

2018

Work-Life Balance of Women Employed Within State Government

Luisa Cunanan Martinez
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

 Part of the [Quantitative Psychology Commons](#), and the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Luisa Cunanan Martinez

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Rachel Moore, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Robin Oatis-Ballew, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Rhonda Bohs, University Reviewer, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2018

Abstract

Work-Life Balance of Women Employed Within State Government

by

Luisa Cunanan Martinez

MPA, Notre Dame de Namur University, 1997

BA, San Francisco State University, 1993

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Organization Psychology

Walden University

August 2018

Abstract

Women in the U.S. workforce have been a focus of scholars since the onset of the 21st century, when work-life balance skewed in favor of the term work-life integration because professional working mothers found that balance was an unachievable ideal in the fast pace of the contemporary world. Accordingly, this research study examined the work-life challenges and career choices of women working in the public sector through the framework of the Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM). While research has been conducted on women in corporate America, there have been limited studies exploring the work-life challenges and career decisions of women working in government. The study design was phenomenological with convenience sampling of women working for state government agencies. Data were collected through a structured interview and demographic questionnaire. Data from the 7 participants were analyzed using the KCM theory and considering Mainiero and Sullivan's A-authenticity, B-balance, C-challenge parameters. Overall, findings indicated that women working in state government chose and remained in their jobs because of stability, security, and benefits. These women did not opt-out, as is common for corporate workers, because they received the flexibility and benefits required to integrate work-life balance. Corporate human resources might explore needs of their own workers using the KCM framework. Policies to retain workers might include more flexibility in scheduling and benefits for workers. This work extends applicability of the KCM to a population of which it has not been used.

Work-Life Balance of Women Employed Within State Government

by

Luisa Cunanan Martinez

MPA, Notre Dame de Namur University, 1997

BA, San Francisco State University, 1993

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Organization Psychology

Walden University

August 2018

Acknowledgments

First, I would like to thank God for all that He has done for me. He has given me the strength and courage to pursue and reach my goal. Through Him, everything is possible, and this degree was one of the most challenging tasks I have ever had to accomplish in my life.

Thank you to my Chairperson, Dr. Rachel Moore, who has gone through this whole process with me and has encouraged me all the way. Dr. Moore, Thank you! To my Committee Member Dr. Robin Oates-Ballew for being my committee member and for encouraging me to follow through with this study. To Eric and Michael, who were there for me. To others who I met along the way, thank you for your positive feedback.

To my family, who are my pride and joy, especially my daughter, Elisse, who inspired me to finish what I started and who motivated me to not give up and to keep moving forward. It is great to have you go through this journey with me. I am very grateful to you for making it possible for me to achieve my goal. Humbly speaking, with God's help this work would not have been possible. You all have made a difference in my life and I hope to make a difference in yours and others.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| List of Tables | v |
| List of Figures | vi |
| Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study..... | 1 |
| Overview | 1 |
| Female Representation in State Government..... | 2 |
| Decision Making Using the Kaleidoscope Career Model..... | 3 |
| Background..... | 5 |
| Problem Statement..... | 8 |
| Purpose of the Study and Research Questions..... | 9 |
| Conceptual Framework..... | 10 |
| Nature of the Study | 12 |
| Definitions..... | 14 |
| Assumptions, Scope, Delimitations, and Limitations..... | 16 |
| Significance of the Study | 18 |
| Summary..... | 20 |
| Chapter 2: Literature Review..... | 22 |
| Overview..... | 22 |
| Literature-Search Strategy | 24 |
| Conceptual Framework..... | 24 |
| Work-Life Balance..... | 27 |
| Culture and Policy..... | 29 |
| Career Experiences | 31 |

| | |
|---|----|
| The Glass Ceiling and Other Advancement Challenges..... | 35 |
| Summary..... | 36 |
| Chapter 3: Research Method..... | 38 |
| Research Design and Rationale | 38 |
| Role of the Researcher | 41 |
| Methodology..... | 41 |
| Participant-Selection Logic..... | 41 |
| Instrumentation | 43 |
| Pilot Study..... | 43 |
| Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection..... | 43 |
| Data-Analysis Plan..... | 45 |
| Issues of Trustworthiness..... | 48 |
| Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability | 49 |
| Ethical Procedures | 50 |
| Triangulation..... | 50 |
| Peer Review | 50 |
| Researcher Bias and Reflexivity..... | 50 |
| Member Checking..... | 51 |
| Thick Description..... | 52 |
| Participant Protection..... | 52 |
| Summary..... | 54 |
| Chapter 4: Results..... | 55 |
| Introduction..... | 55 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Pilot Study..... | 56 |
| Setting..... | 58 |
| Demographics..... | 58 |
| Data Collection..... | 63 |
| Data Analysis..... | 66 |
| Evidence of Trustworthiness..... | 72 |
| Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability..... | 73 |
| Results..... | 75 |
| Research Question 1..... | 76 |
| Research Question 2..... | 78 |
| Summary..... | 81 |
| Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendations..... | 83 |
| Introduction..... | 83 |
| Interpretation of the Findings..... | 83 |
| Findings in context of the literature review..... | 83 |
| Work-Life Balance..... | 85 |
| Culture and Policy..... | 87 |
| Career Experiences..... | 89 |
| The Glass Ceiling and Other Advancement Challenges..... | 91 |
| Conceptual Framework..... | 92 |
| Limitations of the Study..... | 93 |
| Recommendations for Further Research..... | 94 |
| Implications..... | 95 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Conclusion | 97 |
| References..... | 98 |
| Appendix A: Interview Protocol..... | 109 |
| Appendix B: Pilot Study Recruitment Flier..... | 111 |
| Appendix C: Recruitment Flier..... | 112 |

List of Tables

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 1. Female Participant Attributes Working Full-Time | 59 |
| Table 2. Participant Profile | 60 |
| Table 3. Characteristics and ABC Coding | 62 |
| Table 4. ABC Kleidoscope Career Model for Women..... | 63 |
| Table 5. Deductive Categories | 70 |

List of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1. Female Participant Attributes Working Full Time..... | 59 |
| Figure 2: Participant Profile..... | 60 |
| Figure 3. Characteristics and ABC Coding..... | 62 |
| Figure 4. ABC Kleidoscope Career Model for Women | 63 |
| Figure 5. Deductive Categories | 70 |

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Overview

Women comprise 47% of all employed Americans, now outnumbering men within the U.S. workforce for the first time in history (Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers, & Wentworth, 2007). Women have reported that challenges within the workforce include a low number of promotional opportunities, scarce financial rewards, and time demands resulting in a negative impact on their job satisfaction. Researchers have indicated that the traditional organizational structure of U.S. employers has not considered the demands on women with regard to primary care and other personal responsibilities (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Promotion within the workplace requires women to devote increasingly more time to work and gaining greater visibility (Naqvi, 2011).

Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) opined that the career paths of women are based upon job satisfaction or fit. The kaleidoscope career model (KCM) was grounded in the perception of a decision as affecting the outcomes of other decisions (Sullivan & Mainiero). For example, if career was the focus, family and other personal decisions are deemed to be less important, and personal outcomes reflect the lack of focus in adverse ways. Sullivan and Mainiero added that women often leave the workforce for family reasons; hence, traditional career-development models are geared toward men who are focused on organizational promotion. The lack of advancement opportunities for women, coupled with the low attention to career planning due to family demands, hinder female workers from making decisions toward upward career mobility (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007).

Women tend to avoid accepting new responsibilities with increased stress (Lyness & Thompson, 2000).

Female Representation in State Government

In this research, I aimed to examine the work-life challenges of women and how the KCM explained the career decisions of this population in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenges. My intent was to identify the goals of women as they related to their government careers, allowing organizations to better provide support through career-counseling services or human-resource professionals. The findings make a significant contribution to the work-life integration of female state-government workers and to expanding theory grounding the KCM. Female employees within state and local government appear to lack representation, with men dominating this workforce (Sidorsky, 2015).

Sidorsky added that women within the political arena were visibly concerned over underrepresentation at all levels of government and were viewed as having lower levels of ambition than men. Sidorsky (2015) posited that the challenge of the dual role of mother and public official involves a conflict rendering the leadership position of holding a public office difficult. In addition, Kim (2004) opined that women and minorities filling clerical and paraprofessional jobs tend to be overrepresented while those in administrative and technical jobs tended to be underrepresented. Women who sought advancement within male-dominated organizations faced barriers due to a lack of technical and administrative skills (Radin, 1980). Radin indicated that researchers have also shown that a lack of support for women in organizational leadership hindered further

advancement for this population.

The social implication was that women lacked career planning and related counseling when they faced decisions on family matters, and the KCM supported the identification of female needs and goals at given life junctures. Hertneky (2012) posited that effective career models were needed to develop women for leadership positions. According to Hertneky to retain women within the U.S. workforce, human-resources departments required an organizational model that met the needs of women. The KCM was developed for related studies within the private sector. It was an important and useful construct for understanding the changing career patterns of the female workplace population and examining their career interruptions (e.g., providing care for children or parents) or discontinuity in career development (e.g., delaying promotional opportunities)(Hertneky). Human-resource professionals were constantly seeking options toward improved employee morale to retain workers with valuable company knowledge to maintain pace with global market trends (Akanji, Mordi, & Ojo, 2015).

Decision Making Using the Kaleidoscope Career Model

Women face different obstacles within the workplace than those encountered by men. Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) posited that traditional career-development models were geared toward men whose focus was organizational promotion. Other researchers have revealed that women experience competing demands for their time and attention during both their career and homebuilding stages of life (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006; O'Neil, Hopkins, & Bilimoria, 2008). Many talented women have accepted less demanding careers due to their primary caregiving roles (August, 2011). Over time,

women progressed from an early career focusing on opportunities, to a middle career focusing on work-life balance, and subsequently to a late career focusing on personal needs (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006). Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) developed the KCM as a means of understanding the career needs of women at these three parameters-- authenticity, balance, and challenge. These junctures alternated with life changes due to fluctuating career obligations and opportunities.

The purpose of the study was to examine the work-life challenges of women and how the KCM explains the career decisions of this population in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge. Through an understanding of their decision-making progress, the KCM framework was used as a guideline for family balance (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) advanced that policies be developed to increase the recruitment and retention of female workers, and valuable information be gained from application of the KCM as an effective source of guidance. The implementation of strategies to avoid the high turnover of women within the workforce due to caregiving responsibilities or lack of ambition was crucial.

Career counselors have a unique opportunity and responsibility to provide enhanced career exploration for women of all ages (Whitmarsh et al., 2007). Whitmarsh et al. (2007) found that career counselors are highly needed to assist women as they explore career options. The implications of the study for positive social change includes a clearer understanding women's career choices, but also enhanced human-resource systems and programs toward increased recruitment and productivity, thereby concurrently fulfilling the needs of women (see Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). I focused

the research on the use of the KCM within the public sector, as opposed to the private sector. Through application of the model, state government may have been able to create career-development programs that increased employee productivity and heighten morale.

The social implications of the study include a greater number of female leaders possibly emerging when women take control of their own careers and identify their strengths and leadership potential. A gap in existing literature related to the topic of study reflected lack of research application of the KCM to examine women within the state workforce. I therefore focused the study on the lived experience of female state-government workers. The research provides information and solutions for career planning and counseling with the Human-Resource Development (HRD) department when women face challenges due to work interruption and/or discontinuity in career development.

Background

Hertneky (2012) explained that the organizational system had been traditionally structured to provide men with promotional opportunities, perceiving women as eventually leaving organizations for personal pursuits and therefore providing minimal promotional opportunities for this segment of the workplace population. For women, work-life conflict was identified in three major categories: (a) time invested in work that took away from time invested in family, (b) career coupled with family roles overwhelming female workers and diminishing their effectiveness within either or both roles, and (c) differences in work-life behavioral patterns (Aiswarya & Ramasundaram, 2012). O'Neil et al. (2008) further identified the following four interrelated patterns:

- (a) Careers of women were embedded within the context of their personal lives.

(b) Family and career were central to the lives of women.

(c) The career paths of women, and the resources were important aspects.

Hoobler, Lemmon, and Wayne (2014) reviewed empirical studies of women and men with similar tasks, skills, and career aspirations. Hoobler et al. reported a shortage of women holding top-management positions. It assumed this was due to several factors. Hoobler et al. indicated women were perceived as ill suited for leadership positions (i.e., the “glass ceiling” effect or invisible barrier to upward mobility due to discrimination). In addition, it was also assumed that women tended to progress at a slower pace than men when it came to working toward leadership positions (Hoobler et al.). The notion that women were not “designed” to handle top-management jobs was coupled with the assumption that men were more confident in these roles, and women preferred job security with less responsibility and challenge (Hoobler et al.). It was also assumed within the contemporary world of business that the workplace environment required time and energy that was overly challenging for women with their dual role as a working mother (Hoobler et al.).

Hoobler et al. (2014) reported that, contrary to traditional research perspectives on the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions and the “opt-out revolution,” evidence has indicated that women do desire top-management positions. Hoobler et al. posited that a majority of the women within the U.S. workforce are actively pursuing management careers, and this statistic has trended consistently upward since the 1970s. Munn (2013) advanced that it was challenging to support a work-life balance, and organizations may have not been as flexible toward employee needs in related policy

making, which can subsequently affect productivity, attendance, and learning. However, the Human Resource Department was charged with supporting the recruitment and retention of women who needed work-life flexibility, encouraging female employees and organization management to work in a collaborative fashion to meet their mutual needs (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Munn (2013) opined that the work-life domains as two separate and conflicting lives, rather than complementary, was a myth. Munn, Rocco, Bowman, and van Loo (2011) asserted that organizations and employees depend upon each other to their mutual benefit. A major national business magazine referred to work-life balance as a step toward developing a good relationship between employers and employees by hiring workers with skills, career aspirations, and an expectancy toward upward mobility (Munn). The key collective factor in balancing work and family life was family-friendly organizations that provided some flexibility for employees without acting as a controller restraining employees within a constantly changing environment (Kossek, Lewis, & Hammer, 2010).

Munn (2013) indicated that human-resource departments focus on how employees function within their work environments because they have effective balance techniques. August (2011) noted that the KCM addressed the needs of women during the following stages of life: (a) authenticity (i.e., later stage in life) with the identification of a job role that was a good fit, (b) balance (i.e., middle stage in life) with flexibility of work schedule to a modified or part-time option, and (c) challenge (i.e., early stage in life) with advancement opportunities based upon job performance.

Problem Statement

Munn (2013) indicated that work-life balance depends upon the employee and the organization. Within the government realm, in order for women to advance in their careers, education was not as relevant as experience in managerial positions (Caceres-Rodriguez, 2011). Within the federal government, women with more than 10 years of experience typically had less education than men (Naff, 1994). Caceres-Rodriguez (2011) reported that, at the state level, a variation exists in terms of education attainment. Conversely, women held more bachelor-of-arts degrees than men within the engineering and business arenas (Caderes-Rodriguez).

Work-life balance was relevant and important for married working mothers, especially during challenging times (Hochschild, 1989). Munn (2013) reported widespread attention among scholars with regard to this issue. The implementation of strategies toward a family-friendly environment provided a meaningful workplace for employees through HRD. Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) noted that traditional career-development models are geared toward men with a focus on organizational promotion. The traditional organizational structure (e.g., time on the job and responsibilities) was designed for the typical man rather than the demands of a woman (Sullivan & Mainiero). Sullivan and Mainiero added that women with dual roles as working mothers assume many additional responsibilities. Work-life integration was a major problem among contemporary working women as they struggle with balancing career aspirations and family obligations (Tajlili, 2014).

Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) indicated that a traditional organizational structure was no longer adequate to meet the needs of today's professional workers. However, these researchers suggested that when organizations followed the parameters of the KCM, they may result in a long term employee commitment. Sullivan and Mainiero added that workers extended maximum effort because they valued their employer-employee relationship. Conversely, if organizations did not have traditional career and family values and were not flexible in factors allowing women to properly balance their lives, female workers sought the flexibility they needed and the promotional opportunities elsewhere (Sullivan & Mainiero).

