IMPACT OF MOTHERHOOD ON WOMEN'S ACADEMIC CAREERS

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ABSTRACT

During the 20th century, there was a significant rise in the number of women actively participating in the labour force, which resulted in one of the most revolutionary economic and social transformations of the century. The traditional roles of homemaker for men and breadwinner for women have become increasingly common in more developed countries. This increase in the number of women who are working was matched by a rise in the average level of education and credentials held by women. For instance, according to some recent statistics for the European Union, in 2016 around 44% of women (aged 30-34) had a postsecondary degree or above, whilst only 34% of males held that level of education (European Commission, 2017). The employment rates of women in the European Union are still lower than those of men; in 2016, the employment rate of 20-64 year old women in the EU was 65.3%, whereas the employment rate for men in the same age group was 76.8%. Although it is reasonable to assume that highly educated women are generally more likely to have some employment and pursue careers, the employment rates of women in the European Union are still lower than those of men (European commission, 2017). The employment rate of women was even lower than 60% in Greece, Italy, Malta, Croatia, Spain, and Romania. However, there are significant differences across nations, such as the fact that Greece, Italy, Malta, Croatia, Spain, and Romania. The degree to which women participate in the workforce is influenced by a wide variety of different circumstances.

KEYWORDS: Motherhood, Academic, Careers, Performance,

INTRODUCTION

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These include the rate of the nation's economic growth, the social norms of the society, the level of education, the fertility rates, and availability to daycare and other supportive services, amongst other factors. (Verick, 2018) There is some theoretical support for the idea that parenthood can have an effect on the labour supply of women and their status in the labour market (Gutiérrez-Domènech, 2003; Gatrell, 2011The influence of motherhood may be confirmed by statistics on the employment rate of women who have children under the age of 6, which is the average age of children in the United States. The employment rate of women who fall into this group in the EU is, on average, more than eight percentage points lower than the employment rate of childfree women (European commission, 2017). In order to provide assistance to working moms and to stop them from being penalised in the workplace, a number of policies and pieces of legislation relating to work-family reconciliation have been established (in terms of employment and earning). The majority of the time, these policies include paid time off for parents and other family members, subsidised child care, and flexible work schedules. Sadly, despite the fact that EspingAndersen & Billari (2015) demonstrated that the institutional environment has a positive impact on gender egalitarianism and the gender wage gap, equal opportunities policies and everyday management practises that mothers experience in real life are often in disparity with one another (Gatrell, 2011).

As a result, the purpose of this article is to investigate the genuine effects that motherhood has on the work prospects, professional development, and end results that women experience in their careers. The purpose of this research is to investigate the numerous professional paths available to moms as compared to those available to women who do not have children. As a result of this goal, this study includes two research objectives: identifying female viewpoint on the influence of motherhood on developing careers, and especially, mother's opinion on the impact that motherhood has on women's careers. Primary study was undertaken among employed women in Croatia in order to retrieve some empirical information on the subject. It was requested of women who were working moms as well as those who did not have children to give their thoughts on the effects that parenthood has had on their professions.

MOTHERHOOD, WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND CAREER PATH

The primary challenge that faces modern legislation designed to advance women's rights is figuring out how to make it possible for women to successfully balance their professional and personal lives. Finding a balance between their professional and familial responsibilities become a difficult task for working women. They are not only exposed to some stereotypes that they are not ideal at work due to family commitments (for example, see Hampson, 2018), but they are also exposed to the pressure because they have multiple roles to play. This double whammy of exposure leaves them vulnerable to negative perceptions and experiences. It is necessary for women to combine paid labour with unpaid tasks, which results in an extra weight being placed on women (Ciciolla & Luthar, 2019). Nevertheless, there are a variety of approaches that might be taken to mitigate the effects of this issue. Maternity leave, flexible or reduced working hours, job-sharing, and a variety of child care options are only some of the options that are included in these reforms (Leinert Novosel, 2004).

