations, and board management and development. The finding of minimal work-family incentives supports the assertion of Council of Economic Advisers (2010) that over one half of employers allow at least a few of their workers to periodically change to flextime schedules to accommodate family issues.

My study reflected that less than one third of full-time workers are given the opportunity to have flexible hours; therefore, approximately 86 million working individuals, half of whom are women, are without workplace support. Although the majority of the participants acknowledged receiving support from their husbands and/or family members, they indicated that they were tired and had little time for themselves. Omori and Smith (2010) reported that for married European American women, the number of hours worked is significantly affected by children in the family. However, for African American and Hispanic American married women, when they decide to continue working, children barely affect their work hours because they do not have the option of decreasing their work hours or staying home to care for their families. Researchers (John & Shelton, 1997; Kamo & Cohen, 1998; Orbuch & Eyster, 1997) have conducted studies examining household division among racial groups. They noted that the African

American husbands in the studies spent more hours on household responsibilities, including child care, than the European American husbands did, a finding that could have been attributed to a more egalitarian relationship in Black families.

Interview Question 5: How would you describe your leadership style? This question was asked to determine the participants' leadership style as either transactional or transformational, and how they viewed themselves as nonprofit leaders. As stated in Chapter 2, a demographic paradigm shift in the labor force is occurring. European American male Baby Boomers are retiring from the sector (Ilies et al., 2007; Lee & Mather, 2009) and because women are the majority participants in the labor force, it is likely that women will soon occupy more executive positions (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009).

As women move into executive positions, they will bring their own management styles to their organizations (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007). Seven participants identified their transformational leadership style as that of team player. They indicated that they would jump in and do whatever was necessary to complete a task; however, three of the seven participants stated that they would delegate work responsibilities and would not micromanage the task. Two participants also indicated that their leadership styles would fluctuate depending on the situations. Two participants stated that their leadership style was definitely authoritative. Further research should be conducted to determine whether being a team player and sharing the work responsibilities with subordinate can be a contributing factor to WFC.

Interview Question 9: How do you feel when you don't have enough time for yourself?

Interview Question 10: To what extent does work/family balance impact your behavior when balancing work/family activities?

Interview Question 11: To what extent does work/family balance impact your attitude when balancing work and family activities?

This series of questions referred to the participants' behavior and attitude related to WFB. The majority of the participants addressed these questions from the perspective of not having WFB rather than address how they felt or behaved and whether work and family obligations were balanced.

Women are more likely than men to be at risk of stress and depressive symptoms (Cambron et al., 2009; Dempsey & Sanders, 2010; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Judge et al., 2006). The findings from this study support this assertion because the women described their feelings as frustrated, stressed, tired, unproductive, irritated, and lack of patience. In addition, researchers have found that a heavy workload and long hours affect mood and trigger a negative mood reaction in female employees because they feel withdrawn from family and social activities, are exhausted, have poor sleep patterns, and experience reduced job satisfaction (Heponiemi et al., 2008; Ilies et al., 2007; Judge et al., 2006; Mitchelson, 2009).

The participants stated that not having WFB left them feeling short tempered, irritated, and wanting to disconnect from the family. Another theory mentioned by Cambron et al. (2009) and Guendouzi (2006) claims that a woman's self-worth is usually

defined by her family or work, whichever she values more, and that when conflict occurs, she will experience helplessness, which becomes dysfunctional by overwhelming her individuality. Three participants stated that when they felt stressed and overwhelmed by work, they did not allow it to negatively impact their family lives. They further stated that they could separate and/or had learned to leave their work experiences in the workplace. These participants contradicted the theories of Culbertson et al. (2010) and Goldsmith (2007) supporting the contention that WFC has a negative spillover behavior effect in the home if the women are stressed at work and have high family demands at home. Researchers (Goldsmith, 2007; Ilies et al., 2007; Livingston & Judge, 2008; Melchior et al., 2007), also have stated that WFC could be the result of stress and fatigue, both of which influence women's mood and emotional state in the home.

Research Question 2: What strategies do they use to balance their work and family responsibilities?

Interview Question 6: What strategies do you use to manage work obligations when your child is sick or has activities such as sports and doctor appointments?

Interview Question 7: What strategies do you use to manage family obligations when you have to travel or attend meetings after work hours?