Tajili (2014) noted that application of the KCM helped women understand that work-life integration was a solution by identifying goals, researching the benefits and challenges, and finding their authentic selves within their personal and work lives. However, the workforce was not changing as rapidly as the needs of women (Slaughter, 2012). O'Neil et al. (2008) indicated that at the onset of the 21st century, work-life balance was unachievable in a fast-paced contemporary life. Consequently, balance became another measure of success in professional life (Shapiro, Ingols, & Blake-Beard, 2008). Munn (2013) referred to the work-life concept as important to HRD because the two lifestyles were intertwined. The HRD system supported related balance with workplace flexibility and telecommuting.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of the study was to examine the work-life challenges of women and how the KCM explains the career decisions of this population in terms of authenticity,

balance, and challenge. The research was significant because it facilitated an investigation of the phenomenon of interest with an unexplored group of women working within the state-government workforce. The intent was to apply the KCM to ultimately gain insight and understanding through the lived experience of working women. The phenomenological inquiry involved revealing the essence of experiences surrounding a phenomenon that individuals shared or an “object of human experience” (see Creswell, 2007, p. 252). Creswell (2007) contended that phenomenology elicited routine lived experiences, and in-depth interviews were needed to identify the meaning of personal experiences.

The interview questions for the study were no less than hour was open-ended for the three parameters identifying the career stages of the participants. The sample size and sampling plan were both consistent with the phenomenological approach. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the challenges for women employed within state government, in terms of developing a work-life balance?
2. How does the KCM explain the career choices of women, in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study addressed the development of the KCM and its application. Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) applied the model to better understand the careers chosen by women but also to enhance human-resource systems and programs to increase the recruitment, productivity, and retention of female workers. Sullivan and

Baruch (2009) studied the nature of contemporary careers and, in the 1990s, examined and measured overall career concepts: (a) the protean, (b) boundaryless career frameworks, (c) integrative frameworks, (d) hybrid careers, and (e) the KCM. Sullivan and Baruch examined the concepts within related studies. They found that environment and technology have a profound influence on the careers of individuals. Attitudes and behaviors were major factors within their work environments (i.e., longevity and work-life balance)(Sullivan & Baruch). A change in family structure, for example, was balancing parameter. Working couples and single working parents often transferred caregiving responsibilities to parents and children (Sullivan & Baruch). In the authenticity and challenge parameters, learning manifested through growth and development (Hall, 1996; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

In contrast to other models targeting traditional males, the KCM offered a framework that recognizes the unique career challenges encountered by women (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Research related to the career movement of women has indicated that women prefer an entrepreneurial career path. Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) explained that the framework of the KCM was used to explore and analyze the career decisions of female populations. The model addresses the interruptions and/or discontinuity in their career development. Sullivan and Mainiero exemplified such discontinuity with the “opt-out revolution” when women left their jobs to become entrepreneurs, returning to higher level positions and salaries. These researchers recommended application of the KCM to gain a clearer understanding of the changing career patterns of women, particularly the

interruptions and/or discontinuity in the career development of women within the government workforce (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

In this study, individual participant interviews provided an opportunity to explore the lived experiences of women working within the state government. The research questions were formulated to support an exploration of the lived experiences and choices of working women. This framework was grounded in the KCM to explain the career choices of women within the three parameters of authenticity, balance, and challenge. Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) explored how a new model of career decision making improved HRD programs.

Nature of the Study

Researchers have revealed that women face different obstacles than men within the workplace. Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) postulated that traditional career-development models are geared toward men with a focus on organizational promotion. Investigators have found that women experience competing demands for their time and attention in both their work and personal lives (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006). Many talented women accept careers that are less demanding than they are capable of handling due to commitment to a primary caregiving role (August, 2011). The needs of women gradually change as they progress from an early to middle to late career focus (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006). Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) developed the KCM as a means of determining these needs during all three phases of career decision making as the obligations and career opportunities of this population changed.

The study was a phenomenological exploration of the career choices of women employed in state government. I explored the lived experiences of this female population to provide a clearer understanding of how they balanced career and family life. The initial phase of phenomenological research began with acknowledging a need to understand a phenomenon from the lived experience of the sample population in order to reveal underlying meaning (see Englander, 2012). In the study, I focused on a convenience sampling of female state-government workers and collected data via face-to-face interviews. The data collected were expected to be relevant to the research questions (see Hertneky, 2012). Interviewing was the most common form of data collection in qualitative research (Lichtman, 2010). The aim was to collect data from lived experiences and to develop a composite description of the essence of the experience for all participants (see Moustakas, 1994).

Moustakas (1994) advanced that interview questions facilitate the description of meaning behind the lived experience of a phenomenon. In this study seven participants were interviewed, but in Hertneky's (2012) research he had 12 participants. Hertneky interviewed a purposeful sample of female college presidents who met three selection criteria. The inclusion criteria in the study were (a) clerical or professional women, (b) married or single women with children, and (c) employment within state government. In addition, Grant-Vallone and Ensher (2011) referred to data analysis as a critical component of qualitative methodology. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) described related techniques including the following:

- Maintain an attitude of acceptance, listening openly to participants to allow the findings to evolve from the data.
- Record and subsequently transcribe the sessions.
- Read all interview transcription to track emerging themes.
- Conduct a repeat review of all interview transcription for any inconsistencies in data interpretation, sorting all data into categories or themes.

Definitions

The following terms used throughout the study and were defined for purposes of the research:

Authenticity: In the later years in life where desires are important in career and life (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Balance: In the middle years in life when women balancing work and life situations and making decisions involving family and career needs (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Boundaryless career theory: There are no boundaries for workers to go outside of their own organization to seek career opportunities (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

Career: A job experience while working (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

Career development: This was a function of human resources to help individuals reach their professional goals through career planning. (Hite & McDonald, 2008).

Challenge: In the early years, an individual was continually striving to grow and seeking advancement opportunities. (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Development: Continually growing to acquire knowledge, skills and abilities. (Hite & McDonald, 2008).

Face time: Being at work physically showing interest at work in recognition. (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Glass ceiling: An invisible barrier that exists for women and other minorities, limiting their upward organizational mobility. A kind of discrimination or stereotyping of women particularly women leadership positions (Hoobler et al., 2014).

Human-resource development (HRD): Human resource professionals who are there to retain workers and help in career movement for individuals (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Human-resource professionals: Personnel who help employees meet their professional goals. (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Job satisfaction: How an individual accepts their work and work environment. (Elley-Brown, 2011).

Kaleidoscope career model (KCM): A kaleidoscope that produces changing patterns when the tube is rotated is compared to women who's arranging their roles in life through balancing work and life situations. (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Nontraditional career: A nontraditional career professional path (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Opt-out revolution: A time when women have to leave their employment or work is interrupted for any reason. (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005).

Traditional career: A professional career path for male that serves as a hierarchy or ladder approach in an organization. (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Well-being: Refers to being satisfied in life and in career or in health. (Fischer, Zvonkovic, Juergens, Engler, & Frederick, 2015).

Work-life balance: Refers to balancing work and family life happening at the same time. (Akanji et al., 2015).

Work motivation: A drive or aspiration to advance in one's career. (Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2011).

Assumptions, Scope, Delimitations, and Limitations

Several assumptions were made in this qualitative approach. The first assumption was that the participants be open, honest, and truthful when answering the interview questions. Second was the assumption that the participants may provide further explanations when needed to clarify their interview comments. The final assumption was that the findings of the research offered insight into the lived experience of women working for state government and their decision making between work and non work activities. These assumptions were necessary to obtain relevant data leading to the findings of the study (see Creswell, 2007), to authenticate the data collected, and to ensure the trustworthiness of the research. Confidentiality and anonymity will not be violated, and no harm to the study participants.

The scope of the study addresses the gap in existing literature related to women among the state-government workforce who were balancing work- and family-life decisions. All participants were selected based upon a general survey collecting

background information including gender, age, education, experience, family structure, and employment for a state-government agency. This phenomenological approach was important in gaining a clearer understanding of the lived experiences of female workers. A small percentage of women hold high-level positions within U.S. organizations, which was a concern throughout the workplace (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007, p. 352).

In this study, I focused on how KCM explains the career development of women in state government and how the construct were applied to explore the career decisions of women based upon work and family demands at the respective points in their careers. Research participants included all women with children who were working within the professional clerical field in the state government. Women under my supervision and working within private or nongovernmental sectors were excluded from the study. This delimitation precluded me from opening the research to a greater number of participants and to men because my focus was solely on women employed within state government. The results provided insight and understanding regarding the career planning and decision making of women employed within the state-government workforce.

A number of theories addressed career change; however, I sought to explore the KCM from a highly relevant conceptual framework. The protean, boundaryless, and hybrid theories were beyond the scope of the study. The data collected were specific to the participants interviewed within a state-government agency in northern California. The procedure included convenience sampling of women working within the agency. Demographic information surveyed included gender, age, job title, education, and division name. Upon completion of the survey, potential participants were selected from

the female respondents based upon their education and positions. The findings were not generalizable to employee populations of other government agencies.

As a working mother employed within the workforce of state government, the study was highly relevant to me. Therefore, as a supervisor, I had personal biases given my experiences. The reasonable measure to address this limitation was to conduct the research outside my department. I maintained a journal to identify my biases by bracketing related personal experiences. Another limitation of the study was the focus on women working for a state-government agency within northern California. Additionally, educated women filling managerial positions were selected. Lastly, the study was focused on women working among the state-government workforce who participated in the research.

Due to the described limitations, participants may not have been open and honest in their interview responses, fearing loss of their jobs or other form of retaliation. Regarding my own personal biases, as both the researcher and a manager for the study site, the study sample of women did not include employees with whom I had either personal or professional relationships. As noted earlier, any identified personal biases were bracketed in the journal I maintained throughout the course of the study. As also mentioned earlier, the data and study findings are not generalizable to employee populations of other governmental agencies.

Significance of the Study

Balancing work and other life activities pose a major problem for many women within the contemporary workplace (Tajlili, 2014). Struggling with child care needs,

personal needs, and balancing career aspirations with family obligations amid competing demands introduces a formidable collective challenge. Lyons, Ng, and Schweitzer (2014) acknowledged the relatively recent changes in the nature of employment relationships, career progression patterns, and career expectations. This has had direct implications for employers and HRD practitioners. Career models during the 1950s and 1960s tended to support the “male-as-breadwinner” family structure (Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007). The employer-employee relationship was characterized as an exchange of worker loyalty for the implicit employer promise of job security (Rousseau, 1989).

Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) noted the crucial nature of corporate strategies implemented to avoid high turnover from women leaving the workforce due to caregiving responsibilities or lack of ambition. Policies were developed to not only increase recruitment but to retain workers (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Family-friendly programs were typically focused on rewarding employees and supporting family life with paid day care, the option to work from home, and flexible work schedules. HRD were grounded in the KCM with attention to the career needs of women at each stage of their lives (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Positive social change resulted from attracting and retaining qualified female workers.

Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) asserted that women searching for meaning in their lives tend to work for firms that share values similar to their own. Organizational programs that support the needs of women were based upon the KCM. Addressing the parameter of authenticity, companies may sponsor health and wellness programs and employee clubs for workers with parallel interests. The KCM parameter of balance might

be addressed through flexible work hours to manage family responsibilities, and the parameter of challenge might be fulfilled through an effort to ensure advancement opportunities for women based upon performance appraisals. Ellemers (2014) opined that organizational advancement for women implies relinquishment of a family life in order to achieve professional success. However, if HRD professionals fulfilled the needs of women via family-life support, then the retention of talented women were possible. In this study, I applied the conceptual framework of the KCM to analyze this pivotal workplace issue with a sample of women among the state-government workforce.

Summary

Research grounded in the KCM has indicated that women make decisions based upon the status of their families (Cole, 1997). Consequently, they tend to choose family-friendly careers with flexible work schedules (Whitmarsh et al., 2007). Due to conflicts between work and family responsibilities, women were leaving organizations for part-time positions elsewhere or staying at home as primary caregivers (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). HRD was primarily concerned with the development of workers to enhance individual and group productiveness and organizational effectiveness (Gilley, Egglund, & Gilley, 2002). Researchers have revealed that many talented women make career decisions leading to less demanding careers due to primary caregiving roles (August, 2011). Changes in personal values, work environments, and advancement opportunities impacted the career decisions of women as they juggled work and personal responsibilities (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2008). Mainiero and Sullivan (2008) indicated that women were more interested in choosing a career with the flexibility to fit their personal

lives. Lyness and Thompson (2000) reported that women tend to accept jobs with less visibility and fewer responsibilities due to caregiving obligations. Researchers have also suggested the use of the KCM to improve HRD toward enhanced organizational effectiveness (Mainiero & Sullivan). In addition, the authenticity, balance, and challenges of working women addressed benefitted both organizations and female workers (Mainiero & Sullivan). In this study, I applied the conceptual framework of the KCM to further explore this topic area with a sample of women employed within state government.

Hertneky (2012) described the traditional career path as a ladder based upon acquired skills. Abele and Spurk (2011) suggested that women chose less prestigious occupations due to their primary caregiver responsibilities within the home. Balancing home and work responsibilities required women to choose professions that best met their needs at their respective stages of life. The study was unique in the intent to interview women among the state-government workforce to explore the lived experiences of working women. The review of related literature conducted for the research provides an explanation of the conceptual framework relating to the career development of women. The KCM facilitated filling this gap within existing related literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

This review of the literature provided insight into how women among the state-government workforce balance work and family life. How this population made career decisions while concurrently managing this balance was the focus of the review. Traditional and nontraditional career-development models were discussed along with the KCM. However, Elley-Brown (2011) applied the KCM in a study that revealed the differences in how women and men defined their careers. Women found opportunities by rejecting linear career progression, and creating nontraditional or self-crafted professions. Furthermore, Elley-Brown noted that women were more likely to follow nontraditional career paths with interruptions due to personal demands (e.g., childcare, spiritual fulfillment, or primary-caregiver responsibilities).

The KCM offered insight into the careers of both men and women working within corporate America. Most related research has been quantitative studies of both men and women working within private companies. However, a few have applied other career models, such as the boundaryless model, which addressed career advancement via a move to another organization, a career change, or self-employment (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006). Through implementation of the KCM, government agencies created career-development programs that increased employee productivity and heighten morale. When women took control of their own careers and identified their strengths and potential through this model, leaders indeed emerged from this population. Investigators used both quantitative and qualitative methods to focus on specific research goals (e.g., male versus

female workers, career development, and female workers in later stages of life). Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) posited that the KCM was an effective means of determining the career decisions of women and how they alternated with life changes, given the traditional, male-dominated work environment.

Researchers suggested that women leave companies to become entrepreneurs, frequently returning to corporations at higher-level positions and higher salaries (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). The KCM developed by Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) were useful in gaining a clearer understanding of the changing career patterns of women and examining their career interruptions and/or discontinuity in career development. No current studies have applied the KCM to address these issues among women within the government workforce. Sullivan and Mainiero applied the KCM in quantitative research focused on corporate America; however, this did not involve government workers. The factors that impacted the career decisions of these workers remained unexplored. However, studies addressing the careers of women in general offered insight related to the corporate field (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006).

In this qualitative study, I explored the lived experience of women among the state-government workforce, in terms of their career choices, using the KCM. This review of related literature is concentrated on female government workers, the KCM, a conceptual framework on leadership, and the career decision making of women. The literature-search strategy and search process were explained and the conceptual foundation of the study and related theories were detailed.

Literature Search Strategy

Literature reviewed for the research was obtained through the Walden University Online Library and the following databases: SAGE publications, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, EBSCO, government websites, and Academic Search Complete/Premier. The keywords used in the search were *peer-reviewed articles on the KCM, women in government, career development, women career development, and work-life balance*. Peer-reviewed articles were found; however, the majority were not relevant to the study. Approximately 58 articles were unrelated, and 46 were relevant to the research questions.

Searches with the keywords *women's career development in government, women employees in government, and women government employees* drew only five articles relevant to the research questions. A literature search using the key phrase *KCM* from 2011 to 2016 drew 17 articles, with seven relevant to the study. With only three articles related to women in government, the scope was broadened with more general background information to provide greater specificity of publication content.