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IMPACT OF MOTHERHOOD ON THE CAREER OF WOMEN IN CROATIA

It is common to find discrimination based on gender in the workplace, and moms in Croatia are not exempt from this trend. Already in the phase of the job interview, employers frequently inquire about the marital status of women and speculate about the possibility of pregnancies. The discrimination then continues through lower salaries for women and the firing of women in cases of sick leave due to a child's illness or pregnancy (Genov et al., 2001). Women now make up the vast majority of Croatia's jobless population, a statistic that reflects a pattern that has been steadily worsening over the last several years. Statistics reveal that women have a far harder time obtaining employment in industries where there is a lot of male rivalry, despite the fact that there are no big disparities between men and women in terms of the degree of education that each has (Gali and Nikodem, 2009). It is interesting to note that in spite of these statistics, empirical study carried out by Poloki Voki, Sinori, and Obadi (2019) discovered that women in Croatia did not have negative gender-related experiences. There is empirical information that points to the fact that women in Croatia get lower pay than males in almost every economic area. According to Gali (2011), the market has traditionally discounted women's employment and viewed them as though they were transitory or supplementary employees, which has resulted in lower earnings for women. In addition, in Croatia, a man's wage was often believed to be the primary source of revenue for the family, while a woman's labour was frequently seen as supplementary income. According to Topolic (2001), women were historically considered to be responsible for the upkeep of the home, the care and education of children, as well as the care of senior members of the family. When women have children, the wage difference between them and men widens even worse than it was before. When women go back to work, they often end up in lower-paying jobs or jobs with less responsibilities. They make less advancement in their careers overall, which eventually results in smaller pensions. According to Gali and Nikodem (2009), women are often placed in lower levels of organisational structures, social authority, and decision-making.

CONSTRUCTING MOTHERHOOD

Being a mother is a difficult job. It may be seen as an institution (Berg, 2008), and it can be characterised as a gendered and dynamic process (Roy, 2016: 1). Motherhood can be defined as "the state of being a mother" (Roy, 2016: 1). (Elvin-Nowak and Thomsson, 2001). Whether or whether a woman actually has children, motherhood and femininity are often seen to be inextricably linked (Berg, 2008). It has strong ties to "mothering," which refers to the social activity of providing care for young infants (Hollway and Featherstone, 1997). Motherhood is an institution that is inextricably related to the ideologies and discursive constructs of what constitutes "good motherhood" (Phoenix and Woollett, 1991). These constructions are determined by the social and cultural standards that prevail in society (Berg, 2008). These discourses are always restricted by the context in which they are produced, reflecting historical, cultural, and social stances, and constructing and repeating meanings associated to motherhood in a specific time and place as a result (Johnston and Swanson, 2006). Although the expressions of motherhood vary greatly from one culture to the next, the

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impacts of parenthood on a woman's life are often restrictive. Individual preferences and professional identities have a significant impact on the formation of maternal ideals, which are also powerfully sculpted and moulded (Berg, 2008). Part of the production and reproduction of modern motherhood takes the shape of an individualised performance (Baraitser, 2009; Roy, 2016). Therefore, neoliberal and post-feminist principles that embrace choice, empowerment, and individuality, in addition to post-feminist constructions of "moderate feminism" that combine feministic concepts with individualised femininity, are essential (Gill, 2008; Lewis et al., 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ivana Načinović Braje (2021) Over the course of the last several decades, there has been a general rise in the number of working women in all regions of the globe. The employment rate for women is still lower than the employment rate for men, and one of the reasons for the reduced involvement of women in the labour market might be parenthood. Nevertheless, the employment rate for women is still lower than the employment rate for men. In this study, we investigate how mothers feel about the impact parenting has on their professional lives and job opportunities. In the course of the empirical study that was carried out in Croatia, the participants were 241 women, of whom 136 were mothers and 105 were childless.

Carolyn Kehn (2021) This study analyses the gendered dynamics of motherhood and careers, as stated by professionals working in the knowledge-intensive business sector in Finland. Specifically, the paper focuses on the perspectives of women. Through 81 iterative and in-depth interviews with a total of 19 men and 23 women, the CIAR technique was used to inform the content of the report. "It takes two to tango," "It's all about time management," and "Good motherhood 2.0" are the three primary types of discursive discussion that arise among the women respondents who either do not have any children, who only have one kid, or who have two children.

This work by Korenman and Neumark (1992) explores the impact of timing on the career expenses of childbirth and gives fresh information about how labour markets adapt to parenthood. Economists and sociologists have conducted substantial research on the topic of the "family gap," which refers to the salary disparity that exists between childless women and women who have children (e.g. Cramer, 1980; Browning, 1992; Joshi et al., 1998; Waldfogel, 1998; Dankmeyer, 1996; Budig and England, 2001).