Questions 6 and 7 referred to strategies used to balance work and family responsibilities. More strategies for balancing work obligations emerged:

- Have a plan.
- Bring child to work.
- Understand time management.

- Be organized.
- Prepare in advance.
- Prioritize.
- Delegate.
- Work from home.
- Use technology.

The participants identified fewer strategies to help balance family obligations:

- Family members to assist with responsibilities.
- Husbands help with obligations.
- Bring children to work.
- Hire caregiver.
- Children travel with participant.

As mentioned in the literature review, African American professional women are working longer hours and find it difficult to combine their work-family responsibilities because of the time limitations at work (Heponiemi et al., 2008; Judge et al., 2006). This explanation may be the rationale for the participants having identified more strategies to balance work obligations than family obligations.

Interview Question 12: How does an ED maintain success in her career and still have work-life balance?

Interview Question 13: What work-family strategies can an ED provide to help future executives achieve WFB?

As stated Chapter 2, the CompassPoint study surveyed 5,754 nonprofit staff members to gain insight into the disadvantages and benefits of leading a nonprofit organization and to determine whether younger respondents aspired to become EDs, and if not, what might change their minds and what attracted them to charitable work initially. The CompassPoint research data found that only one in three respondents aspired to be an ED and that those respondents were people of color.

Two of the top five reasons the respondents gave for not pursuing an ED position in the CompassPoint study were related to work-life balance. The respondents indicated that they did not want to compromise their personal lives; instead, they wanted to have meaningful careers and healthy personal lives. Therefore, the findings in this study are essential to identify factors that can contribute to the success of nonprofit ED and aspiring EDs.

When the participants were asked how EDs can maintain success in their careers and still have WFB, the participants suggested that understanding time management, organizing, prioritizing, delegating, building a strong team, bringing children to work, and taking time for themselves were key elements to their success while balancing work and family obligations. However, when asked to identify work-family strategies to help future executives achieve WFB, the participants' suggestions were vastly different from what they had previously identified as key success factors. The participants recommendations that future EDs network with other women with children, have a mentor, work from home, use technology to balance priorities, communicate expectations

at home and work, utilize flex schedule, exercise, delegate, and have a passion for the work.

Implications for Social Change

As this research supported, more women than men are employed in the labor force; African American women are working longer hours, they are dual earners and, in some cases, the only source supporting the household; and they are the primary caregivers of their children (Slan-Jerusalim & Chen, 2009). The United States is the only industrialized country that does not offer paid maternity leave, paid parental leave, and payment for new parents, unless it is unpaid leave that is guaranteed through the FMLA of 1993 (Heymann & Earle, 2010). Moreover, only half of employers allow at least a few of their workers to periodically change to flextime schedules to accommodate family issues, and less than one third of full-time workers are given the opportunity to have flexible hours. Therefore, this study is important to social change in contributing to the literature, supporting policy changes, and identifying strategies not only African American in the nonprofit sector can use but all working women who are caregivers of minor children.

Contribution to the Literature

As already stated, although many studies have been conducted on the topics of women in management and WFB, little known about African American female EDs and their perspectives of WFB (Cheung & Halpern, 2010; Chugh & Sahgal, 2007; Jenner & Ferguson, 2009; Percheski, 2008). Therefore, this study will contribute to current

literature on WFB because it provides the perspective of the lived experiences of African American female nonprofit EDs.

Work-Family Policy Change

This study will contribute to positive social change by informing the development of policies to support women in leadership roles and encourage organizations to recognize the importance of family-friendly policies and flexible work arrangements. New Jersey; California; and Washington, DC, have already acknowledged the need for a family-friendly policy and have voted into law the FLI. However, although this is a start, the FLI is completely funded by the workers, not by employers, through a small payroll deduction. Therefore, the objective this study was to provide labor leaders, policymakers, and scholars with insight into the work-family culture in order to facilitate a social change that will benefit not only African American professional women but also other working women who are caretakers.

Recommendations for Action

This phenomenological study presented the lived work-family experiences of 12 African American female EDs in the nonprofit sector in the northeastern region of the United States. In order to retain not only African American female EDs in the nonprofit sector but also all women and aspiring executives, policymakers, and nonprofit leaders need to examine work-family strategies to help women to reach a healthy balance in meeting their work and family obligations.

The findings suggest that EDs in the nonprofit sector are overwhelmed and stressed trying to establish a balance between work and family domains. There is a need

to disseminate the findings from this study and to fill the gap in developing work-family policies in all business sectors. As stated in the literature review, if individuals are having a positive experience at work, it is likely that this behavior will manifest in the home domain, especially if they are able to be involved in stress-reducing activities such as exercising, reading, and working on hobbies (Ilies et al., 2007). Reducing WFC by participating in non-work-related activities can reduce levels of stress, which have a direct correlation with sickness and absence resulting from depression and other mental health problems (Melchior et al., 2007). In addition, as suggested in this study, women should connect and network with other women who are caregivers, utilize flex schedules, and build a strong network support to develop a WFB. Therefore, stakeholders include public and private leaders, policymakers, and any woman who is seeking to have WFB.

The plan of action is to provide an executive summary of the findings and disseminate the summary to the 12 participants who shared their work and family experiences. These women may then share the findings with their organizations and nonprofit communities. I also intend to disseminate the findings in peer-reviewed journal articles. Through publication, information about WFC and WFB will reach and inform a wider audience.

Recommendation for Further Study

As in any phenomenology study, my study had several limitations: (a) The study was limited only to African American female EDs employed in the nonprofit sector; (b) the interviews could not grasp and depict all WFB issues in a single interview; (c) the sample was homogeneous, comprised of African American female EDs; (d) the

participants' leadership styles could have affected their ability to balance WFC; (e) the demographic was limited to African American female nonprofit EDs; (f) the study was limited to the northeastern region of the United States; and (g) this study was limited to working women between the ages of 30 and 45 years.

Additional research in understanding not only African American women but all female nonprofit EDs' perspectives on WFB will broaden the scope of work-family strategies and initiatives. As more women enter the workforce, organizations need to tackle work-family policies that will reduce conflict and enhance a healthy balance to attract and retain executives in the nonprofit sector.

Finally, to contribute to the literature, qualitative and quantitative researchers should continue to examine African American women's perspectives on WFB. Further research should include African American female EDs in the nonprofit sector who are responsible not only for minor children but also elder care in order to bring awareness and alternative policies that will promote women in balancing work and family responsibilities.

Reflection

Personal Biases and Preconceived Ideas

The study was based upon the assumption that the women in the study were experiencing FIW and/or WIF conflict. The results confirmed this to be true. As in any study, some personal biases existed. I knew that as the mother of minor children, it was likely that some of my participants also were the primary caretaker of young children. However, I did not have any preconceived ideas about how other nonprofit professional

women were managing their work and family obligations, because I do not have many African American female nonprofit EDs acquaintances in my scope of network. Therefore, the snowball sampling approach was the best approach for this study because it allowed me to meet and interview women who expressed a passion to make a difference in their communities and who shared with me the many challenges that they faced trying to balance their work and family lives.

Researcher's Effect on the Interview

I assumed that the participants were going to be honest and open in their responses to the interviewing questions. This assumption was confirmed to be true. The one-on-one interviews were conversational, and I noted that the women wanted to speak about their challenges in achieving WFB. In addition, some of the women would say, "That's a good question," as if it were the first time that they had actually thought about how they felt or behaved in achieving WFB. The women probably had little time to reflect on themselves and how they felt while trying to achieve WFB.

Changes in Thinking

I had been interested in this topic prior to conducting this study. As previously stated, I am a mother, a wife, founder and ED of a community nonprofit organization, a college instructor, a trustee for several boards, and a researcher. I wanted to know how other women managed their time, work, and family obligations and responsibilities, a curiosity that prompted this study. After interviewing the 12 participants and listening to their challenges and need to balance their work and family responsibilities, I am strongly

committed to providing awareness in the public and private sectors of the need for work and family initiatives and strategies for all working women.

Conclusion

African American women continue to enter the workforce in growing numbers while struggling to balance their work obligations with their family needs and activities. Although the nonprofit sector employs more African Americans than do either government agencies or for-profit businesses, there has been insignificant research into the complexities of their lives (Terhune, 2008). As a result of this gap in literature on WFC and WFB, I knew that much could be learned by obtaining information about the lived experiences of African American women who have succeeded in the nonprofit sector. Such information could be useful in attracting and retaining African American women to the nonprofit sector as they struggle to balance their work and family lives.

Bronznick and Goldenhar (2009) believed that within the next 10 years, a wave of retirements among the EDs of nonprofit organizations will shift the demographics of leaders in the nonprofit sector, and as the demographically nonprofit landscape changes, emerging female EDs are aware that they will be challenged to maintain a healthy WFB while leading and managing effectively (Cornelius et al., 2008). This finding is supported by the responses to the interviews conducted in my study.

The respondents, all of whom were employed in the nonprofit sector and had been promoted to leadership positions at the time of the study, did not want to compromise their personal lives: instead, they wanted to have meaningful careers and healthy personal lives (Cornelius et al., 2008).

This research achieved its purpose, which was to obtain the perspectives of nonprofit EDs on WFC and WFB, and to provide techniques and strategies for all women to balance their work-family roles. The findings show that working women can achieve WFB by using the strategies recommended by the African American female EDs in this study, including exercising, connecting and networking with other women who are caregivers, utilizing flex schedules, and build a strong network support to help with WFB. However, based upon my analysis of the findings, it was clear that the participants did not necessarily practice the WFB strategies that they recommended for aspiring nonprofit EDs in order to achieve a healthy WFB. Female EDs in the nonprofit sector continue to struggle to find that elusive balance.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol Form

Time of interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: Tammy Evans-Colquitt

Interviewee: _____

Position of interviewee: _____

Central question:

The central research questions that will guide the study is the following: To what degree do African American women who are nonprofit EDs in the northeastern region of the United States experience WFC, and what strategies are used to balance their work and family responsibilities. The interviewing questions are:

Interviewing questions:

1. How do you define work-family balance?
2. What role (work-family) requires more of your time?
3. To what extent does a non-profit ED experience WFB?
4. What are the challenges that a non-profit ED faces in finding WFB?
5. What strategies do you use to manage work obligations when your child is sick or has activities such as sports and doctor appointments?
6. What strategies do you use to manage family obligations when you have to travel or attend meetings after work hours?

7. To what extent do your husband/partner and/or other support share in family responsibilities?
8. How do you feel when you don't have enough time for yourself?
9. To what extent does work/family balance impact your behavior and/or attitude when balancing work and family activities?
10. How does an ED maintain success in her career and still have work-life balance?
11. What work-family strategies can an ED provide to help future executives achieve work-family balance?

Appendix B: Demographical Questionnaire

1. What is your age?

_____ years old (round to the nearest whole number)

2. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

___ High School

___ Undergraduate degree

___ Master Degree

___ Doctorate

___ Post-Doctorate

3. How long have you been working in the nonprofit sector? _____ years (round to the nearest whole number)

4. How long have you been working in a senior level capacity? _____ years (round to the nearest whole number)

5. Are you single, married, living with a partner, widowed, divorced?

6. How many years have you been married, living with a partner, widowed, divorced?

7. How old is/are your child/children?

	< 3 years	3 -5 years	6 – 11 years	12–18 years
Child 1				
Child 2				
Child 3				
Child 4				
Child 5				

Appendix C: Master Codes List

Master codes	
1	Accommodate family obligations
2	Authoritative
3	Balance by prioritizing
4	Balance can be achieved if activities are prioritized
5	Balance of responsibilities between family and work activities
6	Balance the family
7	Being organized
8	Being tired all the time
9	Board development
10	Both family and work requires my time equally
11	Bring children to work
12	Build a strong team
13	Charismatic
14	Children travel with parent
15	Communicate expectations
16	Confident and conquering
17	Delegate
18	Delegator
19	Don't let it change my attitude
20	Don't let it change my behavior
21	Don't want to be bother
22	Enjoying your family while doing a good job at work
23	Establishing a process so you are not overwhelmed
24	Evil
25	Exercise
26	Family member assist with responsibilities
27	Family members
28	Family requires more of my time
29	Finding time for yourself
30	Flex schedule
31	Forget about self
32	Frustrated
33	Get sick
34	Have a mentor
35	Have a passion for your work
36	Have a plan
37	High turnover rate at work
38	Hired caregiver
39	Husband helps with family obligations
40	I am responsible for family obligations
41	Imbalance of WFB is experienced
42	Irritable
43	Irritated
44	Lack of patience
45	Leadership style changes depending on situation
46	Maintaining a passion for your work
47	Managing board members
48	Minimum WFB is experienced
49	Minimum work-family incentives

Master codes

- 50 Motivator
 - 51 Network with other women with children
 - 52 Overwhelmed
 - 53 Overwhelmed with both work and family responsibilities
 - 54 Participative
 - 55 Plan out your day
 - 56 Prepare in advance
 - 57 Prioritize
 - 58 Relaxed
 - 59 Self-care
 - 60 Short tempered
 - 61 Stressed
 - 62 Team player
 - 63 There is no WFB
 - 64 Time management
 - 65 Tired
 - 66 Trainer
 - 67 Unproductive
 - 68 Use technology to balance
 - 69 Work and family responsibilities overlap
 - 70 Work from home
 - 71 Work requires more of my time
-

Curriculum Vitae

Tammy Evans-Colquitt

Education

- 2012 Walden University, Minneapolis, MN
PhD, Public Policy and Administration
- 2009 Walden University, Minneapolis, MN
MS, Public Administration
- 2006 Eastern University, St. David, PA
MS, Non-Profit Management
- 2000 Eastern University, St. David, PA
BA, Organizational Management

Academic Experience

- 2007-Present Senior Adjunct Instructor, Burlington Community College, Pemberton, NJ
- 2010 Adjunct Instructor, Eastern University: Campolo College of Graduate and Professional Studies

Professional Experience

- 1999-Present Founder/President, Image and Attitude, Pennsauken, NJ
A 501(c)3 NPO that helps to elevate the image and self-esteem of economically disadvantaged women.
- 2004-2008 Program Director, Generations, Gibbsboro, NJ
A 501(c)3 Community Development Corporation (CDC), established to cultivate partnership with national organizations, member churches, and their communities to educate, enable, and empower individuals by providing financial products and services.

Professional & Board Affiliations

- 2010-Present Board of Trustees, Lincoln University.
- 2003-Present Board of Trustees, Vice President of Strategic Planning, Women's Alliance.

- 2004-2005 Board of Directors, Vice President of Corporate Relations, New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners.

Presentations

- 2009 Eastern University, St. David, PA
Non-profit Management Alumni Lecture Series 3-member panel discussion
“Considering the state of philanthropy and social entrepreneurship, what are the emerging trends that impact nonprofits today?”
- 2008 Camden County College (Gateway Program), Camden, NJ
“Interviewing Techniques: Dress to Impress and Interviewing Skills.”
- 2007-2008 Camden Community Connections (Youth Program), Camden, NJ
Contracted to facilitate 6-module job-readiness techniques.
- 2007 Century 21 Real Estate, Mount Holly, NJ
“Branding and Marketing.”
- 2006 & 2007 Rutgers University (Hispanic American Leadership Program), Camden, NJ
Facilitated “Dress to Impress,” “Work your Image: Make a lasting impression,” and “Interviewing Skills & Resume Writing.”
- 2006 LEAP Academy, Camden, NJ
“Job Readiness Techniques.”
- 2005 Puerto Rican Unity Program, Camden, NJ
“Interviewing Techniques.”
- 2004-2008 Generations, Inc., Gibbsboro, NJ
Facilitated 6-module Homeownership Program.
- 2004-2006 Camden County Resource Center, Camden, NJ
Contracted to facilitate “Job-Readiness Techniques.”

Professional Activities: Organizer of the Following Activities

- Employment and Résumé Clinic, Camden County One-Stop, Camden, NJ, April 30, 2009.
- Resume Clinic: Be Marketable, Be Employable, and Be Successful, Camden County One-Stop, Camden, NJ, October 21, 2008.
- Resume Clinic: Be Marketable, Be Employable, and Be Successful, Camden County One-Stop, Camden, NJ, July 22, 2008.

Awards & Honors (2005-2010)

- 2010 Breaking the Glass Ceiling Award, Presented by the National Organization of Women Business Owners
- 2010 New Jersey Heroes
- 2009 Nonprofit Lecture Series Award, Eastern University, St. David, PA
- 2007 Community Service Award
- 2006 New Jersey Woman of Achievement
- 2006 Community Service & Leadership Award
- 2005 Women for Outstanding Achievement