Conceptual Framework

Theorists have claimed that female leaders have their own style of leading. However, leaders in general must be team players who were open and flexible to their team members (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007). Chugh and Sahgal (2007) argued that although research has indicated that women in leadership have unique career needs and aspirations, women and men also have different work motivations. Chugh and Sahgal indicated that job satisfaction was important to female leaders, rather than solely the power of leadership. However, studies of women in organizational settings indicated a

lack of career planning among this population of women (Chugh & Sahgal). Chugh and Sahgal added that women in general were more interested in cultivating happiness in their lives than striving for power and prestige.

Goode, an early role theorist, (as cited in Fischer, Zvonkovi, Juergens, Engler, and Frederick, 2015), argued that work and family roles conflict and were difficult to combine. Goode further noted that research has shown that work-family conflict has a negative impact on life satisfaction and well-being. Pradhan, Jena, and Kumari (2016) emphasized that work and life situations present ongoing challenges in contemporary times and introduce conflicting demands surrounding professional and home responsibilities. Traditional career-development models were not designed for women with dual responsibilities between work and family life. Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) indicated that organizations must understand these demands on women. Factors such as family obligations, simplification of life, and changing values have impacted the career decisions of women attempting to balance work and personal responsibilities (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Chugh and Sahgal (2007) opined that family demands hindered the professional advancement opportunities of women. To retain this segment of the workforce, human resources professionals required a model that meets the needs of women as well as men. In the study, I sought to provide a clearer understanding of the challenges encountered by women with respect to work-life situations and how the KCM explains the career decisions of this population in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge.

Hoobler et al. (2014) reviewed empirical studies conducted with men and women who shared similar career aspirations and reported a shortage of women in top-level positions. These researchers asserted that the contemporary labor market required women to work and care for their families simultaneously (Hoobler et al., 2014). However, women opted-out to start their own businesses when their jobs did not offer time flexibility (Hoobler et al., 2014). Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) indicated that, with HRD involvement, it was possible to improve the recruitment and retention of these workers. The myth was that work-life systems did not operate hand in hand (Munn, 2013). The parameters of authenticity, balance, and challenge alternate as life changes were spurred by obligations and opportunities during the careers of women.

The KCM offered a means of studying processes within a nontraditional career framework. The construct provided a framework that addressed the unique career challenges women encounter within the traditional, male-dominated work environment. According to Sullivan and Baruch (2009) the concept of the KCM was when one career decision was made, it affected the outcome of the overall career pattern or kaleidoscope. Sullivan and Baruch (2009) explained,

The kaleidoscope has three mirrors when rotated creates infinite patterns.

Individuals focus on career parameters when making decisions: (a) *authenticity* - to be true to oneself; (b) *balance* –balance the demands of work-life; and (c) *challenge* –need for stimulating work.(p. 1557).

Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) indicated that it was crucial that strategies be implemented to avoid a high turnover of women leaving the workforce due to caregiving

responsibilities or lack of ambition. In trying to understand the decision making process of working women, the KCM be applied to enhance human-resource programs toward improved family balance. There may be a need for improvement in policy development to increase recruitment and retention, and information gained through application of the KCM be a source of guidance for women as they sought to fulfill their needs.

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) developed the KCM as a revolutionary approach to the study of careers. The model used the Kaleidoscope Career Self-Assessment Inventory as a measure for testing the level of authenticity, balance, and challenge (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) indicated that the KCM was a means toward studying processes within a nontraditional career framework. Sullivan and Mainiero added that the framework of the model was used to recommend how changes in HRD be made to enhance the KCM perimeters of authenticity, balance, and challenge while concurrently enhancing organizational effectiveness. Munn (2013) emphasized that employees and organizations did not share the same outlook and mobility; Munn added that HRD practitioners must focus on how employees function within their work environments. It was challenging to support work-life balance, and organizations may not be as flexible in policy making when it comes to employee needs, which can in turn, affect productivity, attendance, and learning (Munn).

Work-Life Balance

Hite and McDonald (2008) reported that a key concept that repeatedly emerged throughout related literature was the definition of careers and career development. Hite and McDonald defined *career* as the life perceptions of an individual related to his or her

experience of work. Hite and McDonald defined *career development* as an ongoing process to reach work and life goals. In addition, development meant growth and the continuous acquisition and application of skills. Career development was the outcome of career planning and the organizational provision of support and opportunities, which was, ideally, a collaborative process (Hite & McDonald).

When individuals assumed greater responsibility for their own career direction, this was referred to as the *career management* by which individuals develop, implement, and monitor career goals and strategies (Greenhaus, Callanan, and Godshalk, 2000). Greenhaus et al. described the process as including the collection of information on careers, determining personal interests regarding work, setting career goals, and implementing a strategy to achieve those goals. However, Munn (2013) viewed work-life goals as a system involving intersecting forces that impacted the work-life balance of employees and the employee-employer relationship. The needs of employees and organizations have an effect on the availability of work-life initiatives within an organization and the development, design, and implementation of public work-life policy.

Kossek, Lewis, and Hammer (2010) added that formal organizational work-family policies were important resources that enabled employees to manage their work and family responsibilities. The types of support were family-supportive supervision where the supervisor was more empathetic in helping subordinates with their work and family responsibilities (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Greenhaus, Ziegert, and Allen (2012) found that work-family balance through a supportive supervisor was positively viewed as a family supportive organizational environment.

DiRenzo, Greenhaus, and Weer (2011) examined the conflict that employees experienced between work and family roles. It suggested that interferences from one role (family) to another role (work) placed demands on time and energy pressuring women to prioritize their roles. DiRenzo et al. indicated that pressures on women were due to their levels in position of an organization and this made a difference when making decisions in prioritizing their roles. Tang, Siu, and Cheung (2014) reported that work and family were important in a person's life, given that there was a rise in dual-earners and single-parent workers taking care of family responsibilities as well as working. This suggested a positive work-family interface that improved both roles in the quality of life (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Culture and Policy

McDonald, Pini, and Bradley (2007) conducted a study exploring the work-life culture with a group of employees within Australia local government. The organizational environment supported a work-life balance and was known as a family-friendly workplace. McDonald et al. detailed the aspects of the work-life culture that impacted employees. McDonald et al. found the following:

- The *first aspect* of work-life culture was manager support in the promotion of work-life balance for employees.
- The *second aspect* of work-life culture that impacted the employees was having the option to work on a part-time basis. This was identified as a career disadvantage for women who returned to their jobs on a part-time basis following maternity leave. Similarly, working part-time was incompatible

with promotions. Bailyn, Fletcher, and Kolb (1997) as well as Whitehouse and Zetlin (1999) opined that such perceptions suggested compelling reasons why part-time employment was underutilized by men, single workers, and career-oriented mothers. However, minimal existing literature had addressed other forms of flexible work such as telecommuting, and their effects on perceived and actual career opportunities (McDonald et al., 2007). The long-term success of employees and management were alternative work arrangements (Kossek, Barber, & Winters, 1999).

- The *third aspect* of the work-life culture within local government McDonald et al. described was gender-neutral and nondiscriminatory policies. In addition, the policies in practice revolved around the working conditions of women and when policies were developed, the issues to be addressed were those of men including the following (McDonald et al.):
 1. Men's claims to family responsibilities and the novelty of policy utilization,
 2. The business environment with competitive pressures, and
 - 3.. The domestic organization within employee families including the centrality of the career.

Few studies have addressed how the small number of men who do overcome contextual barriers within their organizations and accommodate non-work responsibilities (McDonald et al.).

- McDonald et al. indicated the *last aspect* of the work-life culture impacted participating employees' organizational time. Time expectations were defined as the length of time employees were expected and how they used their time in working productively. Frone, Yardley, and Markel (1997) reported that work-time commitment had been found to reduce work-family conflict. McDonald et al. added that many organizations viewed long work hours as a signal of organizational commitment, productivity, and advancement motivation. Glass and Finley (2002) suggested that organizations needed to be more supportive of work-time expectations, and managerial control must be reduced while fostering high productivity through outcome oriented evaluations of employees.

In addition, the last aspect of work-life culture indicated that the population sample in McDonald et al.'s study was "*coworker support*". Theoretical evidence existed for a "backlash movement," which referred to employee resentment toward others having flexible work arrangements. Furthermore, McDonald et al. found that complaints emerged when this opportunity was not available to all employees. So, conflict, resentment, and issues of fairness were directed to women with children when they were given more opportunities and flexibility than childless coworkers (McDonald et al.). Reactions of coworkers to policy users were raised as concerns by organizational managers who supported the work-life balance (McDonald et al.).

Career Experiences

Grant-Vallone and Ensher (2011) opined that working mothers were stressed with when managing work-life challenges. Working mothers found that home life was not as financially rewarding. Grant-Vallone and Ensher also asserted that professional women with children were exhausted from the dual roles. The contributors to stress and overload were long work hours and commuting, which resulted in over work, dissatisfaction, and/or reduced organizational commitment (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Dorio, Bryant, & Allen, 2008; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992).

Elley-Brown (2011) posited that the careers of women were typically broader than those of men because “men built careers and women built lives”. Unlike men, women did not base their careers on work compensation, but rather, personal development. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) suggested that a new definition of “*career*” accurately captured the work experiences of women and provide them with more effective avenues toward career success. Mainiero and Sullivan suggested that the KCM fits the needs of workers for the three parameters that influenced career decisions—authenticity, balance, and challenge—and explained the desires of women to operate relationally in their lives. The model was used inherently by women for many decades due to their involvement in multiple roles of caring, their need for coping skills, and their lived experience with discrimination. The KCM answered the following questions: How do the careers of women unfold? What meaning does a career hold?

Hertneky (2012) reported increasing attention to the career development of women and the linear, hierarchical, and traditional career path that continued to dominate organizational practice. Shapiro, Ingols, and Blake-Beard (2008) advanced that work was

primary and career models were outdated because women were acting as career self-agents, “managing their own careers by negotiating when, where, and how much to work” (p. 478). Women suggested that organizations and Human Resource Development (HRD) must “develop work cultures that support the career self-agency of its [*sic*] employees” (p. 479). HRD played a role in bolstering the self-efficacy of employee career decision making, thereby increasing employee retention and assisting managers in meeting their career goals within their organizations (Peterson, 2009). Bateson asserted that work and life circumstances caused interruptions, competing commitments, discontinuity, repeated redirection, adverse change, and loss in the lives of women (as cited in Hertneky, 2012).

Tajlili (2014) indicated that the work-life balance at the onset of the 21st century skewed in favor of the term *work-life integration* because professional working mothers found that balance was an unachievable ideal in the fast pace of the contemporary world. Balance became another measurement of success in work and home life, breaking down the confidence of women already plagued with guilt as they pushed through the glass ceiling looking to achieve life meaning. Tajlili added that because of the ways women relate to their careers on a personal level, career counselors must assume a more intimate role and holistic focus.

Schmidt (2011) posited that married women who opted-out of the labor force were women who have education and career aspirations. Moreover, these women were marrying highly educated and ambitious men. Schmidt added that when women had children, child-care responsibilities involving time and money emerged and many women

opted-out to work part time. Leaving the workforce equated to a financial risk should divorce or death of a spouse occur, significantly affecting the lives of women and their families (Schmidt).

Super (as cited in Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2011) noted that juggling multiple roles,

- adversely affect the career decision making of women. Individual characteristics (e.g., interests, abilities, and personality),
- be adversely influenced, as well as external variables (e.g., parental socioeconomic class),
- affect career patterns, life stages, and ultimately career satisfaction.

Grant-Vallone and Ensher (2011) listed the following three competencies of boundaryless careers,

- “knowing why” addressed why we work and relate to the motivation to work, the identification with work, education, aspirations, the profession sought, and other interests and goals.
- “knowing how” addressed skills, specific expertise, and the manner in which daily work was performed.
- “knowing whom” addressed knowing the right people.

Lyons et al. (2014) indicated that organizations understood the shift in career expectations, and that experience and attitude were a competitive advantage. However, Chugh and Sahgal (2007) reported evidence of an increased absence of women in leadership positions.

The Glass Ceiling and Other Advancement Challenges

The glass-ceiling effect was the belief that women were not qualified as leaders or to fill high-level positions (Hoobler et al., 2014). Ryan and Haslam (2005) noted that women who broke through the glass ceiling were more likely than men to find themselves in precarious or insecure leadership positions labeled as “glass cliffs.” For example, with international job assignments, 75% of companies indicated that the prejudice of international businesses against women was so great that women were set up to fail, and 20% of women struggling with these assignments reported that their gender placed them at a disadvantage (Ryan & Haslam).

Lyness and Thompson (2000) reported that challenging job assignments, transition to new job responsibilities, and job mobility were specific developmental experiences that facilitate leadership development. Lyness and Thompson noted that women tend to have less access to challenging work assignments, and high-risk jobs generally carry visibility which provided recognition for the success that translated to future leadership opportunities. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) suggested that women not seek higher level positions because of their level of self-confidence and the added responsibilities that may take much of their time away from home life. Mainiero and Sullivan have suggested that women with multiple life roles may find that the emphasis on challenge and balance with their personal lives, but alternate in importance during the early, middle, and later stages of their careers and in their career decisions (August, 2011).

Summary

Naqvi (2011) reported that the challenges encountered by women at home and within the workplace revealed that the most significant challenge was their dual roles as organizational managers and housewives. Naqvi added that 60% of women who lived with an extended family experienced high stress in attempting to balance work and family life. In addition to workplace responsibilities, many women were primary caretakers for children, parents, and/or other relatives in which they experience difficulty juggling work and home life, therefore hindering career advancement (Naqvi). Research has supported the theoretical proposition that the vocational development of women were influenced by their consideration of family life (Ganginis Del Pino, O'Brien, Mereish, & Miller, 2013).

August (2011) indicated that many talented women accepted career roles that were less demanding than they were capable of handling due to primary caregiving responsibilities. Research suggested that women often made professional decisions based upon family situations (Cole, 1997). Women tend to choose family-friendly careers with flexible work schedules, which exemplified this mind-set (Whitmarsh et al., 2007). Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) suggested that when organizations followed the parameters of the KCM this allowed women to meet their own needs which they may discover the true value of long-term, committed employees. The research design and rationale behind the study explained in detail along with the role of the researcher, the methodology of the investigation, the instrumentation, procedures, and ethical considerations.

On February 11, 2016 in Dr. Sullivan's personal communication, she claimed that the "KCM has been used by herself, Dr. Mainiero and other researchers for empirical

testing and also for conceptual discussions. For example, the KCM was applied to look at generational differences and for discussion of faculty sabbaticals.” Dr. Sullivan stated that back in 1999, in reviewing the “careers literature one of the things noticed was that scholars were applying models of career which were developed using samples of male workers to women’s careers and the models did not really explain women’s careers well.” In this regard, this current study benefitted from this framework by exploring women who work for the government and how they balanced their career and home life. This study may further expand future research in other avenues such as the public sector.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of the study was to examine the work-life challenges of women and how the KCM explained the career decisions of this population in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge. A qualitative approach to this phenomenon, applying the KCM, supported this stated purpose. The study sample of women employed within state government represented an unexplored population to date within the topic area. The participants provided information on their lived experiences, and the processes with rationale explained behind their career-life decisions. The framework of the KCM facilitated this data collection as well as the overall aim of the research. The research design of the study encompassed the research questions formulated to elicit the perceptions of female state government workers, as they related to the processes and rationale behind their career decisions in their life.

Research Design and Rationale

August (2011) advanced that the career development decisions and changes of women was implicit from within the KCM context from Mainiero and Sullivan (2006). My research design for the study was similar to August's qualitative approach. My goal was to recruit a sample of female state government workers to answer the following research questions:

- RQ 1 What were the challenges for women employed within state government, in terms of developing a work-life balance?
- RQ 2 How did the KCM explain the career choices of women, in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge?

An interview protocol facilitated the collection of data that led to a textual description of the lived experiences of the sample as well as a structural description of women's experiences (see Creswell, 2007).