Toby J. Thomas (2020) In order to study the many diverse aspects of the motherhood penalty, we conducted an unique survey of academic women in the United Kingdom. Even in an industry with such a great demand for highly qualified workers, having children will hold you back professionally and won't affect your salary. The experience of motherhood influences women's perceptions of their working environments in a way that is both positive and negative: although it increases their overall sense of contentment, it also decreases their sense that their salaries are fair in comparison to those of men. In this research, we also investigate how various policies might help reduce the negative effects of the motherhood penalty.

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Per the study objective, the qualitative research approach was most appropriate to use because the study was interested in exploring the experiences, interpretations, and meanings, mothers attached to the decisions and most importantly to generate findings that were solely based on the shared experiences of participants. In order to fulfil my role as a researcher, it is essential for me to articulate the philosophical premises upon which I am basing my investigation. Because I bring my own worldview assumptions and beliefs to the research endeavour, it influences the substance of the study as well as the conduct of the research and the writing.

DATA GENERATION METHOD

For the purpose of the research, a total of seven semi-structured interviews were carried out, each of which lasted between thirty and one hour and fifteen minutes. There were a total of twenty questions included in the interview guide. The first questions were closed questions and included fundamental information on demographic characteristics. The second and third portions were comprised of open-ended questions, the majority of which were narrative and problem-focused, respectively (See Appendix 1 & 2). Each and every interview was carried out in the English language, despite the fact that a few of the interviewees spoke in the native tongue (Twi) for one or two words each, which the researcher then interpreted.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is broken up into two parts: the introduction and the body. The first half of the discussion is organised as a series of in-depth examples, in which the accounts of two different participants are detailed. In the second portion, the results are presented, and they are grouped into six different general topics.

IN-DEPTH CASES

This part analyses the narratives of the lived experiences of two mothers: one of whom is now employed in the formal sector, and the other of whom has left her previous employment in order to pursue a career in self-employment. Leaving one's job in the official sector, also known as Serwaa. The choices that a woman makes in her own life are not only significant to her as an individual, but they also have implications for her family. "Serwaa," a married woman with three children ranging in age from 9 to 14 years, two of whom are girls and one of whom is a male, is a good example of a woman who gave up her traditional work. She earned her Master of Science in Finance degree 11 years ago, making her the holder of this prestigious degree. She worked as the Facilities Manager at one of the most cutting-edge information technology institutions in the country right up to the point when she decided to leave her previous position. She has been self-employed for the last eight years, running a private catering company out of which she provides meals to a number of different businesses. She has no desire to go back to her previous employment, which she left eight

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years ago. According to Serwaa, the decision to leave her traditional profession in order to pursue a career as a self-employed business owner was a sacrifice that she made in order to maintain harmony among her family. She reflected on her experience as a mother who worked outside the home and noted that juggling the responsibilities of motherhood with employment in Ghana's formal economy was incredibly difficult. She was unhappy with the stubborn nature of the work that she had from eight in the morning till five in the afternoon. During that time period, it was difficult since her husband also worked full time, and the couple did not have anybody to assist them in caring for their children.

CONDUCIVENESS OF WORK ENVIRONMENT, STRUCTURAL POLICIES & GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES

In most cases, the welfare provisions that are made accessible to women at their place of employment are directly proportional to their level of labour force participation. Because of this, the atmosphere of the workplace and the many rules that are associated to it are of utmost significance in the event that a woman decides whether or not to continue working in the formal sector. The primary focus was on the degree to which the working environment was accommodating, as well as the degree to which there was access to institutional and governmental programmes that lightened the load of working moms. The majority of the replies from the participants demonstrated that the working environment, the institutional arrangements, and the policies of the government were not typically favourable for pregnant women, breastfeeding women, or mothers in general.