August (2011) indicated that in her previous study, the participants described each parameter of their lives involving decisions solely to meet personal needs (i.e., authenticity) rather than the needs of others. August added that within the personal needs parameter, the individual focused on oneself in making decisions or on center of awareness. August subsequently described analyzing the balancing of needs as women juggle work and personal activities. Finally, challenging needs involved the desire to professionally learn and grow as well as finding stimulating, interesting work to support this desire (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006). Therefore, the textual and structural descriptions provided in this study captured the overall essence of challenges encountered during the work-life experiences of female state government workers.

The research design chosen for the study was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research was conducted when a problem or issue required exploration (see Creswell, 2007). The KCM was applied in the research which has been studied extensively using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies with male and female participants working within corporate America (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006). Mainiero and Sullivan added that a narrative approach was overly narrow for the scope of the study, but captured the experience of an individual. There were a number of narrative designs with this focus, and all involved documented stories of individual experiences (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006). In this study, the issues explored were all related to career, and

family life decisions of women within the state government workforce, and this design was considered, the phenomenological approach which was ideal in exploring the “why factor.” (see Creswell, 2007).

Grounded theory seeks to generate new theory (see Creswell, 2007). In addition, I applied an already existing theory to KCM. Grounded theory was not appropriate for research in capturing the essence of the lived experiences of women. The final method considered was biographical study which involved the exploration of the detailed life stories of individuals, focusing on life stages. However, this method was not chosen because I was exploring women’s decision making in career choices in state government workers.

The initial phase of the phenomenological process began with acknowledging a need to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of women’s lived experiences to get insight into their career choices (see Englander, 2012). For this study, I chose the qualitative, phenomenological approach to explore the meaning and essence of the experiences of women as they made career-family decisions. The KCM was applied in this research, which focused on the needs of women (i.e., authenticity, balance, and challenge). In phenomenology, the lived experience was drawn through in-depth interviews (Moustakas, 1994) which was the data collection method best suited for this study. This allowed me to identify and analyze the career-life decisions made by the participants from the data gathered within the natural environments of the participants. Phenomenological studies described the meaning of lived experiences grounded in a phenomenon of interest from the perspectives of the participants (Creswell, 2007).

Role of the Researcher

My participatory role in the study was that of an interviewer. I also created and placed a flier in a common area of the study site for purposes of sample recruitment. Upon approval of the study and sample selection, the interviews were scheduled. Each session began with an introduction of the study delivered to the participants. A disclosure document was provided with an informed consent form that included information regarding a participant's right to discontinue the interview at any time. Upon confirmation of participant understanding of all verbal and written information, the interview began. To eliminate potential bias, I maintained manual notes on comments made during data collection. I also bracketed any personal experiences during the interview sessions (see Creswell, 2007).

I might have known a participant as an acquaintance, but I did not include individuals with whom I had a personal or professional relationship. I have been employed with the same state-government agency for 25 years; hence, I am familiar with many workers within the agency. However, I do not know others who work for a different government agency within the same building. As a supervisor, women who worked under my supervision were excluded from study participation. My title had no power over those selected to participate.

Methodology

Participant-Selection Logic

The study sample for the research included women who work in state government agencies. Convenience sampling was performed. As noted earlier, a flier was posted and

handed out, and snowball sampling was also implemented. I recruited a sample of seven participants, all female state-government employees. Potential participants received a telephone call to confirm their interest in the study.

Three qualitative studies related to the career paths of women were reviewed for the research to obtain a relevant sample size (see August, 2011; Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2011; Hertneky, 2012). Hertneky (2012) interviewed 12 female college presidents as a purposeful sample meeting the following three selection criteria:

(a) services within a current presidency from 2 to 6 years; (b) current position was first presidency; and (c) current service was for a private, liberal-arts institution or state university system. August (2011) interviewed 14 participants in over a 12-year period. The interview protocol was composed of 14 open-ended, preformulated questions. Grant-Vallone and Ensher (2011) interviewed 23 women from southern California with a wide range of career backgrounds who met the following inclusion criteria: (a) an education minimum of a bachelor's degree, (b) at least one child under 5 years of age, (c) married or in a committed relationship, and (d) a perception of current work as a career.

Candidates for participation in the research not only met the inclusion criteria, but were also willing to participate in a study interview. Creswell (2007) defined *data saturation* as the process of reaching a point when no new information was drawn from the data collection. Creswell (1998) recommended “long interviews with up to 10 people” for a phenomenological study (pp. 65, 113). In this research, I collected data from seven participants for a representation of the breadth and depth of the phenomenon under study.

Instrumentation

A demographic questionnaire was used for participant screening in the study. The demographics collected included age, race, gender, marital status, number of children, and income. An interview protocol was used in the delivery of questions during face-to-face interviews, and each hour or less session was audio recorded. After the demographic information was gathered, 21 interview questions were asked (see Appendix A), as the sessions were tape recorded and my observations notated.

Pilot Study

Pilot studies were often conducted to test conceptual ideas and develop interview questions (Yin, 2009). Baker (1994) opined that a pilot study included a sample size of 20% of the sample size planned for the primary study. Therefore, I recruited two participants of any age or race for a pilot study. The results provided information on whether the research questions needed changing based on how participants answered and I found that all questions were valid. In addition, the procedures for recruitment, participation and data collection were carefully handled and were checked to see if interviews held in a secure room with no interruptions were successful. All elements were met and the interviews continued in the same manner as the pilot study participants.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The procedures for sample recruitment in the research required careful consideration to the needed size of the sample and the specific type of sampling necessary for the study, as well as ethical considerations. A flier was posted or handed out to women outside of the state government building. All potential participants were

provided with a consent form that met the requirements of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the American Psychological Association (APA). The purpose of the study and my contact information were included. When consent was returned, an interview was scheduled via telephone, emailed, or postal mail.

On the scheduled dates, I conducted the study interviews using an audio recorder. I met each participant at a location that was most comfortable for the interviewee. Each session was expected to consume 1 hour or less, as needed. The work and family life stories of each respondent were captured with a small recording device, and each interviewee reviewed his or her respective interview transcription and corresponding notes taken by me to ensure accuracy.

As noted earlier, interviewing is the most common form of data collection in qualitative research (Lichtman, 2010). Sessions conducted for the study were audio recorded with the approval of the Walden University IRB and the participating state-government agency. Lichtman indicated that the individual in-depth interviews is a type of qualitative approach frequently perceived as a conversation between the interviewer and participants. The qualitative approach allowed me to hear participants say in their own voices and in their own languages and narratives their lived experiences. All interview questions were delivered in English, and each respondent was allowed to request clarification if they did not fully understand specific terminology.

As also noted earlier, participants in the study were interviewed wherever they were most comfortable. I took notes during the interviews, and the session recordings

were transcribed. The identifications of all participants were protected and held strictly confidential.

Data Analysis Plan

According to Taylor and Bogdan (1998), the overall aim of data analysis was to gain insight from participants. The KCM parameters developed by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) were authenticity, balance, and challenge. The parameters showed various ways in representing women within their early, mid, and later career stages. The KCM offered the parameters with analysis and approaches that was reliable.

According to Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) rounded theory was rooted in data representing reality and needs analysis in the phenomenon of interest, related facts, and condition under study. The construct was useful when a lack of well established theory exists to explain the phenomenon of interest or the need to view the phenomenon from a different perspective (Mainiero & Sullivan). The KCM offered a general outline for describing key concepts related to the careers of women, and the use of grounded theory for exploring the meanings of key concepts. In this study, the KCM was used in referencing women working in state government. The majority of research focused on the working lives of women in their early stages to later stages of life, but lacked the exploration of facts to explain the experiences of this population in depth. In the study, data analysis provided insight into the unique meanings assigned to the parameters of the KCM (i.e., authenticity, balance, and challenge). I categorized the interview data into themes related to the KCM which affected transitions. The data analysis process involved several steps (see Creswell, 2009): It was organized and prepared for analysis, which

included transcription of the individual interviews and typing of the field notes; I reviewed all data were reviewed several times to obtain a general sense of the information and reflected on its overall meaning; Any discrepancies were reviewed with the respective participants. The interviewees were checked and transcripts were verified prior to progression to the coding process.

Data analysis were based upon the interview transcripts and any additional follow up information received. The transcripts were reviewed thoroughly, and the text were determined as it related to these concepts of authenticity, balance, and challenge, as defined by the KCM. These three concepts were considered core categories essential in explaining the test measurement. Glaser and Straus (1967) indicated that this was achievable by implementing a coding technique of constant comparative analysis. This technique entailed labeling parts of text according to whether they were similar to text parts from interviews processed earlier (Glasser & Strauss). In addition, if found to be similar it was placed into the same category and labeled accordingly, and if not, it was moved into a new category with a different label (Glasser & Strauss). Following numerous repetitions and sorting of the properties and dimensions of each category, a coding scheme was ultimately developed to represent the concepts of authenticity, balance, and challenge.

Specific properties of the *authenticity* category were

- taking care of ones needs,
- (b) accepting own self,
- compromising life situations, and

- finding the meaning of work.

In the work-life or *balance* category, there were techniques for improving work-life situations,

- helpful connections between work and personal life, and
- harmful relations in work-life situations.

The properties for the *challenge* category were

- continually striving to grow, proving ability, and
- basically showing interest in work.

A standard for all coded incidences was meaningful and unique data was encountered during coding.

All interviews and data analyses conducted were analyzed. Hertneky (2012) explained that narrative data was analyzed thematically while searching for categories, connecting threads, patterns, and themes within and across each narrative and, wherever possible, using the words and phrases of the participants as codes during the process. Hertneky also suggested the use of statistical computer software for the organization and coding of the interview transcripts.

Questions related the interview data collected, as well as the substance and underlying meanings of the data were recorded in the margins of the transcription. The coding process were used to generate themes and the detailed descriptions in the participants own words. The themes and descriptions were subsequently developed into a single general description and also represented in narrative form and labeled. The final

step in the data analysis involved interpreting or drawing meaning from the data (see Creswell, 2009). This captured the essence of the phenomenology related to women who made career-life decisions based upon their needs.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Qualitative research needed some assurance that the data collected accurately revealed the participants' experiences, even while considering the possibility of researcher bias. Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to this notion as "trustworthiness" or the idea that audiences must be persuaded that findings were important. In qualitative research, the aim of the researcher was to develop an understanding of the phenomenon by examining the ways in which participants experienced, perceived, and made sense of their lives (Kornbluh, 2015). Kornbluh added that through participant's perspectives, researchers recognized their own biases, explored alternative explanations, and gained understanding of the phenomenon under study. The process contributed to ensuring the ethical responsibility of researchers to accurately reflect the lived experiences of their sample populations (American Psychology Association, 2015). Participant trust was also developed as comfort was increased in providing authentic interview responses (Kornbluh, 2015).

Some strategies used in qualitative research followed in the study to ensure data trustworthiness. All data were locked in an office and maintained in a secure fashion throughout the study. This included all interview transcripts, recordings, a memory stick, post interview follow-ups, coding patterns and the sequenced revisions of coding patterns, analytic and procedural memos, and the notes taken. All interviewees had the

opportunity to look over their respective transcripts and made corrections as deemed necessary.

Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability

Researchers found qualitative equivalents to traditional quantitative approaches to validation (see Creswell, 2007). Lincoln and Guba (1985) addressed the following four criteria used for validation by qualitative researchers: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria comprised the foundation of trustworthiness in qualitative research (see Creswell, 2007). *Credibility* referred to whether the results of a study accurately reflected the interpretation of the participant's articulation (Creswell). In addition, it translated into the accuracy of all types of data collection such as observing and interviewing the participant's experiences as well as generalization of the findings (Rudestam & Newton, 2007).

The criterion of dependability was interchanged with reliability of a study. Under comparable settings, if a study was replicated, it was characterized as dependable. *Confirmability* was analogous to objectivity. One method of increasing confirmability was through external auditing. Within the four foundational pillars of trustworthiness, 10 strategies that ensured trustworthiness were triangulation, peer review, researcher bias and reflexivity, member checking, thick description, and participant protection (see Creswell, 2007). In the study, six strategies mentioned were utilized to ensure trustworthiness.

Ethical Procedures

Triangulation ensured credibility via internal validity and was defined as analysis based upon multiple sources, methods, investigators, and/or theories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulating in qualitative research involved corroborating evidence from different sources and/or participants validating their perspectives regarding the phenomenon under study (Lincoln & Guba). In this study, information gathered from the interview sessions were checked for clarity at the time of each interview. Field notes were used as a means of triangulating information and providing procedures, context, and detail. This ensured transferability (i.e., external validity). Triangulation was included in the interview data and the results of member checking.

Peer review took on the collective role of a “devil’s advocate” (Creswell, 2007, p. 2008). This was not performed in the study. Each participant checked and verified the interpretations of the data and the findings. In clarifying *researcher bias*, I documented biases and perspectives with the potential to influence the approach and interpretation of the study. In reflecting these biases throughout the study, I needed to be reflexive. *Reflexivity* was evident when a researcher was aware of personal biases and life experience that conveyed in the respective study (see Creswell, 2007). This awareness was made clear in the study by recording any biases on field notes.

The representation of data required that researchers disclose their own biases as a way of providing understanding of the data given. As the researcher in this study, I am a woman in the mid stage of my career and employed as a state government employee. I am working toward my doctorate degree in organization psychology. I am married with children and a supervisor within in the state government workforce. I do admire women

with children balancing work and family life. As I clarified information regarding my biases and position, I am addressing confirmability. Clarification of researcher bias is important in any study. I have been working with a state government agency for more than 25 years. During these years, I made friends and know individuals with whom I work with on a personal and professional level. I am cognizant of this throughout the study and bracketed any personal experiences accordingly.

During the interview sessions conducted in this study, I built trust with the participants, made them feel comfortable to share their experiences. I explained the intent of the research to each interviewee, and provided background information relating to my educational career. Following this interaction, I asked the participants to share their own educational backgrounds. The respondents had an opportunity to check all collected data after their respective interview or via a copy of the interview transcript provided upon request.

Member checking was noted earlier, the interviewees reviewed their respective transcripts for any needed clarification or feedback on my interpretation and findings. This was referred to as member checking (see Creswell, 2007). This technique established credibility for qualitative studies (Creswell). The process was crucial for assessing trustworthiness because it involved researcher follow up with participants to verify that the findings reflected the meanings intended by participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicated that member checking operated under the assumption that researchers were influenced by their subjective lived experiences, often

entering a research endeavor with a specific position that influenced their analysis. Kornbluh (2015) opined that member checking was for investigators who viewed the research process as participatory, conducive to building participant capacity, collaboration, and a learning process for both researchers and their selected participants. The act of engaging in dialogue and providing feedback on the qualitative findings of researchers increased participant “ownership” of the data collected toward positive social change (Kornbluh).

Thick description referred to a detailed reporting of the settings and participants in the study. I made sure that privacy and security were in place of the setting.

Participant protection ensured the privacy of the participants in this study was of utmost importance for the integrity and credibility of the research. Confidentiality, privacy, anonymity, informed consent, full disclosure, and debriefing were examples of procedures outlined in related statutes (*The 2012 Florida Statutes*, 2012). The Code of Federal Regulations required the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to be responsible for identifying the ratio of risks-to-benefits of a study. This included the level of risk involved in confidentiality with research studies and informed consent (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2013). The IRB reviewed and approved procedures specifying data collection in this study with *approval number 11-16-17-0059570*. In addition, the IRB ensured that requirements were met to protect the privacy of subjects and maintained the confidentiality of data. Lastly, the IRB was in charge of reviewing and approving interview samples.

As recommended by the Office for Protection from Research Risks, the collection of data was subject to oversight by the local IRBs who convened before approving this study. Written informed consent were obtained from each participant in accordance with regulations set forth by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2013). Included among the basic elements of informed consent were a clear description of the specific types of research conducted and procedures for protecting the privacy of subjects and maintaining data confidentiality. Informed consent information describing the nature and purpose of the research were as specific as possible. Informed consent documents did not include any other language through which subjects were made to waive or appear to waive any legal rights. The IRB reviewed and approved a protocol specifying the conditions under which data accepted and shared, ensuring adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and maintain data confidentiality.

In the study, the female participants were provided a consent form to ensure confidentiality. They were informed at the beginning of each interview that referrals of other women working within their state government agency were accepted for possible participation in this study. Participants were informed that they can discontinue the interviews at any time. In addition, to minimize the risk of harm to all participants, informed consent were collected onsite prior to the conclusion of each interview. No identifying personal information were included within any research documentation. Confidential data were securely locked in a cabinet in my home for at least 5 years upon completion of this study. My email and cell phone information were provided for any questions that may arise.

Summary

The methods applied in the phenomenological study were detailed. Throughout data collection, I focused on the perceptions of seven women among the state government workforce. The guiding research questions addressed the career family life decisions of the study sample, as they relate to women's needs. As the sole researcher, all data were collected and analyzed. I interviewed women who worked within the state government who met the criteria, and were willing to be participate. Issues of trustworthiness and data management were vital to the success of qualitative studies (Hertneky, 2012). I addressed these issues in the research by outlining strategies used for the validation of qualitative study. data analysis were completed, and the data collection results and findings of the study were reported in detail.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of women in state government on work-life challenges and how the KCM explained the career decisions in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge. It was important to understand women's perspectives related to their life's decisions to get a better understanding of their lived experiences. My aim was to explore the career paths of women working in government based on challenges faced such as a low number of promotional opportunities, scarce financial rewards, and time demands. Promotion within the workplace required women to devote increasingly more time at work and gaining greater visibility (Naqvi, 2011). Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) opined that the career paths of women were based upon job satisfaction or fit.

The lack of advancement opportunities for women, coupled with the low attention to career planning due to family demands hindered female workers from making decisions toward upward career mobility (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007). To gain insight into understanding this phenomenon on women working in state government, I followed a qualitative approach and used in-depth research open ended questions by interviewing women in a reserved room in a state building. My intent was to identify the goals of women as they relate to their government careers, allowing organizations to better provide support through career-counseling services or human resource professionals. The participants provided information on their lived experiences and the rationale behind their work life decisions. To capture the reality of lived experience as expressed by participants, I posed two research questions:

RQ 1 What were the challenges for women employed within state government, in terms of developing a work-life balance?

RQ 2 How did the KCM explain the career choices of women, in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge? In this chapter, I focused on the pilot study, setting, demographics, data collection, and data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and summary.

Pilot Study

The pilot study included a sample size of 20% of the sample size planned for the primary study, so two participants were recruited for the pilot study. Creswell (1998) recommended “long interviews with up to 10 people” for a phenomenological study (pp. 65, 113). However, my sample size total were seven participants of which two were pilot study participants. Recruitment efforts were made through posting fliers on the main floor elevators. A snowball effect did take place, and participants were recruited by posting pilot study fliers in the state building in Northern California. Fliers were posted for two weeks. Two female participants participated in the pilot study and completed demographic forms. The interview questions revealed were found in Appendix A.

These seven steps were taken to conduct the pilot study:

- Fliers regarding this study and contact information were posted for two weeks on the main floor elevators in a state building.
- Potential participants called by phone, and I scheduled the date and time for the interview to be conducted in a reserved, vacant room in a state building.

- Pilot participants came into a reserved, vacant room, and I warmly greeted and provided participants the demographic form to complete and then the consent form was given.
- The demographic form was used to obtain personal background information to categorize participants based on age and then to label the participants from P001 to P007 in the order they were interviewed.
 - (a) A set of interview questions was placed in front of the participants, and I read aloud the questions. The interviews were audio taped, and participants' responses were written verbatim. Total time for this process was less than 1 hour. The pilot participants were both Asian women; one was 48 years old, and the other was 65 years old, and both have worked for the state government for 8 to 10 years and attained bachelor's degrees.
 - (b) To avoid bias the demographic and consent form consisted this question, do you currently work with or have worked in the past with the researcher? Both pilot participants responded, "No." In addition, the consent form allowed a participant to obtain a copy of their transcript. Options to receive copies were via mail or email. This was part of member checking mentioned in the Trustworthiness section.
 - (c) Transcription of the interviews was typed before data analysis. Data were used to search for categories, connecting threads, patterns, and themes within and across each narrative and, wherever possible, using the words and phrases of the participants as codes during the process. However, there was no statistical

computer software used for the organization and coding of the interview transcripts. Transcripts were transcribed using the Microsoft Word document and the audiotape recorder which were transcribed verbatim.

Setting

In the span of two weeks, I collected data for this investigation in a natural work setting. For convenience, the location was chosen in a state government building where participants go to work. In this state government building, there were many state agencies occupying 22 floors. However, the interviews were conducted in a reserved, vacant room in the state building for privacy. Participants scheduled their interviews on their own time during their break or lunch periods. The reserved room had one table and two chairs opposite each other. The consent and demographic forms were provided to each participant. Once both forms were completed, I asked if they had any questions before starting the interview and then began the interview process. I informed the participants that the interviews were tape recorded. Next, I placed the interview questions on the table in front of them to allow them to read along with me. I read each question aloud and wrote down what they said verbatim. Participants were informed that they had the option to receive their transcript following the interview in order to check for accuracy. When interviews were over, I asked if they had any comments or questions and then escorted them out to the exit. For each of the participants, this process was conducted in the same manner, and in the same reserved room in the state government building.

Demographics

Criteria for participation included women of any age working as a state government employee. Seven total women participated in this study between the ages of 26 to 65. The seven participants were ages 26 (1), 46 (1), 48 (1), 52 (1), 62 (1), and 65 (2). Demographic information included age, phone number, race, gender, education, if person is a state employee, length of time, worked in state service, position, full-time or part-time, marital status, children and their ages, and if they work or have worked with the researcher in the past. All participants completed the demographics form. Of the seven participants, five were of Asian descent, and all were female working full-time and all responded *No* to the question about working with the researcher currently or in the past. Female participant attributes were found in Table 1.

Table 1

Female Participant Attributes Working Full-Time

| <u>Participant</u> | <u>Education</u> | <u>Race</u> | <u>Marital status/Child</u> | <u>State service</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| P001 | BS Medical | Asian | Married/5 children | 10 years |
| P002 | BS Psych | Asian | Married/3 children | 8 years |
| P003 | College | Pacific Islander | Divorced/2 children | 25 years |
| P004 | Some college/ Trade school | Asian | Single/0 children | 2.5 years |
| P005 | 2 yrs. college | Hispanic | Married/2 children | 18 years |
| P006 | AA degree | Asian | Married/4 children | 26 years |
| P007 | BS Accounting | Asian | Married/0 children | 27+ years |

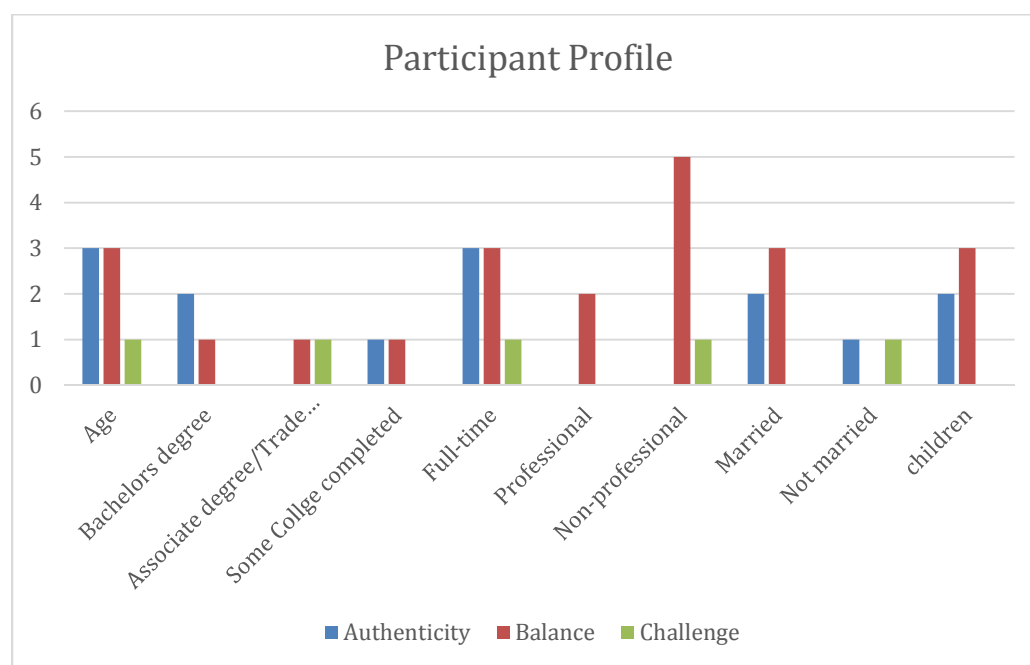


Figure 1. Participant profile. The first pilot participant, P001, was Asian, 65 years old, and attained a BS degree as a medical technician in the Philippines. She is a current state employee who has worked for the state for 10 years and is working as a Custodian. She is married with five children. The second pilot study participant, P002, was Asian, 48 years old, attained a BS Psychology, and was a prior state employee who worked 8 years in state government, but is now working for the federal government as a professional. She is married with three children.

P003, was Pacific Islander, 62 years old, who completed some college years and has been with the state for 25 years as a clerk and is divorced with two children. P004, was Asian, 26 years old, completed some college years in her country and migrated to the United States where she attended trade school will soon graduate. She has 2 years of experience working for the state and is currently a clerk. She is single with no children.

P005, was Hispanic, 52 years old, has completed two years college and has been working for the state for 18 years as a clerk. She is married with two children. P006, was Asian, 46 years old, has an AA degree, she has 26 years of state service, and is a professional. She is married with four children. P007, was Asian, 65 years old, attained a BSC in Accounting and has been working for the state for more than 27 years as a clerk. She is married with no children.

I replaced the names of participants with labels using P001 to P007 for each participant. The purpose for using labels was to identify the participant and to record the flow of all data gathered for that participant. In an effort to maintain confidentiality, I conveyed the labels assigned to each participant in numerical order of interview date. Labels were used to identify the code for the KCM model used during the data collection process found on Table 3. I introduced the seven participants in this study according to the date of their initial interviews.

The coding for the kaleidoscope model was found on Table 3 with labeled participants. To classify the following three codes of authenticity, balance, and challenge the following explains the coding mechanism in categorizing women by using the *age range*:

- Challenge (C) – (1) Woman age 20-30
- Balance (B) – (3) Women ages 31- 59
- Authenticity (A) – (3) Women ages 60 – 70.

The KCM model of A-authenticity, B-balance, C-challenge were used to explain and identify the codes for the three themes that emerged.

Table 3

Characteristics and ABC Coding

| <u>Participant</u> | <u>Occupation</u> | <u>Age</u> | <u>KCM (code)</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| P001 | Custodian | 65 | (A) - Authenticity |
| P002 | Professional | 48 | (B) - Balance |
| P003 | Clerical | 62 | (A) - Authenticity |
| P004 | Clerical | 26 | (C) – Challenge |
| P005 | Clerical | 52 | (B) - Balance |
| P006 | Professional | 46 | (B) - Balance |
| P007 | Clerical | 65 | (A) - Authenticity |

Note. A visual diagram helps to demonstrate the ABC model of women and their characteristics with ABC coding based on their age range.

Table 4

ABC Kaleidoscope Career Model for Women

Authenticity - Later Years (A) (P001, P003, P007) coding (A) (3)

- In later years, women have been freed from balance issues, so questions of authenticity arise. This issue moves to the forefront.
- Women also wish for challenge and remained concerned about balance, but the kaleidoscope shifts according to the woman's choices and desires in each arena as dictated by her life patterns.

Balance - Middle Years (P002, P005, P006) coding (B) (3)

- In middle years, women cope with issues of balance and family/relational demands. This issue moves to the forefront.
- Women also wish for challenge and authenticity, but these issues take on a secondary role as compromises were made for balance issues.

Challenge - Early Years (P004) coding (C) (1)

- In early years, life/career pattern for women is to be concerned with goal achievement and challenge in their careers.
 - Issues of balance and authenticity were there, but is not priority while she pursues her career interests.
-

Note. Adapted from “The ABC Kaleidoscope Career Model for Women” A chart developed by Mainiero, L. A., & Sullivan, S. E. (2005). Kaleidoscope careers: An alternate explanation for the opt-out revolution. *Academy of Management Executive*, 19, 106–123.

Data Collection

The procedures for data collection began December 6, 2017 and concluded on December 20, 2017. I used the convenient sampling as a strategy to recruit. I initially posted fliers on the main floor by the elevators in a state building. I announced the need

for volunteers to first participate in a pilot study found on Appendix B, and then posted a detailed flier for more volunteers found on Appendix C. The criteria for women working in state agencies excluding my department made recruitment efforts challenging based on the number of employees per department. Each department has about 200 up to 3,000 employees working in the state building, and possible number of participants anticipated were around 12, if the posting was up for one month. In the selection process, I included the question: Do you currently work with or have worked in the past with researcher? This question was used as a factor to address the relationship between researcher and participant indicating that we have no employer-employee relationship. In this recruitment, all participants responded that they did not work with the researcher. Member checking was later discussed under the Trustworthiness section.

There were seven participants who called and all seven participants were scheduled for interviews. On the flier, participants were instructed to call the researcher, and the researcher scheduled the interviews by phone. Participants had 21 interview questions that was audiotaped. They filled out the demographic form, consent form and were interviewed as stated in the instrumentation section in Chapter 3. The whole process took less than one hour to finish. The completion of the demographics ranged from 1-2 minutes, the consent form ranged from 3-5 minutes, and the interview ranged from 20-40 minutes. I went over the consent form to ensure that they understood their rights as participants. I then asked if they had any questions before the interview started and P005 commented, "I told my husband about this study and we were happy to know that a study

is being done for state employees, especially on women. As a state employee, it is about time that women government workers become a focus and voices heard.”

At the conclusion of each initial interview, I thanked each candidate and at this time, participants who requested copies of their transcript were given options to receive via mail or email. Copies of transcripts were provided within two weeks. All forms collected and generated during the data collection stage were uploaded to a password protected computer located at work and at home. The original paper/handwritten documents were destroyed after a digital copy was created. The audio files for each interview were destroyed immediately following the process of transcription. Data related to this study were managed, stored, and maintained in accordance with the described details presented in Chapter 3.

The data collection procedure varied from the plan presented in chapter 3 which include:

- Income was part of the demographics, but was not included in this study. Income replaced the position title as professional, clerical or other. The information was not relevant to answer the research question. Instead, the title showed their direct level of position that is more relevant in terms of their advancement in government work.
- In data collection, a statement that interviews were held wherever the participants were comfortable in being interviewed was changed from “wherever the participant is comfortable” to “a reserved, vacant room in the building.”

- In addition, on Chapter 1 under the Assumptions, Scope, Delimitations, and Limitations heading, the following statements changed from:
 - (a) “Permission requested from the director to conduct a wide survey of all employees were distributed with a description of the study.” This statement was no longer true as this study excluded participation of my department.
 - (b) The reasonable measure to address this limitation was to conduct the research outside my “division, excluding staff members under my supervision, but continuing to include the entire department.” This changed to excluding participation of my department.

My goal for this study was to engage a sample of women working in government by exploring their lived experiences. During this period of recruitment, seven individuals expressed their interest to voluntarily participate in this study. All seven were eligible to participate based on the criteria that they were women working in state government. The data collection phase concluded after each participant’s interview process and transcripts were provided.

Data Analysis

The five phases of specific strategies performed were to complete an analysis of the raw data gathered while using the in-depth interview technique. Qualitative literature indicated that member checks had several advantages for both researchers and participants (Kornbluh, 2015). Kornbluh cited the following advantages for member

checking in data analysis for both researchers and participants. My strategic procedure followed after each phase.