Manageable: All of the respondents, with the exception of one, held the opinion that the policies and structures put in place by the government were not conducive. Being a professional woman, Kukua thought, meant that there was no space for excuses and complaints. She held the position of Chief Executive Officer of one of the most known banks in the nation. She could make a lot of excuses due to the fact that she was a woman and had a lot of duties; yet, she had a goal, and in order to achieve that objective, she needed to do things that defied the reasons. In her defence, she stated the following: "Well, I hear a lot of women complaining about the three months....but you see, as I sit here, I wear the hat of a woman, mother, and an employer. If you give me an entire year to sit home and eat and sleep, I will be very happy, but you are the employer, you need your employees around to work, you need to think outside the box as a career woman if you want to move higher, you cannot just sit and complain." I used to take my children to the hospital at night (in situations of mild illnesses), since I didn't want to take a day off of work, because I believe it would have harmed my productivity, and because I had a vision of where I wanted to go.........."

OPINIONS ABOUT FELLOW MOTHERS & ADVICE TO YOUNGER GENERATION

This study examined how working mothers balance work and motherhood by looking at their perceptions of motherhood and career experiences, their coping mechanisms, their motivating factors, their social support system, their opinions about the decisions that other mothers

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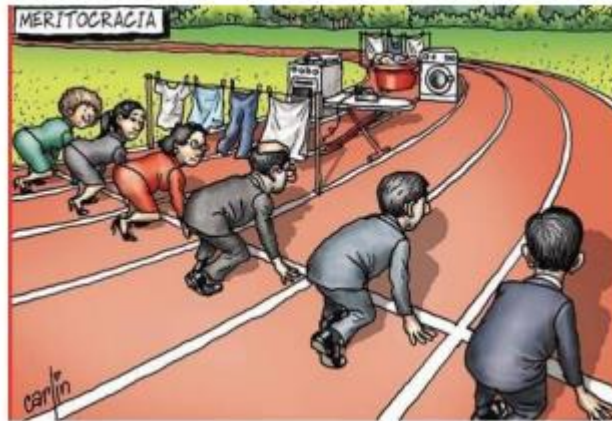
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make, and the advice that they would give to future generations based on their lived experiences. Despite the fact that women had begun participating in the labour field in greater numbers, their traditional roles as spouses, mothers, and unpaid care workers persisted. This had the potential to be stressful for women, particularly in situations where the women had little or no social support. It is feasible that it may be next to impossible to do well in both of these areas; it is more probable that one area would flourish at the cost of the other. The results discussed in the chapter that came before this one served as a guidance for this part. In this section, we also discuss the constraints and difficulties that arose along the course of the study. Using the three facets of the idea of empowerment, I will explain the process by which empowerment takes place. Along the way, I will note significant aspects that came to light over the course of this research, such as the gendered division of labour and regional gender beliefs. Work-family ideas were another source of motivation for the investigation.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

According to Quisumbing et al. (2016), women have the skills, resources, and opportunities necessary to access and compete equitably in markets. In addition, women have the agency to control and benefit from economic gains, which is necessary for women's economic empowerment. Market access and competition are two of the most important aspects of economic empowerment for women. Women are competent (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995), and they are gaining mastery in their fields of specialisation, which paves the way for better opportunities, including career advancements. This opens the door for women to feel more confident in their abilities and to think positively about themselves. This was demonstrated by the fact that almost all of the people who responded to my survey held a master's degree, that they were recognised authorities in their fields, and that they occupied prominent positions including those of medical practitioners, HRMs, CEOs, directors, managers, and entrepreneurs. In addition, all of the moms who worked in the formal sector were interested in advancing their careers, which was something for which they had individually formulated objectives and were eager to enhance their education. It may be deduced from this that respondents were well aware of what they want and had made plans to work toward achieving their objectives. My research led me to confirm with Mechanic that they could see a more direct correlation between their objectives and the means to accomplish them (Mechanic, 1991).

ROLE CONFLICT & ROLE STRAIN

In spite of all of these achievements, it is becoming increasingly necessary for gender activists to continue to advocate for the transformation of power relations in favour of women's rights, social justice, and the transformation of economic, social, and political structures (S Batliwala, 1994). This is due to the fact that women are withdrawing from the formal sector as a result of the burnouts they experience as a result of the double roles they play. All of the respondents admitted that they had faced similar experiences because, in the majority of African societies, housework and child care were considered to be the responsibilities of the mother and not the father.

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Men & Women In A Race (Retrieved On February 2019 From Https://Bit.Ly/2uoiqeg)

If a race of this kind is to be run with men and women competing against each other, and if they are to be assessed in the same manner, how can it be anticipated that women would cross the finish line at the same time as men? It is quite probable that some of these ladies may withdraw from the competition at some point in the future. One of the people who responded to my survey bemoaned the fact that "it's a man's world.... everything benefits guys" (Nhyira, medical doctor). The majority of research on work-family conflict demonstrates that conflicts between the workplace and the home have the ability to impair employee job commitment (Benligiray & Sonmez, 2012; Malik & Awan, 2015). This is the conclusion reached by the majority of these studies. In the context of this research, the term "empowerment" refers to the mechanisms that allow individuals who were previously deprived of the capacity to make decisions to acquire that capability once again (N. Kabeer, 2005). We investigate the experiences of motherhood and profession by drawing inferences to Kabeer's three elements of empowerment: agency, resources, and accomplishments.

AGENCY: WOMEN' PERSONAL CHOICES

 According to Kabeer (2005), the process of making choices and putting those decisions into action is what constitutes agency. It is the choices that women make in respect to their careers, families, and other significant life decisions. According to Mosedale (2005), agency is also the capacity to define one's objectives and act upon them. The fact that all of my participants had at least some level of education, with the majority of them holding a master's degree, and were employed (either in the formal or informal sector), led me to the conclusion that they all exhibited a high level of agency because they were able to take steps toward achieving their individual objectives. A woman has the ability to make decisions about significant parts of her life, such as the person and time she will marry, the path she will pursue professionally and how her education will be shaped to accommodate that path, and whether or not she will have children and when she will do so. Marriage is never just an affair between two individuals; rather, it is an agreement between two families or even, in

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some cases, two clans, and the "consummation" of a marriage is signified by the birth of a child in the African culture, particularly in the Ghanaian culture.

'POWER TO'& TAKING POWER OUT OF EMPOWERMENT

The power to decide between several options carries with it both good and negative implications. The phrase "power to," which has a positive connotation, refers to an individual's capacity to choose their own path in life, regardless of the resistance they encounter. According to the findings of this research, the obstacles that made it difficult for women to attain a balance between parenting and profession were opposition and impediments. According to the results, when women had been able to keep their employment despite the criticism, this indicated that they had been able to take responsibility of their own life choices. This was the case with moms who had been able to maintain their careers even in the face of hostility. On the other side, when the word "power" was removed from the concept of empowerment, this resulted in moms having to carry twice as much responsibility. According to the research that Batliwala (1994) conducted in South Asia on the topic of women's empowerment, the findings showed that women's active participation in economic labour may have created new problems for them in terms of indebtedness and gender-based violence, and it had also increased the burdens that they carried.

POWER OVER': INSTITUTIONAL BIASES & LOCAL GENDER IDEOLOGIES

On the other hand, the term "power over," which has a pejorative connotation, refers to the capability of certain actors to control the agency of others by various means, such as the exercise of authority (N. Kabeer, 2005). The findings of this research pointed to the existence of biases in the form of institutional and gender role expectations in the family, the workplace, and society as a whole. According to the data I obtained, persons who possess authority in such positions have the potential to either assist in the empowerment of women or not. Evidently, the results of my research showed that an understanding and accommodating boss could help empower working mothers in the workplace as they created a balance between motherhood and the responsibilities of work. On the other hand, unfavourable policies at the national level could disempower working mothers. According to Cornwall and Rivas (2015), empowerment is concerned with the power relations that exist between individuals regardless of where they are situated. The implication here is that women's level of empowerment (defined as "acquire the ability to make strategic life choices") can fluctuate depending on where they are located and the powers that are at work in that particular setting; however, this does not necessarily mean that women are disempowered. My results are in line with the arguments that Cornwall and Rivas (2015) and Kabeer (2005) have presented, namely, that the persons in positions of authority at the locations where working moms are employed have the potential to either empower or disempower women. For example, in the situation of Nhyira, her manager had made it easier for her to gain agency by agreeing to reduce the amount of time she spent on the road so that she could spend more time with her family. This allowed her to become more self-reliant. Again, the presence of institutional and governmental biases such as the lack of paternity

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leave, insufficient maternity leave, rigid work hours, unpaid breastfeeding hours, and the absence of other family-friendly policies in various organisations could be a factor in limiting the agency of working mothers.