First phase of data analysis was to offer a chance to detach personal biases of the researcher by soliciting alternative viewpoints regarding the interpretation of the data (Bryman 2004; Lincoln & Guba 1985; Marshall & Rossman 2010). The procedure for anticipating potential barriers such as the tendency for participants to refer to the researcher as the expert was by identifying the position of the researcher (management) and politics present within the research by establishing transparent relations with participants (Kornbluh, 2015). When first entering the setting, I assessed and identified the power (keeping in mind my position as management) and politics at play within the environment by focusing on particular elements such as education, occupational status and the political environment being in the premises of a government agency. I engaged in critical reflexivity identifying my own position (management) of power. A neutral setting was chosen to hold the interviews. In gathering the demographics, this gave the researcher more personal information to become acquainted and comfortable with the individual offsetting potential power differences, areas of conflict, and misinterpretation.

The second phase of data analysis was to support the ethical obligation of the researcher to ensure accurate presentation of participant narratives (APA 2015; Fossey et al. 2002). The procedure for conveying the data analysis process with transparency was a significant barrier that kept participants from voicing their opinions (Kornbluh, 2015). In this procedure, I interviewed the participants and wrote verbatim their lived experiences. Kornbluh indicated that the exposure to data analysis identified prominent findings and

themes. In addition data analysis provided participants the encouragement to question the researcher's interpretations and expand participant understanding (Kornbluh). My goal was to use a systematic process for identifying findings rather than being influenced by personal bias.

The third phase of data analysis was to provide the researcher with an opportunity to gather additional details, addressing any gaps in information or areas of confusion (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). The details about an individual were gathered in the demographics form with personal background information, and the interview questions dealt with the work life challenges of the individual and the decisions made at particular stages in their lives. This provided information covering both work and life situations.

The fourth phase of data analysis was to provide the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the data, presenting a range of perspectives (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In this aspect, I found that the personal information gathered from the demographic form, and information from the in-depth interviews offered a range of perspectives in women's lived experiences.

Lastly, the researcher had the challenge of translating participant feedback into the analysis and final report (Kornbluh, 2015). There were no notes taken other than writing down the answers to each of the questions from participants word for word, the transcripts were written verbatim, and provided to participants who requested copies.

The researcher inductively analyzed the data and developed 10 codes when persistent topics from participants' responses continually appeared see below:

- Stability
- Reliability
- Benefits (Retirement/pension)
- Flexibility in work schedule
- Promotion/upward mobility/advancement opportunities
- Family (i.e., children, husband, parents)
- Prioritizing
- Purpose/Goals
- Remained in same position (no stress or added work responsibilities)
- Content

I then combined the codes into four categories: financial stability, emotional stability, balancing roles, and benefits. Data were analyzed using the KCM theory and considering Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) ABC parameters illustrated on Table 4. However, the process of matching the existing codes to these categories were demonstrated in Table 5.

Table 5

Deductive Categories

| Categories | Codes |
|---------------------|--|
| Financial Stability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stability - Reliability - Benefits (Retirement/pension) - Promotion/upward mobility - Family support (i.e., children, husband, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o parents) - Remained in same position (no stress or added work responsibilities) - Purpose/Goals - Content |
| Emotional Stability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stability - Reliability - Benefits (Retirement/pension) - Flexibility in work schedule - Promotion/upward mobility - Family support (i.e., children, husband, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> parents) - Prioritizing - Purpose/Goals - Remained in same position (no stress or added work responsibilities) - Content |
| Balancing Roles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexibility in work schedule - Family support (i.e., children, husband, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> parents) - Prioritizing |
| Benefits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stability - Reliability - Benefits (Retirement/pension) - Promotion/upward mobility - Remained in same position (no stress or added work responsibilities) - Purpose/Goals - Content |

Note. The themes were identified by using the codes found on Table 5. Regardless of whether they were classified as A- authenticity, B- balance, C – challenge, the same findings were consistent across these groups which differed from Sullivan’s work.

There were no discrepancies found from the emerging themes. Participant responses were similar in both Research Questions 1 on Work-Life Challenges while employed in state service and on Research Question 2 Career Choices in terms of the KCM theory.

Findings showed that women's career decisions were made based on "stability, security, and benefits" in balancing their work-life situation around family obligations. The kaleidoscope shifts according to the woman's choices and desires in each arena as dictated by her life patterns (see Mainiero & Sullivan's ABC KCM model in Table 4).

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Member checking is the standard for establishing trustworthiness (Kornbluh, 2015). In assessing trustworthiness engaging in member checks was the most crucial tactic and under the assumption that researchers were influenced by their subjective lived experience, often entering a research endeavor with a specific position with a potential to influence their analysis (Kleinman 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Soliciting participant input helped ensure researchers' ethical responsibility to accurately reflect participants' lived experiences (American Psychology Association, 2015; Fossey et al. 2002). In collecting and analyzing the data, the following steps taken were to ensure trustworthiness. A sentence was added to the demographics and consent form indicating that participant did not work with the researcher. This process contributed to ensuring the ethical responsibility of researchers to accurately reflect the lived experiences of their sample populations (American Psychology Association, 2015). Participant trust was also developed as comfort was increased in providing authentic interview responses and

member checks were a strategy to ensure trustworthiness (Kornbluh, 2015).

Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba addressed the following four criteria used for validation by qualitative researchers: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as the foundation of trustworthiness. The participants were required to complete the demographics and the consent form under their own signature stating they were state employees. In data collection, the researcher conducted the research using six strategies to ensure trustworthiness: *Triangulation, peer review, researcher bias and reflexivity, member checking, thick description, and participant protection.*

Triangulation ensured credibility via internal validity based upon multiple sources, methods, theories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation in qualitative research involved corroborating evidence from different sources and /or participants validating their perspectives regarding the phenomenon under study. In this study, the information gathered from the interview sessions were checked for clarity and the field notes were taken in conjunction with the audiotape recorded. This ensured transferability (i.e., external validity). In *peer review*, this took on the role of “devil’s advocate” (Creswell, 2007).

To avoid *researcher bias and reflexivity* the researcher was aware of her own personal biases in conducting this study. A journal was kept to make sure of possible personal and professional biases. I am an Asian woman in my middle years working in the state government workforce and in management position. I acknowledged and was aware of these biases. *Reflexivity* was defined as researcher awareness of personal biases

and life experience conveyed in the respective study (Creswell, 2007). The representation of data required that researchers disclosed their own biases. The researcher wrote a statement in the demographic form and the consent form with a question to avoid a bias: Do you currently work with or have worked in the past with the researcher? All participants responded “no.” On the consent form it asked if participants wanted a copy of their transcripts, and three participants responded. Therefore, a copy of their transcripts were provided via email or mail. I engaged in critical reflexivity by identifying my own position (management) of power. The setting was in a dialogue format that emphasized the value of participants’ lived experiences, this built rapport in setting the stage for a more honest and collaborative discussion of findings.

In *member checking*, the participants reviewed their transcripts for clarification and feedback on interpretation and findings (Creswell, 2007). Creswell added that this technique established credibility for qualitative studies. Kornbluh (2015) opined that member checks were for investigator who viewed the research process as participatory and a learning process for both researchers and participants. Kornbluh recommended five strategies and procedures mentioned under the data analysis section for each strategy:

- Anticipating potential barriers by identifying the politics present within the research and establishing transparent relations with participants.
- Conveying the data analysis process with transparency by providing participants with activities simulating data analysis and presenting the data analysis process.

- Reconstructing data collection memories and identifying prominent themes by providing participants with activities to support them in reconstructing their memory of data collection and exposing participants to a multitude of perspectives.
- Establishing guidelines for theme comparisons by deciding on a decision making structure with participants regarding the final set of themes and having examples of participants' narratives.
- Incorporating member checks into data analysis by taking extensive field notes during and after member checks and creating a visual matrix to track data.

Thick description referred to as detailed reporting of the settings and participants in the study strengthens generalizability of the research. *Participant protection* ensured privacy of the participants in the study. Informed consent forms were provided making sure participants were protected when collecting data.

Results

This section addressed the research questions and responses from the participants. Out of seven participants, three requested a copy of their transcripts and others did not want a copy. Transcription was necessary for clarification and feedback on interpretation and findings referred to as member checking (Creswell, 2007). The three who requested copies did not respond back to the researcher for any discrepancies. Participants' responses were transcribed word for word. After interviews were held with or without a copy of their transcript requested. However, I received no feedback from the participants.

Research Questions 1 were comprised of 12 questions and research question 2 comprised of nine questions found on Appendix A.

Research Question1 What are your challenges while employed within state service in terms of developing a work-life balance? Participants' responses were the following:

P001 (A) responded:

Stability. I was 56 years old. Worked for state government due to retirement benefits. I am having a hard time to get vacation. I work at night so I can do my day at home, spend time at home.

P002 (B) responded:

Job security and stability. I want stability and benefits. Flexibility with scheduling to care for children. Promotion, upward mobility are positive changes. I strive to balance my work and personal, but I tend to spend more time at work than home. It's a struggle to balance.

P003 (A) responded:

I was laid off from the private sector. In my late 20s. It's reliable, and great benefits. It is who you know and not what you know. I am willing to go to other departments for promotion.

P004 (C) responded:

I value stability. I did not want to work crazy hours. I was 24 years old. Stability. I am looking at stepping up. It is important to not bring stress back home. My boss is flexible and understanding.

P005 (B) responded:

I worked in Mexican government for 15 years. I was used to and identified myself working for the state government. I did not know English. I had support of my mom, and my husband. We covered for our son's needs.

P006 (B) responded:

Security, benefits, and pension. I was 21 years old. I applied straight out of college. Scheduling, there is no flexible hours I have to work 8:00 am to 5 pm. My husband and I work in caring for kids.

P007 (A) responded:

The benefits, location of office and flexibility of schedule. I was 36 years old. I worked 16 years for human resources. In prioritizing work and personal, it depends on what is important at this time. I have a simple life.

P001 (A) responded:

I take my time. To enhance my knowledge and develop friendship. Having meeting some friends, socializing so not bored at home. To achieve my dream by winning the lotto. My goals are met. I value my job. I work hard.

P002 (B) responded:

It was a challenge when kids were younger. I gave priorities at home. As children grew older, my personal sacrifice is I tend to choose work before personal responsibilities. I relied on my parents, husband, and older daughter in helping

P003 (A) responde:

I am a workaholic, but now retired. I got laid off. I was a computer operator. My kids are grown. I am by myself, I have chosen when and what I want to work now. Hours are not too flexible.

P004 (C) responded:

I am back in school, I want to be a massage therapist as side business. I lost my grandfather, and my five year relationship ended. I will step up looking for opportunities. We need to challenge ourselves to grow.

P005 (B) responded:

My supervisor is flexible when I need to volunteer at my son's school, take my mother to therapy. Language barrier. Worked in the same position for years. I've been neglecting my family due to work. Retire healthy and enjoy life.

P006 (B) responded:

Other supervisors cover for me. Busy raising family. To retire at age 55 survive with my pension. I reached the highest position as supervisor, due to changes I have to commute. As a state employee, salary is a concern.

P007 (A) responded:

To retire comfortably When I retire, I want to help the church. I like to go to places. I don't have kids and life is simple. When I was younger I wanted a higher position, but not at this time.

Research Question 2 How does the KCM explain women's career choices in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge?

Women's career decisions from the early, middle and later years revolved around family situations. Women's decisions may have to do with their ethnicity or cultural background. However, further studies may reveal variances due to cultural differences.

P001 (A) responded:

There are advancements available. I looked for promotions. I'm too old.

P002 (B) responded:

I relied on my family for help. I did get promotions. My career path lead me to where I am at. I didn't choose this path, it lead me here in a good way. I reached my career goal.

P003 (A) responded:

I took computer classes at community college, due to kids. I couldn't pursue career and education. I got a few promotions. If the department has somebody in mind they will get that person. Looking forward to renovating my home.

P004 (C) responded:

I have a support system. My supervisor is supportive if seeking promotion. I want to step up, I want upward mobility. I want to make sure that my happiness is also fulfilled by the work that I do.

P005 (B) responded:

I want more responsibilities because I am comfortable with current responsibilities. I am already doing what the job entails in the higher position without the salary. I have considered having a higher position and know it demands more.

P006 (B) responded:

Thought of changing career only due to commute. There is nothing for me to get into at this stage in my life, I am familiar with my work. I sought other opportunities in the past. To retire at age 55.

P007 (A) responded:

At this age, I don't want stress. When I was young at that time I handled a managerial position, I am still working at this time my goal is to retire, but planning to retire soon. I like to travel.

The ABC Kaleidoscope Career Model seen on Table 4 revealed women working in state government during their early years ranging from ages 20- 30 were more focused on promotional opportunities while balancing their personal lives, but career was most important in their *challenging* years. P004 responded, "I want to step up. I want upward mobility."

In the middle years ranging from ages 31-59, women dealt with *balancing* family and work demands. Women struggled with both work-life challenges, but they had family to help, and supervisors provided flexibility in scheduling except for P002 responded, "It is a struggle to balance. I relied on my family for help. I did get promotions." P005 responded, "My supervisor is flexible when I need to volunteer at my son's school, take my mother to therapy." Women were still challenging themselves to move up in their career and to meet their career goals. Some became content in their own job because they had been there for many years for participants P006 responded, "Nothing for me to get

into at this stage in my life. I am familiar with my work. I did seek other opportunities in the past.”

In the later years ranging from ages 60-70 *authenticity*, women had freedom from their balancing years with family responsibilities. P001 responded, “I looked for promotions when younger, I’m too old now.” P003 who responded, “I took computer classes at community college, due to kids. I couldn’t pursue career and education. I got a few promotions.” P007 responded, “I do not have any ambitions for promotion at this time in my life.

Summary

Overall findings indicated that women working in state government workforce chose and remained in their jobs because of stability, security, and benefits. For research question 1, the overall findings were that stability, security and benefits meant that in order for women who juggle work-life situations, they found a job that provided them the stability, security and benefits for themselves and for their families. For research question 2, the overall findings were that women’s decisions on career movement were made because of family situations that involved support from others (i.e., members of family, supervisor, co-workers). This chapter addressed the explanation of data collection procedures, data analysis, and overall findings. Information on steps to ensure informed consent and data collection procedures were included to provide documentation of ethical research. In addition, tables were used to depict the results. This is significantly different than prior research. Chapter 5 presents the interpretation of the findings with the results

included in more detail along with an interpretation of findings and a discussion of implication.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine the work-life challenges of women and how the KCM explains the career decisions of this population in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge. My intent was to apply the KCM to ultimately gain insight and understanding through the lived experience of working women. The results showed that women's career decisions were made based on stability, security, and benefits by balancing their work-life situation around family obligations. The KCM theory was used to guide the research. In the current study, I revealed that women in general involve family as part of life decisions when making career moves at any age, whether it be to stay or promote within the government.

Results of this study suggest that women working in government tend to stay in their government jobs and look for promotions from within the government field. They have the motivation to seek advancement opportunities when presented and have a support system (i.e., family, supervisor, coworkers) to help them cope with home life situations.

Interpretation of Findings

The number of findings confirm and extend the knowledge of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and begin to fill the literary gap by expanding the research knowledge to include women working in the government workforce. I included the nature of findings from Chapter 2 to confirm or disconfirm my research findings.

Findings in Context of the Literature Review

The first finding confirms previous research related to leadership and job satisfaction. Theorists have claimed that female leaders have their own style of leading in that women in leadership have unique career needs and aspirations and work motivations Ryan and Haslam (2005). Job satisfaction is important to female leaders, rather than solely the power of leadership Chugh and Sahgal (2007). Women in general were more interested in cultivating happiness in their lives than striving for power and prestige Chugh and Sahgal (2007). In this study, I found that two women in government who were in management positions showed similar goals, except for one individual whose aspiration was to reach the highest-level in her career. The other individual had the same aspiration, but her agency had no more advancement opportunities within. She was comfortable in her position and stayed in the same positions for many years.

The second finding confirms that work and family roles conflict and were difficult to combine. According to Fischer et al. (2015), work-family conflict has a negative impact on life satisfaction and well-being. Pradhan et al. (2016) emphasized that work and life situations present ongoing challenges in contemporary times and introduce conflicting demands surrounding professional and home responsibilities. Women in government face the same conflicting demands and challenges balancing work-home responsibilities. They need family, coworkers, and/or supervisor support and flexibility in the schedule to meet their demands. Other challenges were to live in a stress-free environment and not take on added responsibilities. As a result, promotions were passed due to family demands. In addition, Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) indicated that organizations must understand these demands on women. Factors such as family

obligations, simplification of life, and changing values impact the career decisions of women attempting to balance work and personal responsibilities (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Chugh and Sahgal (2007) opined that family demands hinder the professional advancement opportunities of women.

The third finding confirms the results of empirical studies conducted with men and women who shared similar career aspirations and reported a shortage of women in top-level positions (Hoobler et al., 2014). Hoobler, et al. asserted that the contemporary labor market requires women to work and care for their families simultaneously. However, women opted-out to start their own businesses when their jobs did not offer time flexibility (Sullivan and Mainiero, 2008). Sullivan and Mainiero indicated that, with HRD involvement, it was possible to improve the recruitment and retention of these workers. In this study, I found that for women in government, there were no indications that women wanted to move to a private company or be self-employed. If there were any career changes, women in government choose upward mobility within the government. I also discovered that women in government remained in their positions due to stability, security, and benefits. They also stayed because they had the flexibility to work around their family situations. In terms of career goals, some women sought the challenges of accepting more responsibilities through promotion, but others did not take advancement opportunities due to added stress. Moreover, the myth was that work-life systems do not operate hand in hand (Munn, 2013), and as life changes women were spurred by obligations and advancement opportunities during their career.

The KCM offered a means of studying processes within a nontraditional career framework. According to Sullivan and Baruch (2009), the concept of the KCM, when one career decision was made, affected the outcome of the overall career pattern or kaleidoscope. These researchers explained that the kaleidoscope has three mirrors and when rotated, creates infinite patterns (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Individuals focus on three career parameters when making decision[s], thus creating the kaleidoscope pattern of their career. These parameters or motivators were (a) authenticity--choices made by the individual to be true to himself or herself, (b) balance--the individual tries to balance the demands of work and non work activities (i.e., family, friends, elderly relatives, personal interests), and (c) challenge--the need for stimulating work (i.e., responsibility, autonomy, promotion; p. 1557). Women in government were categorized in the three parameters, and findings confirm that women make decisions that affect the outcome of the overall career pattern. This means that women make decisions based on the demands of work and non work activities with support from others.

Work-Life Balance

Munn (2013) viewed work-life goals as a system involving intersecting forces that impacted the work-life balance of employees and the employee-employer relationship. The needs of employees and organizations may impact the availability of work-life initiatives within an organization and the development, design, and implementation of public work-life policy. Kossek et al. (2010) added that formal organizational work-family policies were important resources that enable employees to manage their work and family responsibilities. The types of support were family-

supportive supervision where the supervisor was more empathetic in helping subordinates with their work and family responsibilities (Thomas & Ganster, 1995).

Greenhaus et al. (2012) found that work-family balance through a supportive supervisor was a positively viewed as a family-supportive organizational environment. This finding confirmed that family-supportive supervisors indeed helped some women by being flexible in scheduling and/or had coverage for the individual who needed time to care for her family needs. P006 indicated that, “Other supervisors have no families, if I needed to take leave and they were there, whenever I need help they covered for me.” P005 commented, “I really appreciate the people I work with. I have been lucky to have great supervisors who will be willing to work with me, give me flexibility and understand me when I have to attend or volunteer work at my son’s school or take my mother to therapy.”

DiRenzo et al. (2011) examined the conflict that employees experienced between work and family roles. They suggested that interferences from one role (family) to another role (work) placed demands on time and energy pressuring women to prioritize their roles (DiRenzo et al., 2011). DiRenzo et al. indicated that pressures on women were due to their levels in the position of an organization, and this can make a difference when making decisions in prioritizing their roles. Tang et al. (2014) reported that work and family were important in a person’s life, given that there was a rise in dual-earners and single-parent workers taking care of family responsibilities as well as working. This suggested a positive work-family interface that improved both roles in the quality of life (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). This finding confirms that with dual-earners, women rely

on their significant other when it comes to caretaking responsibilities and activities P005 commented, “For years we were commuting together after my son was born and going to school. We arranged the time to cover our son’s needs.”

Culture and Policy

McDonald et al. (2007) conducted a study exploring the work-life culture with a group of employees within Australia’s local government. The organizational environment supported a work-life balance and was known as a family-friendly workplace. McDonald et al. detailed the aspects of the work-life culture that impacted employees. The first aspect of work-life culture was manager support in the promotion of work-life balance for employees. Based on McDonald’s study, this confirms that women who participated in had similar work-life culture described by McDonald et al. P005 indicated, “My supervisor is flexible when I need to volunteer at my son’s school, take my mother to therapy.” P006 commented, “Other supervisors cover for me. Busy raising family.”

The second aspect of work-life culture that has impacted the employees were having the option to work on a part-time basis (McDonald, et al.). McDonald added that this was identified as a career disadvantage for women who returned to their jobs on a part-time basis following maternity leave. There was no indication from women who participated in my study that part-time was available to them. This finding was disconfirmed for women working in government.

The third aspect of the work-life culture within local government that McDonald et al. (2007) described was gender-neutral and nondiscriminatory policies. The policies in

practice revolved around the working conditions of women. McDonald et al. indicated that, when policies were developed, the issues addressed were those of men, including

- Men's claims to family responsibilities and the novelty of policy utilization.
- The business environment with competitive pressures.
- The domestic organization within employee families including the centrality of the career.

This research did not address gender, and discriminatory policies. In addition, it did not include men in the study and their contextual barriers within their organizations.

The last aspect of the work-life culture impacted participating employees' organizational time. Time expectations were defined as the length of time employees were expected and how they use their time in working productively. Frone, Yardley, and Markel (1997) reported that work-time commitment has been found to reduce work-family conflict. McDonald et al. indicated that many organizations view long work hours as a signal of organizational commitment, productivity, and advancement motivation. Glass and Finley (2002) suggested that organizations need to be more supportive of work-time expectations, and managerial control must be reduced while fostering high productivity through outcome-oriented evaluations of employees. Glass and Finley indicated that, theoretical evidence exists for a "backlash movement," which refers to employee resentment toward others having flexible work arrangements. Complaints will emerge when this opportunity is not available to all employees (Glass & Finley). Conflict, resentment, and issues of fairness were directed to women with children when

they were given more opportunities and flexibility than childless coworkers; therefore, policy must reflect support of the work-life balance (Glass & Finley). Findings disconfirmed that conflict, resentment and issues of fairness were present and not addressed in this study.

Career Experiences

Grant-Vallone and Ensher (2011) opined that working mothers were stressed with when managing work-life challenges. Working mothers found that home life was not as financially rewarding (Grant-Vallone and Ensher). In addition, Grant-Vallone and Ensher asserted that professional women with children were exhausted from the dual roles. Contributors to stress and overload were long work hours and commuting, which resulted in over work, dissatisfaction, and/or reduced organizational commitment (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Dorio, Bryant, & Allen, 2008; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992). Findings confirmed that women in government workforce faced stress in various ways, but were not dissatisfied with work. Promotion demanded more work responsibilities and some women took on the challenges. P005 indicated, "I want more responsibilities because I am comfortable with current responsibilities. I am already doing what the job entails in the higher position without the salary. I have considered having a higher position and know it demands more." However, P007 commented, "At this age, I don't want stress."

Studies revealed that many talented women accepted career roles that were less demanding than they were capable of handling due to primary caregiving responsibilities (August, 2011). Research suggested that women often made professional decisions based

upon family situations (Cole, 1997). They chose family-friendly careers with flexible work schedules, which exemplified this mind-set (Whitmarsh et al., 2007). Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) suggested that, when organizations followed the parameters of the KCM that allowed women to meet their own needs, they discovered the true value of long-term, committed employees. Findings confirmed that women in government were long-term, committed employees who sought stability, security, and benefits in the government workforce; therefore, they remained and looking forward to retirement.

Hertneky (2012) reported increasing attention to the career development of women and the linear, hierarchical, and traditional career path that continued to dominate organizational practice. Human Resource Development played a role in bolstering the self-efficacy of employee career decision making, thereby increasing employee retention and assisting managers in meeting their career goals within their organizations (Peterson, 2009). Findings confirmed that women working in government sought promotions within their agency and remained within the same agency for many years.

Schmidt (2011) posited that married women who opted-out of the labor force were women who have education and career aspirations, and women were marrying highly educated and ambitious men. When women had children, childcare responsibilities involving time and money emerged and many women opted out to work part time. Leaving the workforce equated to a financial risk in divorce or death of a spouse which significantly affected the lives of women and their families. This was relevant to the study, but it did not address this aspect of women's lives. This study confirmed that women were married, had children, and worked full-time.

Bateson asserted that work and life circumstances caused interruptions, competing commitments, discontinuity, repeated redirection, adverse change, and loss in the lives of women (as cited in Hertneky, 2012). Findings confirmed that the discontinuity or interruptions for women in the government occurred during their childbearing years. Work and home were competing commitments for women in authenticity, balance and challenge, but mostly during the balancing years. Tajlili (2014) indicated that the work-life balance at the onset of the 21st century skewed in favor of the term *work-life integration* because professional working mothers found that balance was an unachievable ideal in the fast pace of the contemporary world. P002 indicated that it was a struggle to balance work and home. Balance becomes another measurement of success in work and home life, breaking down the confidence of women already plagued with guilt as they push through the glass ceiling looking to achieve life meaning. Findings confirmed that the glass ceiling effect or an invisible barrier that exists for women and other minorities, limiting their upward mobility, applied in this study. These women were all minorities and if English was the second language, it hindered advancement opportunities. This was just the case for P005 who had been a clerk for more than 10 years.

The Glass Ceiling and Other Advancement Challenges

The glass ceiling effect was the belief that women were not qualified as leaders or to fill high-level positions. Ryan and Haslam (2005) noted that women who broke through the glass ceiling were more likely than men to find themselves in precarious or insecure leadership positions labeled as “glass cliffs.” Findings disconfirmed this context

because two women did reach higher level positions, and were secured in their leadership positions. P002 commented, “My career path led me to where I am at and I reached my career goal.” In addition, P006 indicated, “I sought opportunities in the past, but I am familiar with my work and plan to retire at age 55.”

Lyness and Thompson (2000) reported that challenging job assignments, transition to new job responsibilities, and job mobility were specific developmental experiences that facilitate leadership development. Lyness and Thompson noted that women had less access to challenging work assignments, and high-risk jobs generally carry visibility and provide recognition for the success that translates to future leadership opportunities. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) suggested that women may not seek higher level positions because of their level of self-confidence and the added responsibilities took much time away from home life. Findings disconfirmed that women may not seek higher level positions because women in government who were interviewed showed women who aspired for higher level positions, were motivated and had confidence. P002 and P006 were two women in management who took on the added responsibilities because they had family support to help them in their caretaking role.

Conceptual Framework

Job satisfaction was important to female leaders, rather than having leadership power (Chugh and Sahgal, 2007). In addition, Chugh and Sahgal indicated that, studies of women in organizational settings indicated a lack of career planning among this population of women. Women in general were more interested in cultivating happiness in their lives than striving for power and prestige (Chugh and Sahgal).

Results of the findings identified that women working in state government balanced work-life with other's support. Career decisions to promote were based on stability both financially and emotionally, security, and the benefits (i.e. pension, retirement). Limited studies were conducted on women working in the state government using the KCM model. This study was a qualitative study that had its own limitations.

Limitations of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the work-life challenges of women and how the KCM explains the career decisions of this population in terms of authenticity, balance, and challenge. However, there were limitations that arose within this study:

- First, the study was focused on female workers in the state government workforce excluding the male population. This study included only a small sample of participants in one state government building. I designed this research to be an in-depth review of convenient sampling in order to gain some insight and direction for future research. Thus, the results of this study was not generalizable to the larger population of government workers.
- Second, the study was open to a diverse group of women of all ages and ethnicities in the state building, but only three ethnicities participated in this study. Participants who responded to this study were not representative of all ethnicities. Out of seven participants, the majority were of Asian descent (5), Pacific Islander (1), and Hispanic (1).
- The third study had only one participant categorized in the early years (Challenge), and therefore, saturation was not reached for this category. As the

KCM had an existing coding scheme for age range in each parameter (A,B,C) on the Challenge category there was one participant. Saturation was not reached.

- Lastly, the flier was posted for two weeks because no one else responded for several days in the last week, so the fliers were removed. If given more time, I might have received more participants to reach saturation. Creswell (1998) recommended up to 10 people for a phenomenological study. In this qualitative study, the sample size was seven participants.

Recommendations for Further Research

The significance of this study in balancing work and family life activities was a major problem for many women within the contemporary workplace (Tajlili, 2014). The KCM framework focused on how the KCM explained the career development of women working in state government and how the construct can be applied to explore the career decisions of women based upon work and family demands at the respective points in their careers. The KCM was useful in expanding gender differences in the government workforce. However, this study did not focus on both genders. This phenomenological approach was important in gaining a better understanding of the lived experiences of female government workers. The results of this study were critical to understanding women's lived experiences in the state government workforce. The results of this study showed that women chose to work for the government because of stability, security and benefits. Stability and security, and benefits (i.e., medical, retirement), and these were most attractive and in supporting their families.

The following recommendations eliminated the limitations addressed in the last section:

- Research include both the male and female population for a larger group study.
- The participants be a diversified group with both male and female population.
- To have enough individuals in each stage to reach saturation, the posting of fliers has to be longer for recruitment of participants.

Implications

There were positive social change implications for this study with regard to women entering the state government workforce or women who were currently working. This entailed career planning supported by human resources and policy change leading to more family-friendly work environments. Women remain at their jobs due to satisfaction in serving the public. Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) indicated that corporate strategies be implemented to avoid high turnover from women leaving the workforce due to caregiving responsibilities or lack of ambition. In this study, compared to the private, public employees did not have to leave the workforce, but stayed for promotional opportunities within the government. Policies be developed to not only increase recruitment, but retain workers (Mainerio & Sullivan, 2005). In this study, supervisors were supportive of flexibility in schedule to women who need time off to care for their home life responsibilities. (Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007) indicated that, struggling with child care needs, personal needs, and balancing career aspirations with family obligations amid

competing demands introduced a formidable college challenge. Sullivan and Crocitto added that, this had direct implications for employers and Human Resource Department practitioners. Career models in the 1950s and 1960s tend to support the “male-as-breadwinner” family structure (Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007).

Family-friendly programs focused on rewarding employees and supporting family life with paid day care, option to work from home, and flexible work hours (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Sullivan and Mainiero indicated that organizations that support the needs of women based upon the KCM with options and flexibility was pivotal in workplace situations. In this study, the participants faced similar challenges, but women stayed in their government jobs. In addition, women in government have accessibility to human resources personnel to view career options, and advancement opportunities.

The results provided insight and understanding on the decision making of women employed in state government workforce. The HRD was beneficial for awareness of promotional opportunities. The findings showed that these women were aware, and made decisions to take the advancement opportunity or pass it. For two women, the career path led them to take several job opportunities and reach management positions in their department. These women either chose to stay in government because of stability, security, and benefits with contentment and/or satisfaction.

The KCM facilitated an examination of the interruptions or discontinuity in the career development of these women. The government organization that supported the needs of women based upon the KCM with options and flexibility was pivotal in workplace situations. Human-resource professionals were constantly seeking options

toward improved employee morale to retain workers with valuable company knowledge to maintain pace with global market trends (Akanji, Mordi, & Ojo, 2015).

Findings did expose a greater number of women remaining in their state-government positions, due to stability, security, and benefits. This research revealed that state government jobs provided flexibility in schedules, opportunities for advancements, stability, and benefits.