CHALLENGING & TRANSFORMING POWER RELATIONS

In addition, exercising choice is only one component of agency; it is also necessary for challenging power relations (N. Kabeer, 2005) and bringing about fundamental change in structural power relations. This can be accomplished by challenging the ideologies of patriarchy, subordination, and discrimination against women that are embedded in institutions and the frameworks of society (S. Batliwala, 2007; Cornwall & Rivas, 2015). According to the responses I received, there are a number of obstacles that stand in the way of working moms achieving a healthy work-life balance (unfavorable work conditions, local gender ideologies). Given that my respondents were able to identify the constraints to action, this indicated that the first step towards empowerment had been achieved in accordance with Mosedale's analysis; empowerment can be evaluated by identifying the constraints to action, how agency has developed and changed constraints to action, and how constraints to action have changed over time (Mosedale, 2005). After the restrictions have been recognised, relevant stakeholders are obligated to involve the appropriate authorities in order to resolve these difficulties. Because empowerment is about making fundamental changes in the structural power relations (Cornwall & Rivas, 2015), when stakeholders argue and propose better working conditions, issues can be addressed and modified for the better. Empowerment is about making fundamental changes in structural power relations. According to the responses of the women who took part in this survey, they were aware of the request that CSOs had made to the government to increase the length of maternity leave from the existing three months to the current six months. Even if this appeal had not yet been successful, a preliminary extension of two weeks prior to the desired vacation of six months had been granted.

RESOURCES: DISTRIBUTED THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SOCIETY

 Kabeer (2005) discusses resources as a second dimension through which the idea of empowerment may be investigated. Resources are the medium through which agency is exercised, and they are disseminated across the society via a variety of institutions and connections. It is vital to have a grasp of the channels through which choices are made in order to have a comprehension of the processes by which choices are formed. My research demonstrates that societal interactions may facilitate the distribution of resources, therefore this hypothesis is supported by my results. My research has shown, for instance, that concepts like social support are important in assisting with the comprehension of how working women are able to juggle their dual responsibilities. It was essential for a mother to determine her various sources of support in order to be in a position to make and carry out her own decisions. Without the help of their partners, the vast majority of working moms won't be able to handle the obstacles they face, which is confirmed by the results of Annor (2016), who found that the majority of social support comes from members of the family, particularly

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husbands. Because of this, proponents of the empowerment theory have suggested that empowerment should be changed from individual to collective (N. Kabeer, 2005). In this sense, individuals seeking to be empowered may need a bit of external encouragement from others, who can also clear obstacles from their pathway (Cornwall & Rivas, 2015). However, empowerment itself cannot be bestowed; whoever seeks to be empowered must claim it for them.

RESOURCES: DISTRIBUTED THROUGH INSTITUTIONS

Second, there are a variety of organisations through which resources might be dispersed; in these institutions, certain players will have more power and advantages than others (N. Kabeer, 2005). My findings provided empirical evidence suggesting that these supports could help facilitate motherhood and career balance, and one example of formal support is the presence of an understanding boss at the workplace. Other examples of formal and informal support include conducive work policies and the presence of a boss who understands their employees' needs. Serwaa, who just left her formal employment, reminisced about her previous manager, describing him as a guy who was flexible and attentive, with the goal of establishing a library at the workplace for youngsters to use during their summer holidays. The inference here is that, for a woman to keep or withdraw from her formal career, this will be dependant on the support they got from people in power either at work, at home, or in society as a whole. This might apply to people in authority at work, at home, or in society as a whole. We may make the reasonable assumption that Serwaa would not have resigned her work if the library had been finished on schedule and if all other circumstances had been the same. This adds to the themes that were elaborated on in the lines that came before it concerning the role that stakeholders, especially CSOs, have in advocating for something. When activists of this type come together, they are able to challenge the established gender order, which will result in a positive transformation. This is due to the fact that women will be able to fight for better conditions of services that they may have been denied in the past as compared to men (Mosedale, 2005). Respondents said that supportive managers helped them deal with stress connected to work-family issues, but unsupportive employers made the situation much more stressful for them. My findings lend credence to those of a previous study that was carried out on Women, Infants, and Children. In that study, the participants reported that having supportive supervisors at work could significantly reduce the stress associated with breastfeeding in the workplace, whereas having bosses who were not supportive made it difficult (Thompson & Bell, 1997). In a similar vein, virtually all of the women who responded to my survey said that having a spouse who was supportive made their responsibilities easier to manage, and as a consequence, they were able to strike a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives. Again, empowerment must originate from within since an individual's core ideas and values influence whether they support or reject the concept of inequality (N. Kabeer, 2005). As a result, I wanted to understand the values and meanings that women connected to their choices, which Kabeer (2005) referred to as their sense of agency.

ACHIEVEMENTS

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Achievements refer to the degree to which these potentials are achieved or not, based on the efforts of the individual, that is, the consequences of their agency (N. Kabeer, 2005). While resources and agency help people exhibit their potentials for the kind of life they want to live, achievements refer to the extent to which these potentials are achieved or not. Under this category, topics such as the reasons mothers stayed or withdrew from the formal sector, as well as the values associated to motherhood or their multiple responsibilities, were questioned. Also included in this category were questions about the values attached to motherhood. To begin, it was extremely important to have an understanding of the reasons why some women opted to continue working in the formal sector despite the difficulties. Their reasons may be broken down into the following categories: a reaction to a new opportunity, a desire for higher personal success and self-reliance, a demand for self-fulfillment, or a response to a "distress sale" of labour, as Kabeer described it (2005). Those working mothers who were motivated to 'acquire greater personal achievement' could be described as those who also pursued towards higher levels of education in order to advance their career, which Kabeer (2005) described as evidence of progress in women's empowerment. Working mothers who were motivated to 'acquire greater personal achievement' could also be described as those who were motivated to 'acquire greater personal achievement' in As a result, the aspirations of Kukua, Anita, and Akua Duku to pursue a Ph.D., as well as Akua Duku's choice to return to school, serve as proof of women's increasing levels of empowerment. The suggestion here is that these women were encouraged to accomplish a niche deeper since they were driven by what they had done up to this point in their careers. Again, the desire to be self-reliant or self-dependent is also indicative of progress in women's empowerment. Furthermore, the results of my study showed that all of the respondents desired to supplement the income of their spouse in order to assist in providing for the needs of the family, and these women desired to be financially independent. Working in the official sector allowed them to achieve not just financial independence but also a number of other rewards, both intrinsic and extrinsic, which served as a key driving force for them.

CONCLUSION

This study's overarching purpose was to investigate the ways in which working moms in Ghana manage their responsibilities as mothers while still pursuing careers in the formal economy. In addition to presenting a review of the most important results for each research topic and the implications that stem from those findings, this section will also include discoveries that were not anticipated as a result of the study. In addition to that, several topics for future study are suggested, as well as some suggestions for both research and practise. What are the perceptions of motherhood and professional experiences held by women who are working moms as well as those who have chosen to forego their job? Everyone who participated in the survey acknowledged that maintaining a healthy balance between parenting and employment in the formal sector in Ghana was not easy. As a result, moms who worked outside the home as well as mothers who stayed at home with their children felt that parenting and professional experiences were difficult and stressful. These difficulties were mostly caused by the incompatibility of both responsibilities in the organisation. It was

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practically difficult to fulfil the responsibilities of parenting while working in the formal sector, mostly due to the industry's inflexibility and monotony, and vice versa. The incompatibility of the two positions led to role conflict, and those who had done everything possible but were unable to deal with the stress opted to make motherhood a priority by withdrawing from the formal sector in order to do so. Even those people who were able to successfully leave their regular occupations were forced to hunt for other methods to make money. This was due to the fact that the economy of Ghana was having difficulties at the time, and as a result, it was absolutely necessary for both parents to maintain employment in order to care for their family. Since mothers in Ghana played an important supplementary role in financially contributing to house hold income, even those who left their formal jobs were required to learn a trade in order to be able to assist their spouses in providing for the family. This was the case despite the fact that some of these individuals had already quit their jobs. Inference: all respondents had challenges in working in two distinct areas at the same time (motherhood and career). Consequently, the only people who stayed employed in the official sector were those who were highly committed to keep their work despite the many challenges they faced. What kinds of incentives motivate women to keep working in the formal sector, and what kinds of coping strategies have mothers developed in order to cope with the pressures and pressures of their jobs?

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