Conclusion

The overall aim of this study was to provide an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of women working in state government using the kaleidoscope career model. The basic definitions of the KCM parameters were adopted from Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), August (2011) pointed out that the specific nature were left open to allow for potential differences in their representation among women in comparison to the three parameters. This exploration of women's lived experiences led to a much deeper understanding on how women balanced work-life challenges in their lives. This strategy allowed insight into the unique meanings of the general concepts of authenticity, balance, and challenge. Analyses were based on the in-depth interviews in data collection and questions were related to the concepts of authenticity, balance, and challenge as described in one's career. This study demonstrated that the concerns of authenticity, balance, and challenge not only continue to be present in women's work lives, but is intermingled for the woman to choose what is her priority in life.

References

- The 2012 Florida statutes*. (2012). Retrieved from <https://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes>
- Abele, A. E., & Spurk, D. (2011). The dual impact of gender and the influence of timing of parenthood on men's and women's career development: Longitudinal findings. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 35*(3), 225–232.
doi:10.1177/0165025411398181
- Aiswarya, B., & Ramasundaram, G. (2012). A study on interference of work-life conflict between organizational climate and job satisfaction of women employees in the information technology sector. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Management Research and Innovation, 8*(3), 351–360. doi:10.1177/2319510X12 00800315
- Akanji, B., Mordi, C., & Ojo, S. (2015, March). Reviewing gaps in work-life research and prospecting conceptual advancement. *Economic Insights – Trends and Challenges, IV*(LXVII), 21–30.
- Allen, T. D., Herst, D. E. L., Bruck, C. S., & Sutton, M. (2000). Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: A review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 5*, 278–308.
- American Psychology Association. (2015). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Arthur, M. B., & Rousseau, D. M. (1996). The boundaryless career as a new employment principle. In M. B. Arthur & D. M. Rousseau (Eds.), *The boundaryless career* (pp. 3–20). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- August, R. A. (2011). Women's later life career development: Looking through the lens of the kaleidoscope career model. *Journal of Career Development, 38*(3), 208–236. doi:10.1177/0894845310362221
- Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J. K., & Kolb, D. (1997). Unexpected connections: Considering employees' personal lives can revitalize your business. *Sloan Management Review, 38*(4), 11-19.
- Baker, T. L. (1994). *Doing social research* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Bryman, A. E. (2004). Member validation and check. In M. S. Lewis-Beck, A. E. Bryman, & T. F. Liao (Eds.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of social science research methods* (p. 634). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Caceres-Rodriguez, R. (2011). The glass ceiling revisited: Moving beyond discrimination in the study of gender in public organization. *Administrative Society, 45*(6), 674–709. doi:10.1177/0095399711429104
- Chugh, S., & Sahgal, P. (2007). Why do few women advance to leadership positions? *Global Business Review, 8*(2), 351–365. Doi:10.1177/097215090700800211
- Cole, P. M. (1997). Women in family business. *Family Business Review, 10*, 353–371. doi:10.1111/j.1741-6248.1997.00353.x
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. doi: 10.1177/0011000006287390
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

- DiRenzo, M. S., Greenhaus, J. H., & Weer, C.H. (2011). Job level, demands, and resources as antecedents of work-family conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 78, 305-314. doi:10.016/jjvb.2010.10.002
- Dorio, J. M., Bryant, R. H., & Allen, T. D. (2008). Work-related outcomes of the work-family interface: Why organizations should care. In K. Korabik, D. S. Lero, & D. L. Whitehead (Eds.), *Handbook of work-family integration* (pp. 157–176). London, England: Academic Press.
- Ellemers, N. (2014). Women at work: How organizational features impact career development. *Policy Insights From the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 1(1) 46–55. doi:10.1177/2372732214549327
- Elley-Brown. M. J. (2011). The significance of career narrative in examining a high-achieving woman's career. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 20(3), 18–23.
- Englander, M. (2012). The interview: Data collection in descriptive phenomenological human scientific research. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 43, 13–35. doi:10.1163/156916212X632943
- Fischer, J. L., Zvonkovic, A., Juergens, C., Engler, R., & Frederick, H. (2015). Work, family, and well-being at midlife: A person-centered approach. *Journal of Family Issues*, 36(1), 56–86. doi:10.1177/019213X13488370
- Fossey, E., Harvey, C., McDermott, F. & Davidson, L. (2002). Understanding and evaluating qualitative research. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 36(6), 717-732.

- Frone, M. R., Russell, M., & Cooper, C. L. (1992). Antecedents and outcomes of work-family conflict: Testing a model of the work-family interface. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 77*, 65–78.
- Frone, M. R., Yardley, J. K., & Markel, K. S. (1997). Developing and testing an integrative model of the work-family interface. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 50*, 145-167.
- Ganginis Del Pino, H. V., O'Brien, K. M., Mereish, E., & Miller, M. J. (2013). Leaving before she leaves: Considering future family when making career plans. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 60*(3), 462–470. doi:10.1037/10032651
- Gilley, J. W., Egglund, S. A., & Gilley, A. M. (2002). *Principles of human resource development*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus.
- Giorgi, A. P., & Giorgi, B. M. (2003). The descriptive phenomenological psychological method. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design*. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.
- Glass, J. L., & Finley, A. (2002). Coverage and effectiveness of family-responsive workplace policies. *Human Resource Management Review, 12*(3), 313-337. doi:10.1016/S1053-4822(02)00063-3

- Grant-Vallone, E. J., & Ensher, E. A. (2011). Opting in between: Strategies used by professional women with children to balance work and family. *Journal of Career Development, 38*(4), 331–348. doi:10.1177/0894845372219
- Greenhaus, J., Callanan, G., & Godshalk, V. (2000). *Career management* (3rd ed.). Ft. Worth, TX: Dryden Press.
- Greenhaus, J.H., & Powell, G.N. (2006). When work and family are allies: A theory of work-family enrichment. *Academy of Management Review, 31*(1), 72-92.
- Greenhaus, J.H., Ziegert, J.C., & Allen, T.D. (2012). When family-supportive supervision matters: Relations between multiple sources of support and work-family balance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 80*, 266-275.
doi:10.016/j.jvb.2011.10.008
- Hertneky, R. P. (2012). Composing our lives as women and as leaders. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 14*(2) 140–155. doi:10.1177/1523422311436303
- Hite, L. M., & McDonald, K. S. (2008, February). A new era for career development and HRD. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 10*(1), 3–7.
- Hochschild, A. R. (1989). *The second shift*. New York, NY: Avon Books.
- Hoobler, J. M., Lemmon, G., & Wayne, S. J. (2014). Women’s managerial aspirations: An organizational development perspective. *Journal of Management, 40*(3), 703–730. doi:10.1177/0149206311426911
- Kim, C. (2004). Women and minorities in state government agencies. *Public Personnel Management, 33*(2), 165–180.

- Kleinman, S. (2007). *Feminist fieldwork analysis: Qualitative research methods series*. Los Angeles, Sage.
- Kornbluh, M. (2015). Combatting challenges to establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 12*, 397–414.
doi:10.1080/14780887.2015.1021941
- Kossek, E. E., Barber, A. E., & Winters, D. (1999). Using flexible schedules in the managerial world: The power of peers. *Human Resource Management, 38*(1), 33-46.
- Kossek, E. E., Lewis, S., & Hammer, L. B. (2010). Work-life initiatives and organizational change: Overcoming mixed messages to move from the margin to the mainstream. *Human Relations, 63*, 3–19. Lichtman, M. (2010). *Qualitative research in education: A user's guide* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lyness, K. S., & Thompson D. E. (2000). Climbing the corporate ladder: Do female and male executives follow the same route? *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*(1), 86–101. doi:10.1037//0021-9010.85.386
- Lyons, S. T., Ng, E. S., & Schweitzer, L. (2014). Changing demographics and the shifting nature of careers: Implications for research and human resource development. *Human Resource Development Review, 13*(2), 181–206.
- Mainiero, L. A., & Sullivan, S. E. (2005). Kaleidoscope careers: An alternate explanation for the opt-out revolution. *Academy of Management Executive, 19*, 106–123.

- Mainiero, L. A., & Sullivan, S. E. (2006). *The opt-out revolt: How people are creating kaleidoscope careers outside of companies*. New York, NY: Davies-Black.
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G.B. (2010). *Designing qualitative research*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- McDonald, P., Pini, B., & Bradley, L. (2007). Freedom or fallout in local government? How work-life culture impacts employees using flexible work practices. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(4), 602–622.
doi:10.1080/09585190601178968
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Munn, S. L. (2013). Unveiling the work-life system: The influence of work-life balance on meaningful work. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 15(4), 401–417.
doi:10.1177/1523422313498567
- Munn, S. L., Rocco, T. S., Bowman, L., & van Loo, J. B. (2011). *Work-life research and the representation of sexual minorities*. Paper presented at the 7th International Critical Conference, Naples, Italy.
- Naff, K. C. (1994). Through the glass ceiling: Prospects for the advancement of women in the federal civil service. *Public Administration Reviews*, 54, 507–514.
- Naqvi, F. (2011). Perspectives of Indian women managers in public sector. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 18(3), 279–309.
- O’Neil, D., Hopkins, M., & Bilimoria, D. (2008). Women’s careers at the start of the 21st century: Patterns and paradoxes. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80(4), 727–743.
doi:10.1007/s10551-007-9465-6

- Peterson, S. (2009). Career decision-making self-efficacy, integration, and the likelihood of managerial retention in government agencies. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 20(4), 451–475. doi:10.1002/hrdq.20024
- Pocock, B., van Wanrooy, B., Strazzari, S., & Bridge, K. (2001). Fifty families. What unreasonable hours are doing to Australians, their families and their communities. Retrieved from http://www.arts.adelaide.edu.au/social_inquiry/download/50%20familiesFINAL.doc
- Pradhan, R. K., Jena, L. K., & Kumari, I. G. (2016). Effect of work-life balance on organizational citizenship behaviour: Role of organizational commitment. *Global Business Review*, 17(3S), 1S–15S. doi:10.1177/0972150916631071
- Radin, B. A. (1980). Leadership training for women in state and local government. *Public Personnel Management*, 9(2), 52–60.
- Rousseau, D. M. (1989). Psychological and implied contracts in organization. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 2, 121–139.
- Rudestam, K. E., & Newton, R. R. (2007). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process* (3rd ed.). London, England: Sage.
- Ryan, M., & Haslam, A. (2005). The glass cliff: Evidence that women are overrepresented in precarious leadership positions. *British Journal of Management*, 16(2), 81-90. doi.10.1111/j.1467-8551.2005.00433.x

- Schmidt, L. (2011). Glass ceilings and 100-hour couples: What the opt-out phenomenon can teach us about work and family, by Karine Moe and Dianna Shandy. *Feminist Economics*, *17*(3), 214–217. doi:10.1080/13545701.2011.58203 0
- Shapiro, M., Ingols, C., & Blake-Beard, S. (2008). Confronting career double binds: Implications for women, organizations, and career practitioners. *Journal of Career Development*, *34*, 309–333. doi:10.1177/0894845307311250
- Sidorsky, K. (2015). Moving on up? The gendered ambitions of state-level appointed officials. *Political Research Quarterly*, *68*(4), 802–815. doi:10.1177/1065912915607638
- Slaughter, A. M. (2012). Why women still can't have it all. *Atlantic Monthly*, *310*(1), 85–102. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/>
- Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Sullivan, S. E., & Baruch, Y. (2009). Advances in career theory and research: A critical review and agenda for future exploration. *Journal of Management*, *35*, 1542–1571. doi:10.1177/0149206309350082
- Sullivan, S. E., & Crocitto, M. (2007). Developmental career theories. In P. Hartung & L. Subich (Eds.), *Handbook of career studies* (pp. 283–309). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sullivan, S. E., & Mainiero, L. (2008). Using the kaliedoscope career model to understand the changing patterns of women's careers: Designing HRD programs

- that attract and retain women. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 10(1), 32–49. doi:10.1177/1523422307310110
- Super, D. E. (1953). A theory of vocational development. *American Psychologist*, 8, 185–190.
- Tajlili, M. H. (2014). A framework for promoting women’s career intentionality and work-life integration. *Career Development Quarterly*, 62(3), 254–267. doi:10.1002/j.2161-0045.2014.00083.x
- Tang, S., Siu, O., & Cheung, F. (2014). A study of work-family enrichment among chinese employees: The mediating role between work support and job satisfaction. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 63(1), 130-150. doi:10.1111/j.1464-0597.2012.00519.x
- Taylor, S. J., & Bogdan, R. (1998). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guide book and resource*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Thomas, L.T., & Ganster, D.C. (1995). Impact of family-supportive work variables on work-family conflict and strain: A control perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 80, 6-15.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). Code of federal regulations. Retrieved from <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/guidance/issues-to-consider-in-use-of-stored-data-or-tissues/>
- Whitehouse, G., & Zetlin, D. (1999). Family friendly policies: Distribution and implementation in Australian Workplaces. *Economic and Labor Relations Review*, 10(2), 221-239.

- Whitmarsh, L., Brown, D., Cooper, J., Hawkins-Rodgers, Y., & Wentworth, D. K. (2007). Choices and challenges: A qualitative exploration of professional women's career patterns. *Career Development Quarterly*, 55, 225–236.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research design and methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Demographics

Name: _____

Age: _____ Phone: _____

Race: Hispanic
 Caucasian
 African American
 American Indian/Alaska Native
 Asian
 Pacific Islander
 Other: Specify _____

Gender Female (circle one): Yes/No

Education: (highest grade completed) _____

Are you a state employee? (circle one) Yes / No

How long? _____ (yrs/mos)

Position (circle one): Professional Clerical

Circle one: Full-time Part-time

Marital status (circle one): Married Single Separated Divorced

Children (specify how many): _____ Ages: _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Do you currently work with or have worked in the past with Luisa Martinez (Researcher)? Y/N

RQ 1 Work-Life Challenges

- 1) What factors caused you to choose employment with the state government?
- 2) At what age did you begin working for the state government?
- 3) What obstacles have you encountered in your work life?

- 4) If you have experienced job changes, when did they occur, and how did you feel about the changes?
- 5) If personal-work conflict arises, how do you balance the related responsibilities?
- 6) How do you define your purpose in life?
- 7) Which of your accomplishments are you most proud of and why?
- 8) What are your goals in life?
- 9) Did you ever take a work break during your career? If yes, for what reasons?
- 10) Are your work and personal goals met?
- 11) Do you feel you are constantly arranging work around family needs? Why or why not?
- 12) How have your work and personal priorities changed over your career?

RQ 2 Career Choices

- 13) Do you feel that the personal aspects of your life, such as family, friends, and hobbies, have permitted you to be authentic or true to yourself? Why or why not?
- 14) Are opportunities for professional advancement available to you?
- 15) Have you sought job promotions?
- 16) Please describe your job experiences (e.g., promotions, demotions, job titles, and duties)?
- 17) Did you ever leave the government workforce? If so, why?
- 18) What are your professional goals?
- 19) Are extra work responsibilities difficult for you?
- 20) What do you desire in a career?
- 21) Have you reached that goal?

Appendix B: Pilot Study Recruitment Flier

Walden University

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR
PILOT STUDY RESEARCH IN*WOMEN WORKING IN THE STATE GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE*

I am looking for volunteers to take part in a study of
Women who have worked or is currently working in State Government

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to: Complete a demographic, consent
form, and participate in an interview

Your participation would involve (1) face-to-face session which is approximately (30)
minutes.

This is a personal project study for Walden University

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study,
please contact:

Luisa Martinez - Walden University (PhD candidate)
at

Phone:

Email:

Note: This pilot study is voluntary. Your feedback identifying any questions or areas of the interview which may be confusing, upsetting or raise concerns is important in order to improve the interview process. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during the study. If you feel stressed during the study, you may stop at any time. You may skip any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering.

Appendix C: Recruitment Flier

Walden University

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR
RESEARCH IN*WOMEN WORKING IN THE STATE GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE*

I am looking for volunteers to take part in a study of
Women who have worked or is currently working in State Government

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to: Complete a demographic, consent
form, and participate in an interview

Your participation would involve (1) face-to-face session which is approximately (30)
minutes.

This is a personal project study for Walden University

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study,
please contact:

Luisa Martinez - Walden University (PhD candidate)

at

Phone:

Email: