THE ART OF "HAVING IT ALL": MOTHERS IN PERFORMING ARTS ADMINISTRATION AND THE USE OF WORK-LIFE POLICIES

By

Yolanda Davis

Submitted to the

Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

In

Arts Management

Chair:

Ximena Varela

Suzan Jenkins

Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

April 29, 2014

Date

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ABSTRACT

The arts are an exploration, expression, and distillation of the human experience. As such, it is only fitting that organizations that produce art be respectful of the work-life balance of employees. There is a great deal of research on work-life policies and the career paths and obstacles of professional women, but most of this research is restricted to business and academic environments. There is a significant lack of information about women in performing arts management. This paper explores the use of work-life policies by mothers in performing arts administration. Qualitative methods are used to investigate the use of leave policy, flexible work arrangements, childcare, "the mommy track", and work-life balance. Mothers rely on personal ingenuity, partner and family support, and amenable supervisors to fill the void of structural support from their employer. Mothers shoulder the bulk of work-life responsibility. A tenuous work-life balance is achieved, but greater structural assistance is needed.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

"Marissa Mayer is currently the most powerful pregnant woman in America." (Belkin, 2012). This statement is indicative of the maelstrom of opinions surrounding Marissa Mayer, the CEO of Yahoo.com. Mayer was appointed to the executive position in 2012, and shortly after the announcement was made, shared that she was six months pregnant. Mayer was quick to assert that she would only be taking two weeks of maternity leave, and planned on working from home throughout that time. The debate surrounding Mayer intensified when she ended Yahoo's work from home program yet significantly increased the amount of maternity and paternity leave offered to employees (McGregor 2013). Mayer's choices and the passionate differing reactions to said decisions; exemplify the complexities facing women, specifically mothers, in management roles. Mayer exemplified the precarious balance between career and motherhood, power and policy. There is a great deal of scholarly literature concerning work-life policies and female career advancement as well as an ever-increasing amount of popular media articles and blog posts.

The conflict between work-life balance and its effect on working women reached a fever pitch with the release of Lean *In* by Sheryl Sandberg and "Why Women Still Can't Have it All", a piece by Anne-Marie Slaughter, written for the Atlantic Monthly. These pieces are often positioned as being diametrically opposed to each other, but this seems too simplistic. Sandberg, (a high ranking executive who worked at Google and is now at Facebook), argues that women must "lean in" to succeed and encourages mentorship, authenticity, ambition, and finding a supportive partner. She is invested in the internal

controls at women's disposal, "changing the conversation from what we can't do to what we can do" (Lean In.org). Sandberg also argues that having more women at the top of organizations will lead to a trickle down effect, creating more opportunities for women and more consideration of their needs. For example, she recalls being very pregnant and struggling to walk from the parking lot to the Facebook offices, which prompted her to create pregnancy parking spots (Sandberg 2012). *Lean In* and its concepts have expanded into a full-fledged non-profit organization, based around the book's concepts of community, education, and Lean In circles (Lean In).

Slaughter, a highly accomplished academic and government professional, details her realization that "having it all" is almost impossible under current societal constraints. She admits that constant work; long hours and little flexibility led her to leave a prestigious job. Slaughter provides a powerful personal narrative of a working mother, while bemoaning the lack of honest narratives available for younger women. She posits that the lack of women leaders in high positions is not due to a dearth of ambition or commitment, but caused by systemic barriers. Slaughter suggests the use of flextime, increased technological options, "investment intervals", and "family first" management styles to modify and improve current policies (Slaughter 2012). She is focused primarily on the external systemic barriers facing working women.

The passionate and varied response to the work of Sandberg and Slaughter points to the growing discussion concerning the state of modern motherhood and the role of career and workplace advancement. As illustrated by Sandberg and Slaughter's very different viewpoints on the challenges working mothers face, and possible methods of alleviating some of the stressors, there are few simple solutions. Women from several fields have

responded to Sandberg and Slaughter's thoughts, but most of the dialogue has revolved around corporate and academic environments. This paper will explore the use of work-life policies by women in performing arts administration and illuminate perspectives on work-life balance. An investigation of the current situation will lead to possible best practices.

Research Questions and Definitions

Work-life balance has multiple facets. This research is primarily concerned with use of work-life policies and overall perception of work-life balance. The research is guided by the following questions:

1. How do women in performing arts administration use work-life policies?
2. How do mothers in performing arts administration use work-life policies?
3. What supports do women in performing arts administration use to maintain work-life balance?
4. What are the perspectives of working mothers in performing arts administration, and what role does organizational culture and work-life policies (or the lack thereof) play in their career advancement?
5. How can the performing arts administration field be more effective in addressing work-life balance?

The terms surrounding work-life policies often blend into one another or encompass several components, which can lead to a lack of clear vocabulary. This lack of clarity can create obstacles when conducting research, discussing work-life policies, and advocating for their importance. For the purpose of this research, the following definitions will be used:

Working mother - a woman who holds a job outside of the home

Work-life balance - the ability to balance the needs and responsibilities of the workplace with the needs and responsibilities of personal life

Work and family conflict - "occurs when participation in the work role and the family role is incompatible in some respect. Participation in one role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the other role" (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985)

FWA - flexible work arrangement

Family Leave - Leave taken to provide care for a family member who is seriously ill (Including a spouse or partner disabled by pregnancy or childbirth), or to provide care for a new baby or newly placed adopted or foster child (National Partnership for Women and Families 2012)

Maternity Leave - A broad term that encompasses both pregnancy disability leave (medical leave) and parental leave to care for a new baby. It applies only to pregnant women or birth or adoptive mothers." (National Partnership for Women and Families 2012)

Paternity Leave - leave specified for fathers that is used for the birth of a new baby, or a newly placed adopted or foster child

Paid Family Leave - A state-administered program or employer-provided benefit that fully or partially replaces the wages of workers who take leave to care for a seriously ill family member or new child (National Partnership for Women and Families 2012)

Paid Sick Leave - Employer-provided benefit that provides full wage replacement to workers who take sick leave for their own illness or medical appointment or for those of a family member (National Partnership for Women and Families 2012)

Sick Leave - Short-term leave taken to recover from a brief illness or, in some cases, to

obtain preventive or routine care." (National Partnership for Women and Families 2012)

Flextime - allows workers some discretion in determining arrival and departure times"(Kingston 1990)

Job sharing - two employees jointly hold a position, giving both of them access to the responsibilities and rewards of a full-time position but involving a lesser time commitment." (Kingston 1990)

Compressed workweek - an employee still works a standard 40 hour work week, but in compresses the time into less than 5 business days

Telecommuting - when an employee works outside of the office, often from home

School-age children - Children who live at home, are under the age of 18 and/or attending elementary, middle, or high school

Flexible spending account – A benefit offered by an organization where an agreed upon portion of a paycheck can be set aside, untaxed, for qualified purposes. Flexible spending accounts (FSAs), are often used by employees to offset childcare costs

Significance of the Research

The arts are an exploration, expression, and distillation of the human experience. As such, it is only fitting that organizations that produce art be respectful of the work-life balance of employees. There is a great deal of research on work-life policies and the career paths and obstacles of professional women, but most of this research is restricted to business, law, and (to a lesser extent) academic environments. There is a significant lack of information about women in performing arts management, even though most casual

observers note the large presence of women in the field. Women in arts administration are also often grouped with artists in surveys and data reports, making it challenging to determine the accurate statistics. Arts management graduate school programs are rapidly training an increasing number of women to lead arts organizations, but this will be for naught if work-life policies and organizational culture are lagging behind. The perspective of working mothers and an exploration of policies that can best support them is vital to deepening gender diversity in art management, and consequently, arts organizations.

Methodology

A literature review concerning women in arts management, leave policies, flextime, childcare, and the "mommy track" (Schwarz 1989) was conducted. An online survey was sent to female, full-time arts administrators at fifty performing arts centers and sixty LORT (League of Resident Theatres) theatres around the United States. These organizations are mid-size or large, with a budget of at least 5 million dollars. Performing Arts Centers and LORT theatres were chosen because they are usually established organization with written policies, and perhaps an employee dedicated to human resources. The themes of the survey included leaves of absence, flexible work arrangements, childcare, the mommy track, and work-life balance. Comment boxes were placed within the survey so respondents could expand on their answers, if they wished. The survey was initially e-mailed February 26, 2014 and the survey closed March 29, 2014. The survey received 337 responses. Of the 337 respondents, 87 identified as the primary caregiver of school-age children. In addition, 8 phone interviews with female performing arts administrators were used to dig deeper into the survey questions and capture personal narratives. The interviews centered

on a list of pre-written questions, but each interview was conversational and focused on the parts of work-life balance that resonated the most with each interviewee.

Limitations

This qualitative research study consists of a survey and several interviews of women working at performing arts center or LORT theatres. Dance companies, opera companies, and symphonies are not included in this survey sample. In order to encourage candid responses, survey takers and interviewees were guaranteed anonymity and asked few personal questions. For example, respondents were not asked to report their employer, job title, salary, racial/ethnic background, or education level. The individuals chosen for interviews were obtained by (a) survey respondents emailing the researcher and volunteering to have a conversation; or (b) the researcher had a connection with an individual or organization. However, the researcher had no previous knowledge of the interviewee's use of work-life policies. The researcher did not contact any human resources managers employed at performing arts organizations, for fear of losing access to unvarnished employees perspectives. Therefore, there is no information on an organization's actual documented policies. Interviewees often commented on their organization's documented policies, or the lack thereof. All thoughts concerning work-life policies derive from employee's personal experience. This paper is primarily concerned with work-life policies and does not delve into other factors that may influence work-life balance, such as physical and mental health and spirituality. In addition, no respondents mentioned their experience of leave policy as an adoptive or foster parent.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Working Women

"A woman deserves to take a day off to care for a sick child or a parent without running into hardship. A woman deserves workplace policies that protect her right to have a baby without losing her job. It's pretty clear that, you know, if men were having babies, we'd have different policies. Right?" (Obama 2014) As President Obama campaigns across the country for an increased minimum wage, he has repeatedly referenced the gender wage gap and the seemingly antiquated "Mad Men" (Obama 2014) era policies that govern most workplaces. Indeed, though women have made great progress towards workplace equality, there is still further to go. The number of women in the workforce has increased greatly, with around 70 percent of mothers working outside the home (Balancing Work and Family 2007). 78 percent of working mothers have school-age children (Expecting Better 2012) and 7.9 percent have children under the age of three (Catalyst). The United State's structural systems have yet to adapt to this demographic shift (Workplace Flexibility 2010, Balancing Work and Family 2007, Expecting Better 2012). In comparison to other first-world countries, The U.S. is lagging behind in women labor participation. "Labor force participation for college educated women in the United States is lower" than the 20 other comparable countries (Hegewisch and Gornick 2008). The single breadwinner model has rapidly become outdated and a significant "restructuring"(Schein 1993) of work-life is necessary to address the needs of women.

Workplaces have not adjusted to changing needs of workers, specifically women,

with long-term consequences. Congress legislated pay equity in 1963 with the Equal Pay Act (Crosby 2004), but the wage gap still persists more than 50 years later. In 1963 women earned 59 cents for every dollar earned by a man (Siniscalco and Damrell , 2013). Today, women who work full time (excluding those who work only part of the year) earn 82 cents for every dollar earned by a man (Catalyst 2014, Encouraging Family-Friendly Work Policies). This pay inequity, though it varies in exact number, persists in all fields. Women in the age range of 25-34 have the highest level of pay equity, at 90.2 percent. In the next age range of 35-44, the pay equity rate drops dramatically to 78.1 percent and moves down to 75.1 percent in the age range of 45-54 (Catalyst, 2014). Mothers suffer even greater pay inequity, "experiencing a wage penalty of roughly 3 percent per child" (Walsh, 2012).

Women now equal or surpass men in educational credentials. Women hold 57.4 percent of Bachelor degrees, 60 percent of Master degrees, and 50.1 percent of Doctoral degrees (Lang 2010). In a study of Fortune 500 companies (Lang 2010), 46.4 percent of employees were women. 13.5 percent of executive officers were women and women held a scant 2.6 percent of CEO positions. This number increased to 4.6 percent in 2014. A 2011 longitudinal study (Barsh, 2001) found that women are 53 percent of new hires, but that number drops to 37 percent by the time women reach middle management. Perhaps most tellingly, 62 percent of the women were in positions that rarely led to the CEO positions. Barsh argues there are four barriers to women's career advancement: "structural obstacles, lifestyle issues, imbedded institutional mindsets, and imbedded individual mindsets" (Barsh, 2001). The struggle for work-life balance has resulted in a bundle of policies that fall under the work-life umbrella. These policies may include family or medical leave, flexible scheduling, telecommuting, and childcare support. Work-life policies can be part of

an organization's recruitment and retention strategy (Taneja, 2012). In a study of 526 United Kingdom firms it was found that "The presence of a bundle of work-family policies is positively associated with perceived firm-level performance. Specifically, organizations with a greater range of work family policies have higher levels of org. performance, market, performance, and profit sales growth." (Perry-Smith, 2000)

The heterogeneous and dynamic needs of parents, as well a lack of solid and detailed evaluative methods are mentioned as significant barriers to family responsiveness. Organizations are traditionally more accepting of "cheaper" and easier supports, such as flex time and dependent care accounts, and less likely to invest in child care solutions (on site or subsidized), and a compressed work week. Organizations with a human resources department or "family sensitive constituents" are more likely to adopt work-family policies (Glass and Estes 1997).

Of course, there is more than one typical working mother experience, and there is a great need for deeper research into the different dynamics that influence a working mother's reality. Gill and Davidson attempt to diversify the literature on working mothers by focusing on U.K. "lone mothers", or what those in the U.S. call single mothers. Lone mothers battle the same issues of childcare and work-family balance, but experience a much "greater" amount of "pressure". Lone mothers are in a double bind, as they have less time and resources to commit to the workplace, but the financial need for employment is more urgent than mothers in dual earner households. The authors discuss popular work-family supports and note that some are very appealing to single mothers (flex time and reduced work hours), while some are less financially feasible (job share and part-time

work). A few of the study respondents credited their work-family balance to personal solutions they were able to create with the help of management. Gil and Davidson suggest that women should be more proactive in asking for employer assistance. This statement seems naive, but it appears that the authors acknowledge that work-family policies are not one size fits all, and individual solutions might better address working mother's needs (Gil and Davidson, 2001).

Kamenou (Kamenou ,2008) also argues for a broader and more diverse understanding of work-family needs and conflicts. If employers consider and attempt to address the need for supportive policies, said policies are often based on a "White, Western world" model. After a study of ethnic and white men and women, it is concluded that all groups struggle to achieve a work-life balance, but ethnic women have added dimensions to consider, such as "religious" or "community" demands. Kamenou advocates for further study of minority women's work experiences.

Women Arts Managers

A recent study of "next generation" nonprofit staff "found that young nonprofit staff are concerned that challenges such as work-life balance, insufficient lifelong earning potential, a lack of mentorship...may prevent them from becoming nonprofit executives (Philanthropy News Digest, 2013). Very few of these young workers are being primed to become organization leaders and "women are less likely to be developed as leaders than are men" (Philanthropy News Digest). What will entice young nonprofit workers to enter the field and stay? Work-life balance can be powerful incentive for the next generation of nonprofit leaders. "The message of the importance of work-life balance must come from

the top. One of the best things current nonprofit managers and leaders can do to attract these new leaders is set an example of positive work-life balance (Commongoods Career, 2013).

There is very little research on female arts administration, though the general perception is that women have high numbers in the field. "There's a common observation that it's women who 'do' the arts managing, directed by male decision-makers. But is it true? The first problem I came up against was the scant information available on women in the arts workforce (Courage, 2012). Courage found that in the United Kingdom, there are "2.5 male leaders to every female leader and that women are outnumbered by men in the most senior roles" (Courage, 2012). A study initiated by students in the graduate Arts Management program at Carnegie Mellon University in 1996 is a notable exception. Gender statistics on upper level and mid- level arts management are offered. For example, women hold "76%" of mid- level positions, but only 33% of upper level jobs. On average, male arts managers make $14,000 more annually than women. Age, education, and experience are mentioned as barriers to women ascending to upper level ranks, in addition to lack of promotions. Interestingly, there is no mention of how motherhood or work-family conflict might affect these numbers or prevent women from progressing further. The author mentions the increased number of female graduate students in arts management programs, 77 percent in the year 1997 (Herron et. al 1996). How will these future arts managers, who might choose to have a family, address work-family concerns, and how family responsive is the arts field (Herron et. al 1996).

In the wake of Anne Marie Slaughter's article, "Why Women Still Can't Have It All", highly accomplished women from a wide variety of fields weighed in with their

perspectives, including a few who work in the arts. Carley Perloff is the Artistic Director of the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, and offers a rare performing arts administrator perspective. In a Huffington Post blog (Perloff 2012) seems ambivalent about the Slaughter article, arguing that women have been balancing work and family for years, and many have succeeded. Perloff advocates not making a big fuss about it, claiming that much of the trouble can be remedied by attitude and an awareness that "having it all" is impossible. She mentions an adage her mother shared with her when confronted with unmet family demands: "I don't compete on that level." Perloff does not suggest using this sentiment when confronted with challenging work situations. The article closes with a demand for earlier, better, and more affordable childcare options, deeming the current child care system "inefficient, unrealistic, and unfair" (Perloff 2012). Women leaders in the fine arts also chimed in on the issue. "A common feeling was cooperation and various forms of novel arrangements were needed to share the added responsibility of having a family" (Martinez, 2012). They also stressed the importance of a career mentor, and support for "wider use of comp time" (Martinez 2012).

Leaves of Absence

The most significant piece of literature pertaining to medical leave is the Family Medical Leave Act. FMLA offers twelve weeks of "unpaid, job protected" leave. This leave can be used by new parents (birth, adoptive, or foster), caregivers of an ill family member, or serious employee health issues (Family and Medical Leave 2010). Canada has a much more generous maternity leave policy than the U.S., offering 17 unpaid weeks, and 37 weeks of unpaid parental leave for mothers and fathers. As of 2011, "less than 30% of

women took paid maternity leave" (Catalyst 2013). Due to the lack of a strong federal policy, family leave is often dependent on "employer generosity" (Walsh, 2011). Leaves of absence can also have negative effects on career trajectory. Employees who take leaves of absence, regardless of gender, experience fewer promotions and lower salary increases (Judiesch, 1999). This puts the lion's share of the burden on women, as "89%" of leaves of absence are taken by women and (Judiesch 1999, Lovell 2003). Wisensale (2001) recommends making family leave paid and putting an emphasis on *family* needs, not just newborn care. He also urges for a more diverse definition of caregiver, including in-laws and grandparents and the pressing need to expand FMLA language to include domestic partners. Though FMLA offers time away from work, it does not guarantee that this time is paid. ""Without some form of wage replacement, the FMLA's promise of job-protected leave is unrealistic for millions of women and men" (Encouraging Family-Friendly Work Policies 2009). In order to make ends meet, families often use a combination of methods, (such as family leave, vacation days, short-term disability, and personal days), cobbling together a leave that has paid and unpaid components (Catalyst 2013). Offering paid maternity leave increases the likelihood that a mother will return to her employer after her leave and can "reduce the wage penalty for motherhood" (New Evidence on the Gender Pay Gap for Women and Mothers in Management, 2010).

Flexible Work Arrangements

In a study 726 MBA graduates who were currently working full time in a for profit or not for profit organization. The report defines FWA's as having six possible components: "Flexible arrival and departure, flex time within the week, telecommuting, a

compressed work week, reduced/part time work, and job sharing." In contrast to many headlines, FWA's are still offered at many organizations of various sizes. The report finds that all surveyed employees, regardless of gender, value FWA's. Half of corporate employees stated FWA's were very important, while two thirds of not for profit employees felt FWA's were imperative. The most used FWA arrangements were flexible arrival/departure and telecommuting. The report notes that lack of FWA's has a profound effect on career aspirations of women. "83% of women with access to FWA's aspired to C-suite level, vs. just 54% of women without FWA access." Organizations are urged to use FWA's to attract and retain talent (Beninger and Carter 2013).

In 2012 many prominent companies, such as Yahoo! Best Buy, and Bank of America ended their flexible work arrangement policies in favor of a more traditional business model and an emphasis on face-time. However, flexible work arrangement has been found to have a positive effect on employees. "Corporate Voices for Working Families did a study on work flexibility and found that workers with flexible work schedules were 40 to 50 percent more committed to their work and 30 percent less likely to leave their current employer within a 2 year period." (Balancing Work and Family, 2007). Flexible work arrangements also contribute to less absenteeism, lower turnover rates, and increased productivity (Glass, 1997). Many companies do not have formal flexible work policies on the books. These arrangements tend to be informal arrangements with a supervisor. In the article "The Joy of Flex", (Capowski, 1996), Capowski highlights how this method can be problematic. She interviews a consultant who says the following: "When companies say 'Oh we have flextime, we have telecommuting,' what they mean is 'We have an individual working here who does this.' They don't mean they have an integrated system...The

difference is that in a flexible company these options would be available to everyone, instead of employees having to cut deals." (Capowski, 1996).

Childcare

The United States has no national daycare or Pre-K program, yet high quality, publicly funded, and affordable childcare has been shown to decrease the motherhood wage gap (New Evidence on the Gender Pay Gap for Women and Mothers in Management, 2010). Childcare costs have grown increasingly prohibitive. A particularly alarming statistic shows "in 36 states, including the District of Columbia, the price of infant child care for one year exceeds the cost of one year of in-state college tuition" (Child Care Aware 2012). There is no parental public financing options for child care (unlike college), and middle-income parents are particularly affected (Child Care Aware 2012). Organizations have several options when providing childcare benefits to employees. These options include direct services, information, financial assistance, and alternative work scheduling (Auerbach, 1990). The simplest and most affordable of these is a flexible spending account. Morrisey (Morrisey 2009) studied a FSA flexible spending account dependent care program for employees, funded by Cornell University. Vouchers have become a more popular option for employers, as they are less expensive and more manageable than on site daycare. Morrissey finds that organizational culture is a determining factor in employees being aware of and utilizing vouchers. Employees were more likely to participate if they were personally and directly informed of the program.

Mommy Track

In 1989, Felicia Schwartz wrote the article "Management Women and thee New Facts of Life. The article caused quite a stir. Schwartz argued that businesses would lose highly

qualified and educated women if they did not implement better work-life policies. She also divided women into two groups; "career primary women" and "career-and-family women (Schwartz, 1989). "Career-and family women" needed broader options for structuring their workdays as well as their career path. Though Schwartz never actually used the phrase "mommy track", it has become attributed to her. The mommy track usually signifies women that use more flexibility in their career to navigate family demands, but also suffer from decreased opportunities, wages, and are stigmatized by their choices. These women are marked as mothers and are perceived as less committed (Schein, 1993). Schwartz continued to tackle many of the prominent issues in the field: Flex time, parental leave, and part time work. She recommends that businesses combine work-family policies with gender diversity initiatives to help mitigate gender inequities in the workplace (Schwartz, 1996).

Lorra M. Brown set out to collect quantitative and qualitative data on working mothers' experiences (Brown, 2010). A survey was distributed to 200 working mothers who held managerial positions. All of the subjects had at least one child that was young enough to need some type of childcare. 90 women responded. The survey asked women to rate their level of agreements with statements pertaining to work and family, such as "I struggle with work-family conflict". Not surprisingly, 75 percent of women agreed with this statement. A few of the survey questions were open ended, allowing women to give more detailed answers. Ten of the survey respondents were selected for in-depth interviews. Brown notes that there was often a large disparity between the quantitative and qualitative responses. Quantitatively, women were optimistic about their career advancement and felt their employers were supportive of their roles as mothers. The open-ended questions

revealed a much bleaker picture, with women bemoaning the lack of flexibility, stalled professional trajectory, and no-win decisions. This study foregrounds the importance of personal narratives of working mothers and a need for family friendly policies. Though employers, society, and working mothers may feel they have made a conscious decision to slow down, the decision is often made for them by outdated societal and work models.

CHAPTER 3

FINDINGS

An exploratory survey was emailed to over 50 performing arts centers and 50 LORT theatres across the United States. Survey responses were received from February 27, 2014 to March 28, 2014. Initial questions asked participants to identify their gender, marital status, and if they were a primary caregiver. Survey questions were grouped around the following themes: maternity leave, flexible work arrangements, childcare, mommy track, and work-life balance. Each survey question had space for additional comments, which survey respondents used to clarify their answers or provide additional insights. 87 mothers responded. The majority were married (81 percent) while a few were single (7 percent) or divorced (7 percent). Divorced respondents were equally divided between having full custody and partial custody. The bulk of the participants had one child (46 percent) or two children (40 percent). 248 women who did not identify as primary caregivers also responded to the survey, answering questions about schedule flexibility and work-life balance. Ten phone interviews were conducted with women in performing arts administration who are employed at one of the surveyed organizations. These interviews adhered to the survey themes, with leeway given to discuss facets of the topic that were most pertinent to the interviewee.

Maternity Leave

47 of the surveyed mothers took some type of maternity leave while at their current organization. 65 percent of respondents sat down with a Human Resources affiliated person to discuss their leave options, while 34 percent did not. Several respondents stated that no maternity leave policy was in existence prior to their pregnancy. "No one had ever taken maternity leave until I did. So it was uncharted territory for us all. I will now be taking it again this summer, no one else has used it since I last did." "The maternity policy was created for me", said another respondent. A few mothers mentioned taking extra initiative in beginning a discussion about maternity leave and determining the parameters. "I am very aggressive about these issues", said one survey respondent.

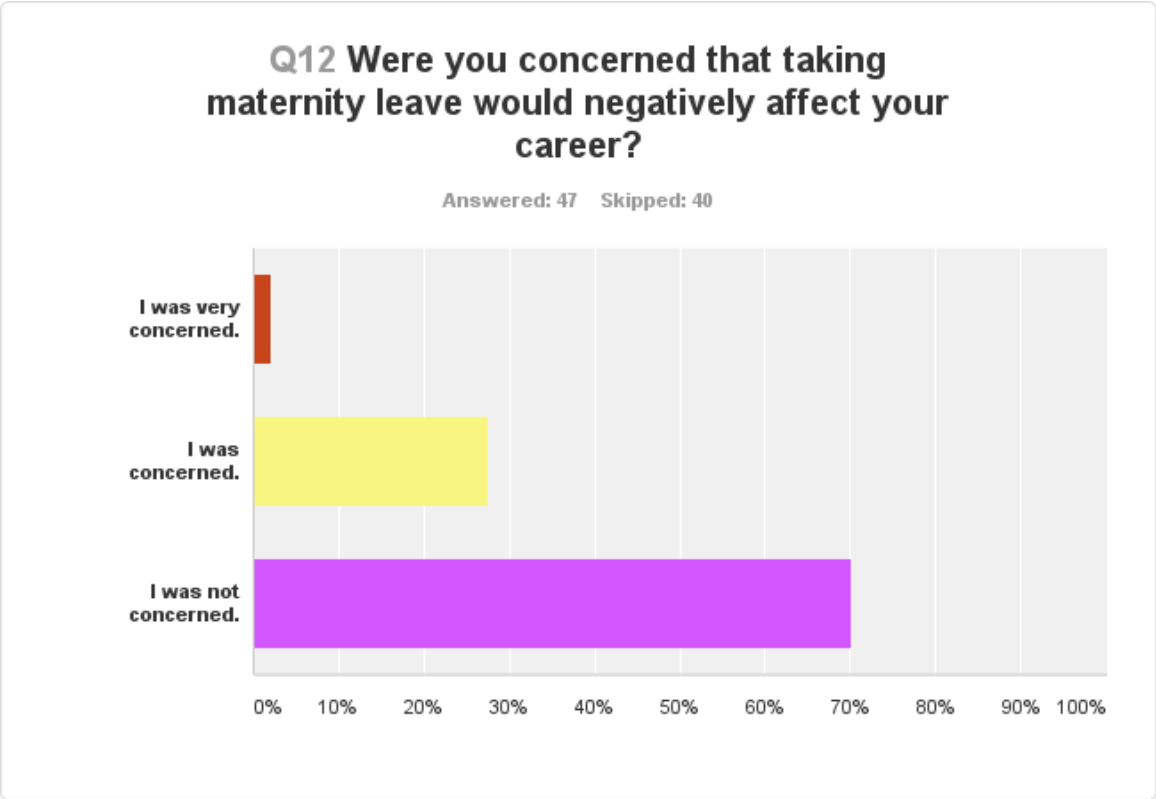

Figure 1. Were You Concerned That Taking Maternity Leave Would Negatively Affect Your Career?

The bulk of mothers (70 percent) were not concerned about maternity leave

affecting their career. One participant noted, "I did feel certain opportunities were no longer available to me, but this wasn't completely unreasonable."

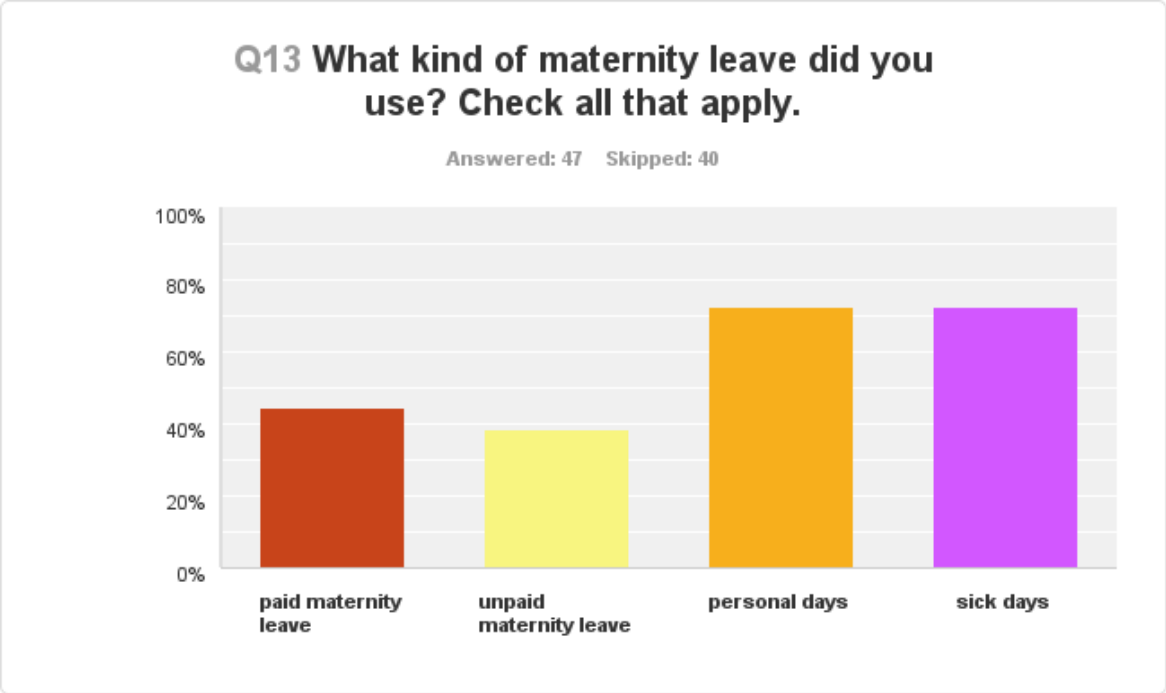

Figure 2. What Kind of Maternity Leave Did You Use?

Most survey participants used a combination of leave options to create a maternity leave. Accrued personal days and sick days facilitated employees ability to take more time and receive some amount of pay. For example, one participant said, "I am a long-time employee and had enough sick days to cover my 4 months of leave. I also had sick days left over." Many mothers used short-term disability leave (which includes some pay), instead of maternity leave. 38 percent of the respondents used some form of unpaid maternity leave. "I had a high risk pregnancy which meant I needed to be on bed rest for the last 2 months and I took 4 weeks after my son was born before returning. In that time, I did not receive a paycheck." One respondent mentioned, "Staff members also donated their vacation time to me to help cover my maternity leave."

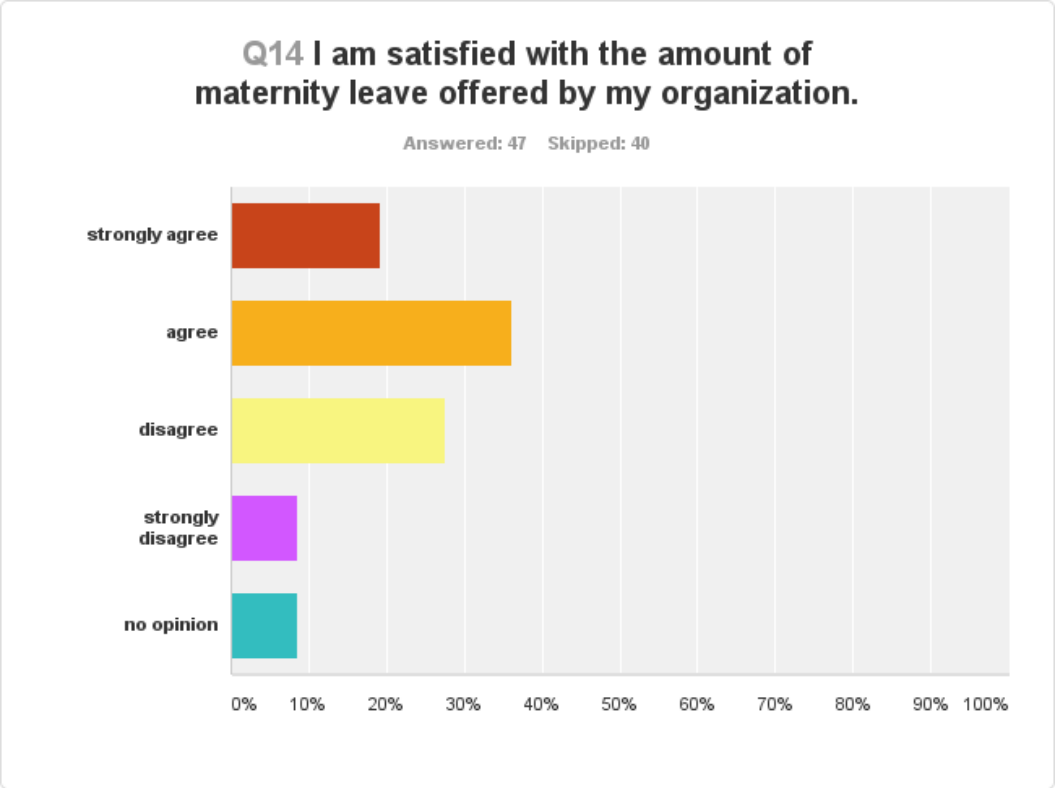

Figure 3. I Am Satisfied With the Amount of Maternity Leave Offered by My Organization

There was a varied lack of satisfaction with maternity leave offerings among the survey participants. While 36 percent agreed with the statement, "I am satisfied with the amount of maternity leave offered by my organization", 27 percent disagreed. Many commenters expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of paid maternity leave provided by their employer. "I'm satisfied with the amount (12 weeks) but not the fact that the leave is unpaid." Several participants expressed gratitude for the leave offered but wished for more. "I feel fortunate to have had 12 weeks when other companies only offer 6, but 12 weeks really isn't enough time." There was also a broader frustration with maternity leave policies in the United States. "I believe America in general should have more liberal maternity leave policy for women. 6 months at home is much more reasonable to prepare to leave a baby in full time daycare and return to work."

Flexible Work Arrangements

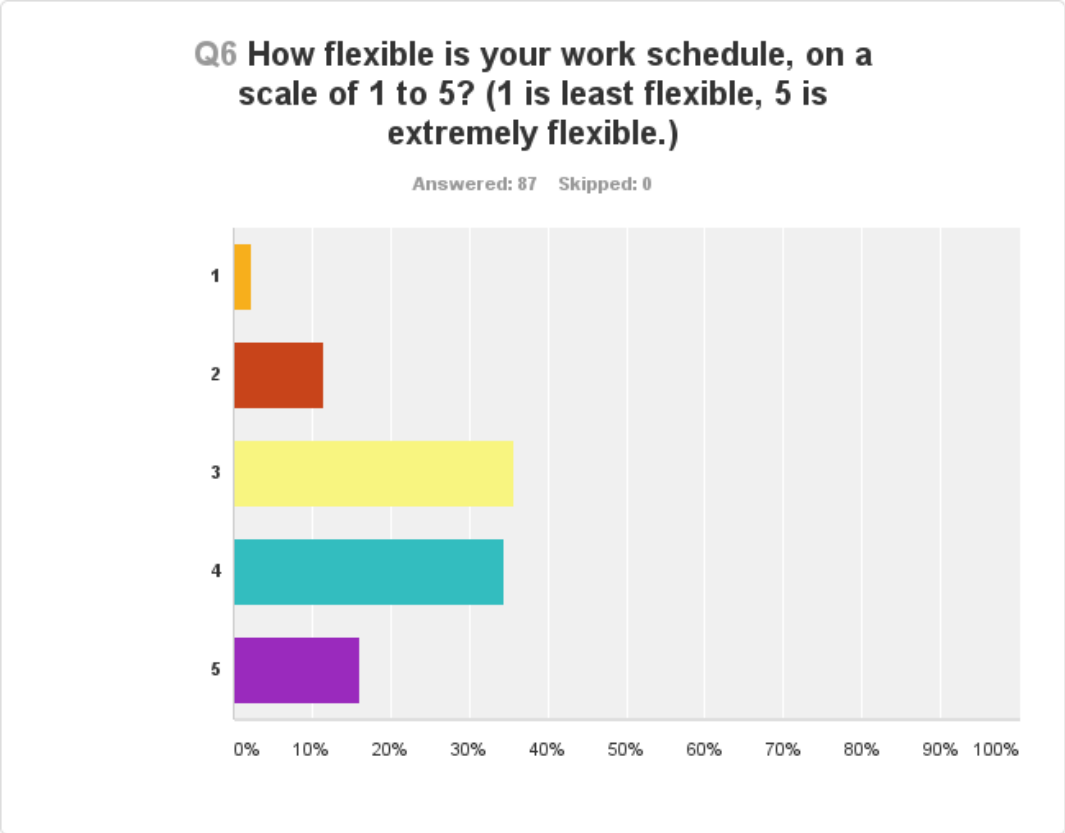

Figure 4. How Flexible is Your Work Schedule, on a Scale of 1 to 5?

The majority of survey respondents feel their schedules are flexible, with 85 percent ranking their flexibility a 3 or above (on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being extremely flexible). Respondents mentioned the sometimes erratic hours of a performing arts organization require work hours outside of the traditional 9 to 5 schedule, ("lots of nights and weekends"). "I work many nights and weekends, and as a trade off, can also work at home as needed." Many of these organizations also have seasonal changes where the ebb and flow of production level influences flexibility. "It depends on the week. Some weeks are not flexible due to events. Other weeks are more accommodating." Some participants mentioned that the level of flexibility did

not denote a lack of workload. "While the hours are flexible, I am frequently working odd hours and over 60 hours per week."

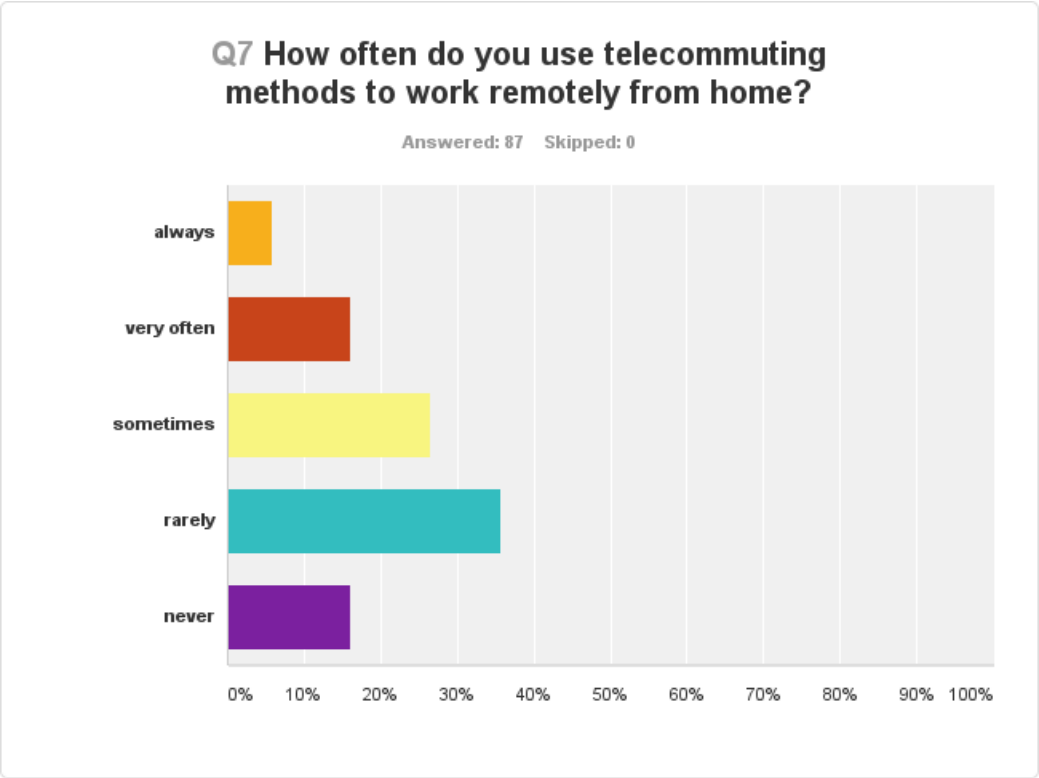

Figure 5. How Often Do You Use Telecommuting Methods to Work Remotely from Home?

35 percent of survey respondents rarely use telecommuting. There were a wide variety of comments to this question, giving the impression that telecommuting usage is highly specific to one's organization and position. Some respondents noted that they had to be onsite to do their specific job -" I am able to check email from home, but do not have access to the development database that I would need to fully work from home." Respondents mentioned that telecommuting is used in the organization but is not available to everyone. "Others at my workplace do, but it's above my pay scale." Telecommuting was also used by respondents to accommodate gaps in a child's school schedule. "Generally I work from home when schools take a day or two off (i.e. Fall Break, professional days,

etc.)" Other barriers to telecommuting were also mentioned. Said one respondent, "Although my children attend school, one is in preschool. When they are both home, it's difficult to work remotely because they both require a lot of attention--and want my attention!" A supervisor's definition of acceptable telecommuting proved to be problematic for one mother. "Every other Tuesday is what was scheduled, but I am not always able to take the days, and was told by my boss that I "shouldn't be using telecommute days to help ease the burden of childcare and pickup of my daughter." There was frustration ("telecommuting is not allowed at my work - absurd in today's market and culture") with organization's ability to incorporate telecommuting into workplace culture. Several respondents used telecommuting methods outside of typical 9 to 5 business hours. "I work from home every night after the children have gone to bed since I leave work early (4:30pm ish) to be home with kids in the evening."

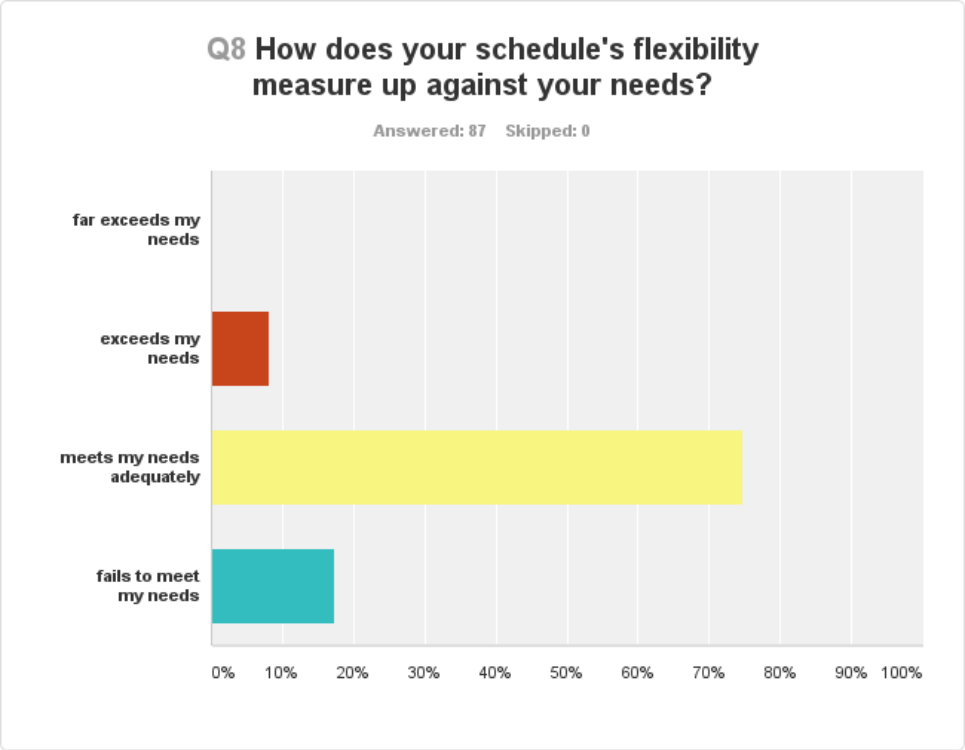

Figure 6. How Does Your Schedule Flexibility Measure Up Against Your Needs?

74 percent of respondents felt their schedule flexibility met needs adequately. 17 percent felt the flexibility failed to meet their needs. Respondents navigated schedule flexibility in a variety of ways. Survey comments included the following:

- "My husband's schedule is much more flexible and we rely on that flexibility to make our day to day work."
- "We (my husband and I) make the schedule work, but there is not much flexibility in our schedule."
- "As a salaried employee who often has evening and weekend responsibilities - I'm able to adjust my schedule as needed."
- "I took this position because of the short commute and the flexibility...The Development offices are separate from the Main building so we come and go as needed."

Some respondents expressed dismay concerning schedule flexibility.

- "I spend much more time working than taking care of myself or my child."
- "Looking for a new position - love what I do, but can't work in this environment."

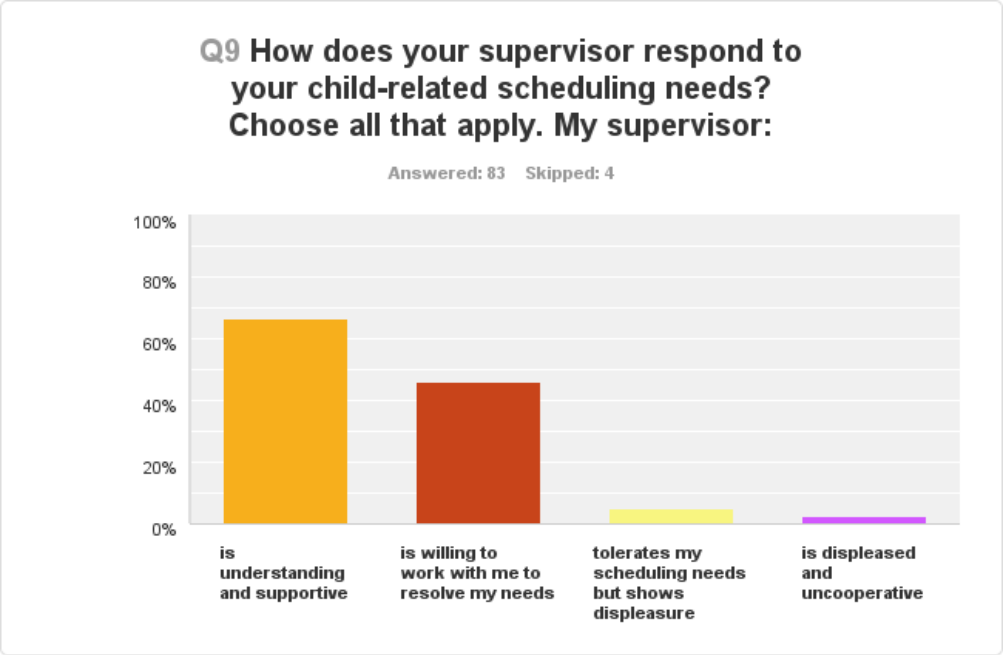

Figure 7. How Does Your Supervisor Respond to Your Child-Related Scheduling Needs?

An overwhelming number of respondents felt their supervisor was understanding and supportive of child-related scheduling needs or willing to aid in resolving those needs. A few respondents specified that they were the CEO and did not have to answer to a direct supervisor. The seasonal nature of some organizations was cited as an influencing factor:

- "Sort of depends on time of year and situation"
- "Within the confines of the show calendar"

The general perception of a high level of support comes with a few caveats. Survey comments included:

- "Is generally understanding, but sometimes the timing is bad."

- "Would be displeased and uncooperative if knew, but is in separate building"
- "My direct supervisor (has children) is understanding but my VP (no children) is not."

Childcare

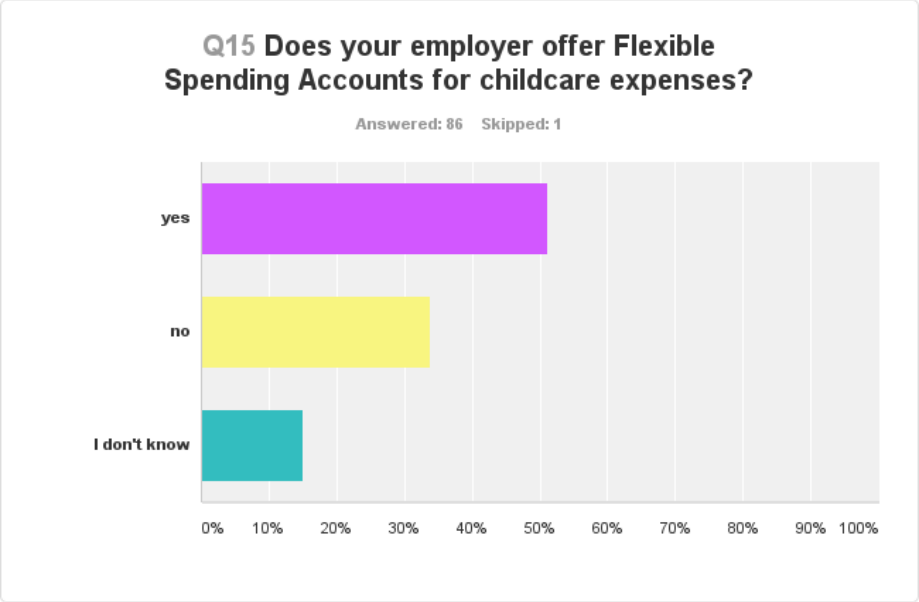

Figure 8. Does Your Employer Offer Flexible Spending Accounts for Childcare Expenses

Half of the survey participants had an employer that offered Flexible Spending Accounts. Surprisingly, 33 percent of organizations did not offer these benefits.

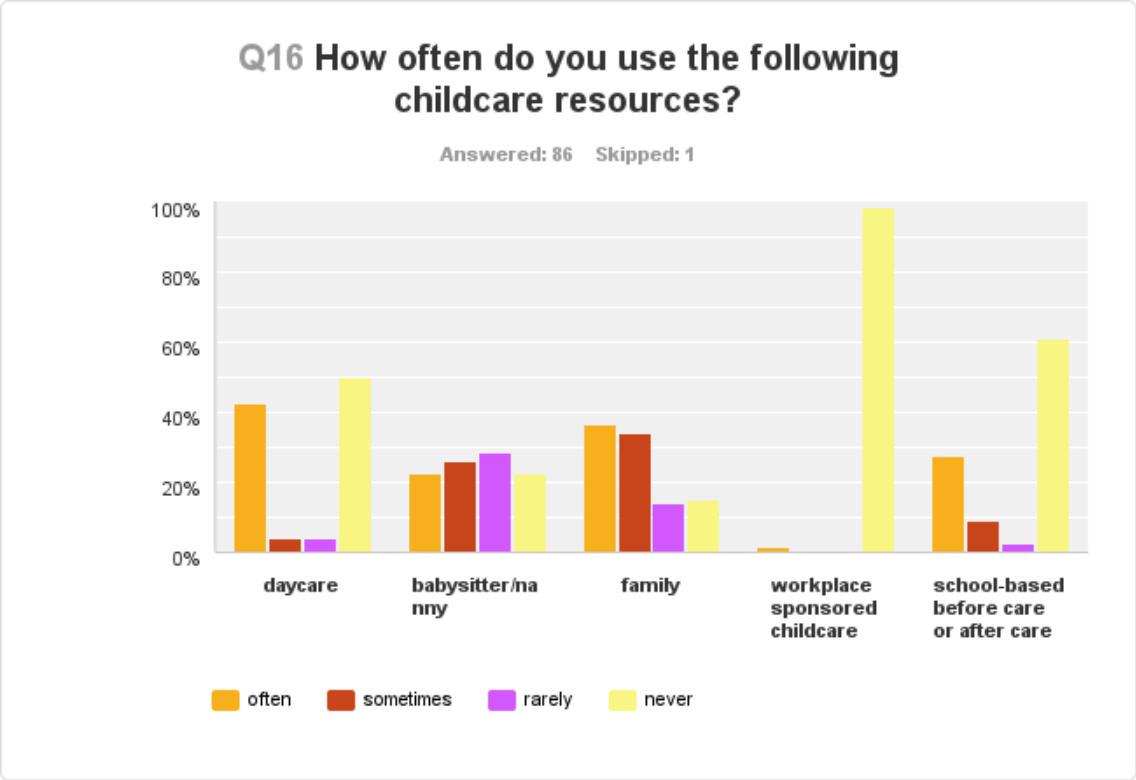

Figure 9. How Often Do You Use the Following Childcare Resources?

Daycare and family were the most frequently used childcare resources, (42 percent and 36 percent, respectively). 34 percent of survey participants noted that they "sometimes" used family as a childcare resource. Only 1 participant used workplace-sponsored childcare.

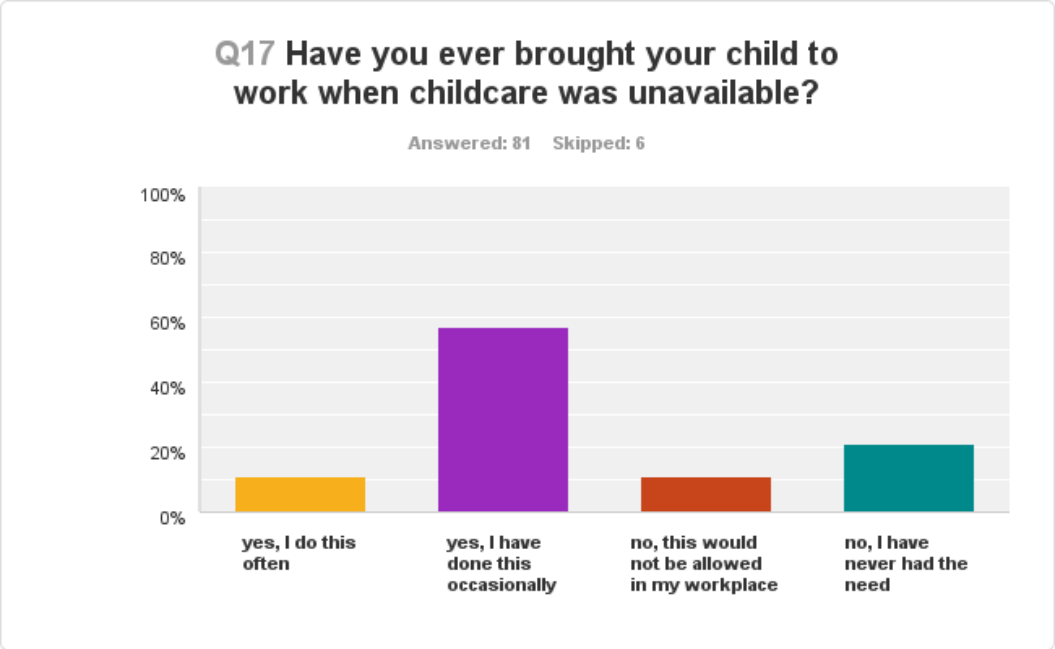

Figure 10. Have You Ever Brought Your Child to Work When Child Care Was Unavailable?

Over half of survey respondents have occasionally brought their child to work. 11 percent said bringing a child to work would not allowed. Some respondents mentioned that they would be unable to do their job if their child was at the workplace. Most respondents stressed that they brought their child/children to work, rarely and under very specific circumstances. Comments included:

- "For only short periods of time when the situation is appropriate"
- "Have done it rarely, and my children were not babies or toddlers when I did it"
- "I have only brought her in on weekends when I have to give a pre-performance talk or curtain speech."
- "Only during holidays or on weekends when I know it won't be disruptive."
- "Only for about 15 minutes in a desperate situation."
- "I try to do this as rarely as possible and it is usually a 15 minute wait before I take them home."

Mommy Track

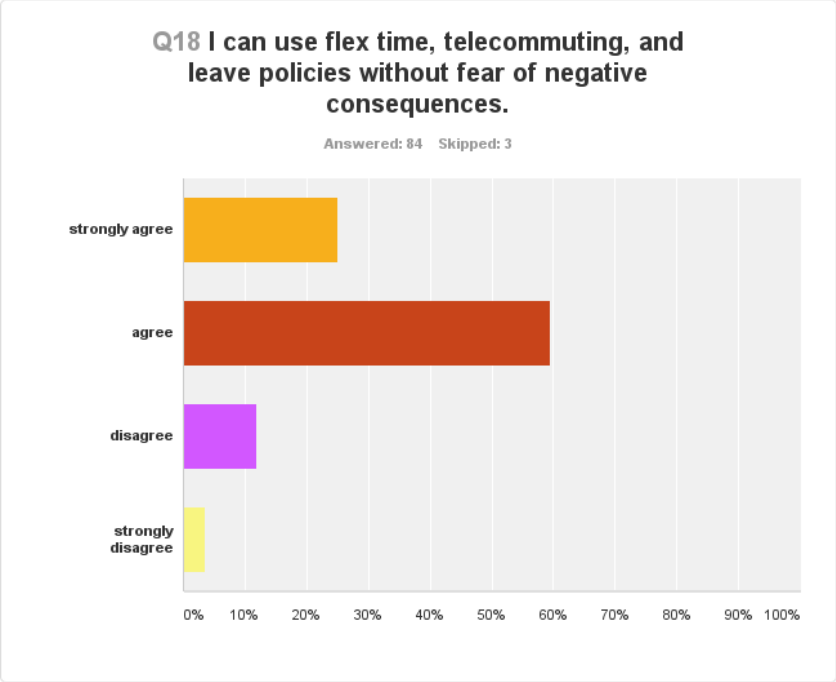

Figure 11. I Can Use Flex Time, Telecommuting and Leave Policies without Fear of Negative Consequences

Over 80 percent of survey respondents feel they can use work-life policies without fear of negative consequences. 15 percent of respondents feared that use of work-life policies could have unfavorable outcomes.

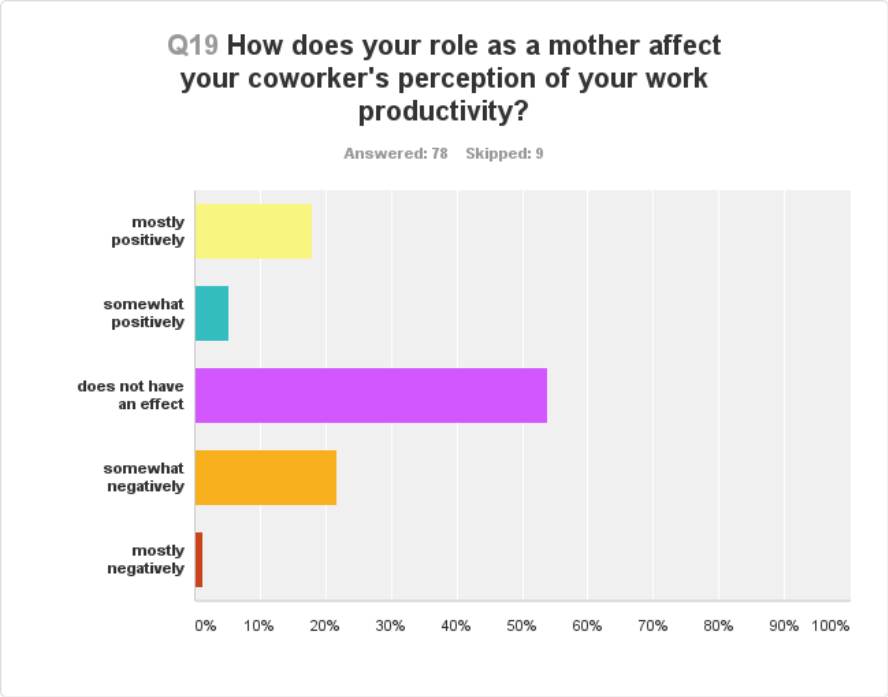

Figure 12. How Does Your Role as a Mother Affect Your Coworker's Perception of Your Work Productivity?

Half of the survey respondents felt that being a mother did not have any effect on perceptions of their work productivity. 21 percent felt motherhood affected their work productivity somewhat negatively, while 17 percent felt the perception was mostly positive. Many respondents mentioned that they were not sure what their co-workers thought. Respondents felt there was no overall perception of work productivity; the perception changed from person to person. Several respondents remarked that they were one of a few (or the only) mother in their office. There is an overall environment of support, but little understanding of the life of a working mother. Comments included:

- "It varies based on the co workers."
- "Most is positive, but there is some resentment from childless coworkers who don't understand my need to put my child first."
- "I'm sure some think mother's get some preferential treatment, but they don't have

children so they cannot completely understand the need."

- "I think my colleagues are supportive and my productivity is not questioned - however, I am the only parent in my department so it's hard to tell."
- "I work in an Education Department, so everyone here is pro-kid."
- "I don't know what they really think or if they realize how hard I work"
- "I can only think of one instance in which I was made to feel that leaving at the end of a "normal" workday (5 PM) was viewed as not working enough."
- "I think some see us as having to be at home a lot - and don't realize we put in the extra time in the evening after the kids are in bed and work through lunch time to make up the difference."
- "It's hard to scale my coworkers, all of whom do not have children. I don't think any of them see my having children as a disadvantage to the work I contribute."
- "I answered this in a neutral way. It all depends on the co-worker. Some are more understanding than others."
- "I feel as though my performance is judged more critically if I am gone, more so if I have a sick kid. Not by my supervisor but by my colleagues without children."

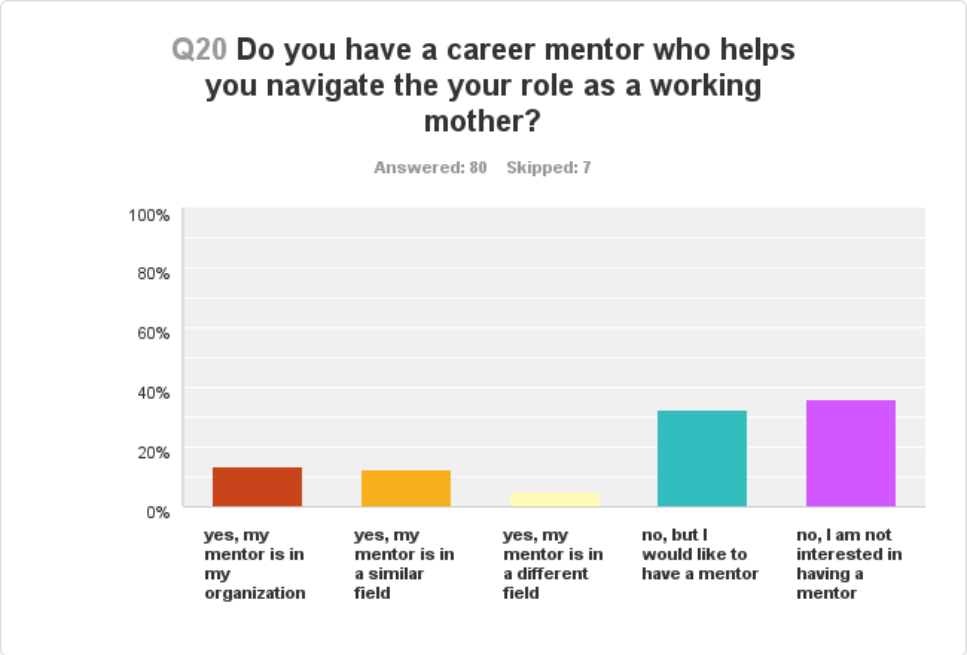

Figure 13. Do You Have a Career Mentor Who Helps You Navigate Your Role as a Working Mother?

30 percent of survey respondents have a mentor, whether in their organization, a similar field, or in a different field. 32 percent do not have a mentor, but would like one. Notably, 36 percent were not interested in having a mentor. Several respondents highlighted informal personal relationships that filled a mentorship role. Survey comments included:

- "No, never came up and I never longed for one."
- "I do have a strong support system of working friends who are mothers."
- "In this way, my mother was my mentor."
- "I don't need a mentor. Been there, done that."
- "My supervisor is my mentor."
- "Several of my experienced co-workers have helped me navigate my role as a working mother."

Work-Life Balance

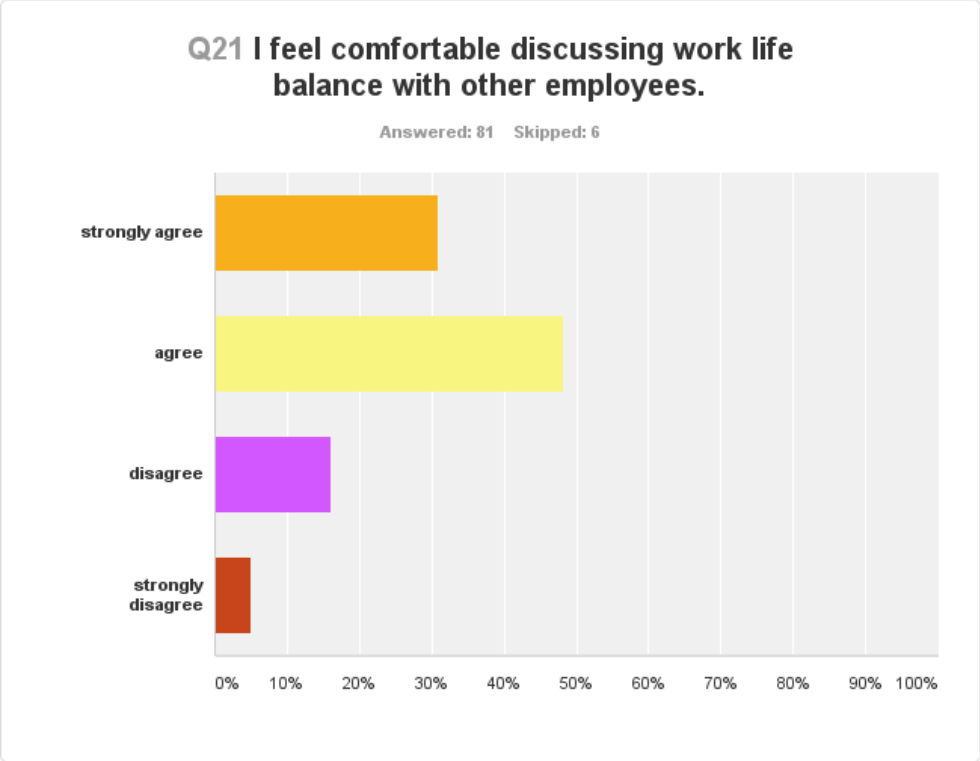

Figure 14. I Feel Comfortable Discussing Work-Life Balance With Other Employees

78 percent of survey respondents felt comfortable discussing work-life balance with other employees, while around 20 percent did not. Respondents seemed to feel most comfortable having these conversations with other parents. Survey comments included:

- "I'm the only one on staff with full custody of children."
- "I don't want to appear different, as I am in charge of my department, but yet the only mother. Don't want to appear to get special treatment."
- "No one cares."
- "With other parents"
- "Very few working mothers where I work. I think I am one of 2."
- "Somewhat but not really. I think that adds to people perceiving me as a distracted mom, so I keep it to myself."

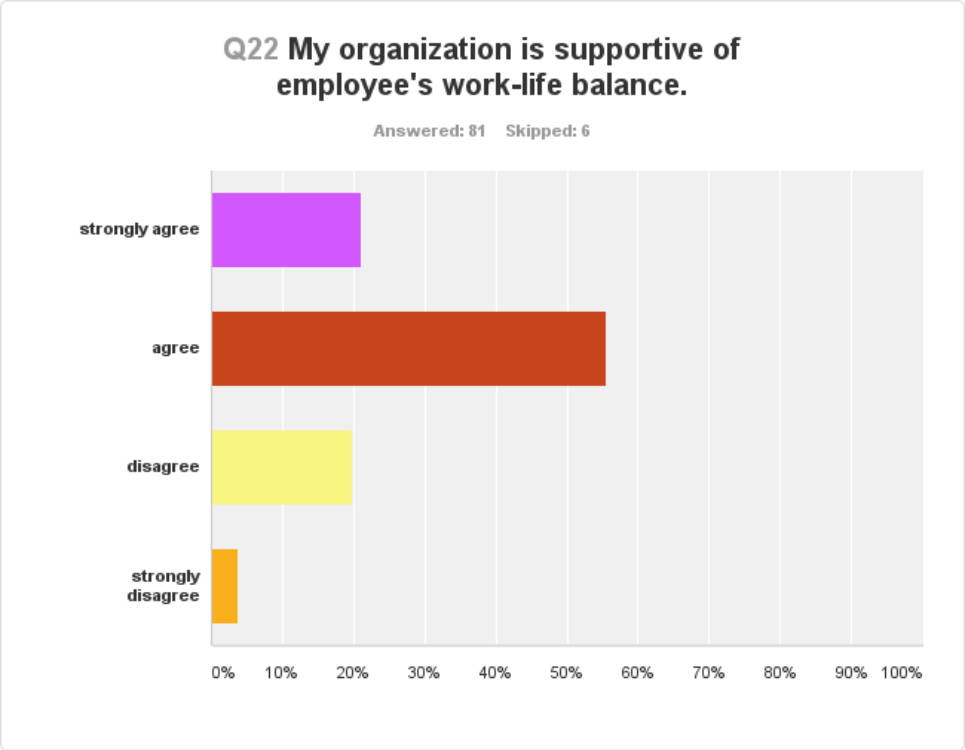

Figure 15. My Organization is Supportive of Employee's Work-Life Balance.

55 percent of survey respondents feel their organization is supportive of work-life balance, and 20 percent strongly agree with this statement. 22 percent do not feel their organization is considerate of work-life balance. Respondents mentioned supportive supervisors or departments that were more supportive than the organization as a whole. There was a repeated sentiment that organizations claim to be appreciative of work-life balance, but they don't always follow through. Survey comments included:

- "My supervisor is supportive but I'm not sure I can say the institution as a whole is supportive. Agree to a certain extent - they say they are (and I have to trust that), but I'm not sure people here really support working from home or a flex schedule. It's a cultural shift from the past here."
- "They support it but it is not easy because our programming is very demanding."
- I think this has everything to do with my boss...I don't know if it would be as

supportive without her support.

- "DEPENDS on which department you work in ... As a whole, I feel my supervisor (who is not a parent) is very understanding and supportive of ensuring that all of his direct reports have work-life balance (in fact, I believe he sees the benefit and really strives to make certain it is so). During some points in the hectic season, there IS no balance. The schedules are demanding and it is what it is!"
- "They pay lip service to work life balance but we are drastically understaffed in order for that to be a reality. I am lucky that I am no longer putting in 60 - 70 hour work weeks."
- "I think on paper it's supported but I think there are expectations that make reality a different thing."

Figure 16. I am Happy With My Work-Life Balance.

64 percent of respondents agreed that they are happy with their work-life balance, while 25 percent disagreed. Respondents cited a variety of factors that influence their

answer. Survey comments included:

- " I'm not certain I am happy with my work life balance, but I feel like I can't complain."
- "I have practically no personal time between work and raising my son; any time to myself is used to decompress."
- "I go back and forth with this. There are times when my work takes me away from my family for days but other times when it's like a normal job. It's an ever changing work schedule based on the production needs."
- "For the MOST part - I agree ... I feel my scenario is a bit more skewed than other working mothers. I am a single parent with no immediate family in the area (including my children's father). Because my children are in their teen years - work-life balance has become a bit easier as they have become more self-sufficient. This doesn't erase guilt of times I wasn't able to attend school functions or allow them to participate in outside activities, though."
- "I could take more advantage of a good situation but am an extreme workaholic."
- "My current organization is more supportive than past situations. And my kids' schools are all within 5 minutes away (one is 2 blocks away). So it makes my balance much easier to achieve."

At the close of the survey, participants were asked if there was anything else they would like to share about work-life balance. Comments fell under the following general categories: Flexibility, Work-Life Balance in a Partnership, the Nature of the Performing Arts, Scarcity of Parents in the Workplace, Challenges and Guilt, Appreciativeness

Flexibility

- “I tend to "pay for" the flexibility by working on weekends or from home in the evening. But it works for me!”
- “We work too many hours.”
- “I feel the higher you move up in the organization the harder it can be to juggle due to long days and after hours events.”
- “The flexibility afforded me at my not-for-profit organization is a strong motivator for staying (18 years). My role as a mother has not held back promotional opportunities.”

Work-Life Balance in a Partnership

- “ If you are in a committed relationship, you owe it to yourself to look at what options suit everyone best...Men CAN be primary caregivers.”
- “While my company and my boss are extremely supportive when I need to take time to be with my son, I don't know what I would do without a spouse whose company also offers flexible leave.”
- “When you have two parents who both work in arts nonprofits its very tough road. One that can be fulfilling but there's never enough time and money for both.”

The Nature of the Performing Arts

- “Working in the arts means weekends and evenings, and while we know that going in, it can prove challenging to balance it.”
- “Having a child in theater can be a hard road, unless you have an understanding community of people you work with. I believe that the more people have children and continue working in theater, the more attitudes will change.”

- “If you work for a not for profit theatre I highly recommend at least one of the two of you do something else. The time requirements, and pay scale do not support family life. I'm looking for a new job, possibly in education.”
- “Theater is difficult due to the performance schedule and when patrons are in house.”

Scarcity of Mothers/Parents

- “People are supportive here, but since I am the only one on staff with kids, they don't "get it" as much as other parents do.”
- “I find that I keep any work-life balance struggles I have to myself. I don't want to be perceived as a less productive/effective employee because I am a mother. Since a lot of my superiors and peers do not have young children, I fear that would not understand.”
- “Most of my co workers - male and female - do not have children. Those that do have grown children. So I am very much in the minority.

Challenges and Guilt

- It varies a lot depending on the types of projects I'm working on. Sometimes it feels balanced, sometimes it feel far out of whack.”
- “It's a daily challenge, especially for single moms.”
- “I often feel guilty when I need to request time off for family obligations or needs.”
- “Work and care of the children take up all the available time. Wish there was any time for me, exercise, free time, quiet, dates with husband etc!”
- “I'm not sure how self-inflicted it is but I always feel I need to overcompensate with work when my personal life encroaches. It doesn't feel balanced but it's better than

it's been in the past."

- "While I feel that my balance is very good, I do often feel like I'm not fully engaged or "there"...both with work and with my family."
- "It is just very hard, no matter how supportive work is. I always feel like I am not being dedicated enough to either my family or my job."

Appreciativeness

- "I feel like there is room for improvement but I also think I'm luckier than most women my age in terms of the flexibility of my job."
- "I can't complain."
- "I feel like I've got it pretty good now."

Interviews

Eight interviews were conducted with mothers who are employed at performing arts organizations. Interviews expanded on survey questions and explored facets of work-life policies that resonated most with the interviewee. Below are a few of the capsulated interviews.

- Interview A is the CEO of her organization. Her children are now grown, but she remembered the challenges of advancing her career while being a single mom to 2 young children. A acknowledges the field of performing arts administration can pose specific barriers. "The arts are notoriously (and by design) not 9 to 5 positions.... We're not talking about something where you clock in and clock out...where you can be consistent in when you pick your kids from daycare...As a younger woman (20s-30s) you're really just starting to grow your career and make

a name for yourself...at the same time that a lot of women are having children. The push and pull is always extreme." A recalled an incident earlier in her career, when a more prestigious job opened up at her organization. A supervisor told her, "'you would be wonderful as major gifts director if you didn't have children." A was chagrined, but today says, "In a very real way, he was right." A only stayed in that organization for a few more years before finding a better fit at an organization that offered more flexibility. Even so, she struggled with balancing the evening requirements of her position. There was a running joke that she should create a mechanized cardboard cutout of herself that could be place in the lobby; waving to patrons as they arrived and bidding them goodnight at the end of a performance. Once her children were older she would bring them to board meetings where they would sit in the hallway doing homework. It reminded board members that she was human; "Oh yeah, she does have other constrains in her life." She felt that most of her coworkers were supportive, but experienced "personal pushback" and occasional pangs of guilt. A's personal understanding of work-life conflict influences how she manages today. "Now that I'm in a position of more authority, I am adamant about flex time and making sure that parents, and non parents too, get to work a schedule that's comfortable for them and gives them enough time away, because down time is just as important as your work time." When asked what supports she used or she sees other women using to achieve work-life balance she replied, "we're just doing it."

- Interview B is the head of her department and has two young children. Lack of time is a challenge for her. "My time commitment just isn't scalable like it used to be. I

only have a certain number of hours that I'm able to work, where pre-kids I could just work 12 hours at the office, no big deal, I did that all the time. So now it's a challenge. I still need to accomplish that much." B feels appreciative that she works in a stable arts organization "that is almost run like a corporation." B feelings about her organization's capacity for flexibility are complex. "People in the arts understand that there's a need for flexibility, not just all about families and parents, but a lot of people are actually artists...there's an understanding of that here." However, the workload can make flexibility difficult. "We have such a limited budget, people are kind of doing a job and a half, so there's more work." B also notes that there are very few mothers of school age children on staff. Recently, an upper level position was vacated at B's organization. B was more than qualified and knew "I could totally do her job." After much thought, she decided to not pursue the promotion. "I decided I couldn't take on any additional time." B is actually "looking for a way to scale back." With two children in daycare "it is really hard to make ends meet."

- Interview C is a General Director of a Theatre. She has two young children. C recalls taking a 3 month maternity leave, but adds that her mother in law came to live with the family for a year. Now that the children are no longer babies, C and her husband rely on a babysitter who also rents a property close to their home. C says her job is "not really flexible" and there is a lot of schedule juggling. "Somebody is juggling all the time and we're fairly lucky." C does not telecommute often. "I don't think I can telecommute, I'm not good at it. It's hard to telecommute if your job entails putting out lots of 'fires.'" The majority of her colleagues do not have children, but she feels

they are supportive; “for the most part, everyone understands.” C married and had children later in life. She did not make the decision intentionally, but believes it “worked out, career wise”.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The results of this research tell two different stories. The survey charts paint a picture of overall satisfaction with work-life balance and work-life policies. The majority of respondents are pleased with their schedule flexibility and feel their workplace is supportive of employee work-life balance. However, a close reading of the survey comments as well as the interviews reveals that the true story is more complex. Multiple respondents and interviewees desired more work-life support but were grateful for whatever they received. Survey and interview comments indicated a tenuous work-life balance that was almost wholly facilitated by the employee. These comments, explaining a combination of schedule maneuvering, personal relationships, personal sacrifice, and frequent concessions, illustrate how the overall survey results are possible. This is a story of mothers figuring it out and making their situation work, with little organizational support.

Personal Relationships

Personal relationships were often cited as a means of maintaining work-life balance. A positive relationship with supervisors allowed respondents to shift schedules when needed. Overall, respondents felt their supervisor was willing to work with them to address work-life conflicts. Tellingly, numerous respondents stated that their flexibility and work-life balance might not be possible if they worked in a different department within their organization. Respondents often felt coworkers did not quite understand the work-life needs of a working mother. Mothers did not want to be seen as receiving preferential treatment or not pulling their weight, so respondents downplayed their work-life conflicts

to colleagues. Respondents worried that mentioning these concerns would foreground them as a harried mom, instead of a focused employee. Within the organization, work-life concerns were usually only shared with fellow mothers. Perhaps this tendency to keep work-life problems private is reflected in survey respondents disinterest in having a working mother mentor; it might mark them in a negative light. However, mothers frequently mentioned maintaining a small network outside of their organization, comprised of mothers in performing arts administration. These networks provided a sounding board and a support system. This close-knit network of moms, who are also currently in the trenches, might also explain the disinterest in mentorship.

An overwhelming number of respondents mentioned the importance of their partner in navigating work-life challenges, particularly in the area of schedule flexibility. Respondents relied on the flexibility of their partner's schedule to make up for deficiencies in their own and related stories of having few fallback options when both parents were in a heavy work period. The use of family as childcare was cited numerous times as a means of meeting work-life challenges. Some respondents had family who came live in their home for the first year of a child's life, while others had immediate family living in the same geographic area. Multiple interviewees said, "I don't know how I would do it" without family nearby. This dependency on personal relationships to bridge policy and structural gaps puts mothers at a significant work-life disadvantage. Single mothers, mothers without geographically close family members, and mothers whose partner's have an inflexible schedule face even larger impediments to career work-life balance.

Lack of Policies

Personal relationships are heavily relied upon to navigate work-life challenges, in part because there is a significant lack of official organization policy. Across the board, respondents stated that their use of flex time and telecommuting were the result of an arrangement with a supervisor and their organization had no written FWA policy. Surprisingly, this lack of policy also existed in the area of maternity leave. Though multiple respondents worked at an organization with an official maternity leave policy, quite a few respondents were the first in their organization to have need of a maternity policy. They were surprised to find that their organization had nothing in place for such an occurrence, and effectively (with the aid of management) created a policy for the organization. This lack of policy enforces the notion that the onus of work-life balance is on the employee. The unspoken edict seems to be, make it work, or go elsewhere. Lack of policy casts doubt on an organization's true commitment to work-life balance. Employees and personal relationships may help foster a culture of work-life balance, but official written policies create a foundation for that to happen. An absence of policy leaves employees vulnerable. If an employee does not have an amenable supervisor, they might find it difficult to sustain work-life balance. A formerly supportive supervisor may have a change of heart, curtailing an employee's use of FWAs. Having official written work-life policies legitimizes the need for work-life balance.

Structural vs. Personal

In a striking resemblance to the Lorra Brown study (Brown, 2010), survey respondents' perception of the use of work-life policies is much better than their personal comments attest. Many respondents stressed their appreciation for what they had, even if

they wished for just a bit more. There was a sense of great personal responsibility. Work-life balance was the responsibility of only the employee; the organization was not held to the same level of accountability. Survey responses on overall organization support of work-life balance and personal happiness with work-life balance highlight the structural vs. personal dichotomy. Over 55 percent of respondents agreed with the statement, "my organization is supportive of work-life balance", with 20 percent in strong agreement. Even so, survey respondents couched these statements carefully. Some felt the statement was true for their particular supervisor or department, but not the organization as a whole. Some felt the organization paid lip service to work-life balance but did little to back up its words. However, the respondent's personal ingenuity in jumping work-life hurdles and positive relationships with supervisors superseded organizational and structural deficiencies, casting a favorable light on overall perception of the organization.

64 percent of respondents were "happy with their work-life balance", but over 30 percent disagreed, or strongly disagreed with this statement. The level of personal work-life satisfaction is higher than organization satisfaction; the level of personal discontentment was also higher than organization discontentment. The use of work-life policies and overall work-life balance differed greatly between each person. It makes sense that many work-life solutions are specific; customized to fit a particular person and situation. At the same time, a singular focus on personal solutions with little to no structural underpinning puts mothers in an impossible bind. Very few respondents openly critiqued their organization's structural work-life policies, though a few expressed unhappiness with maternity leave length and the inability to telecommute. Dissatisfaction with the status quo was tempered by an appreciation of how much worse it could be. This

"figure it out" attitude is a wonderful quality and undoubtedly has helped in career advancement, but it masks the persistent structural support void faced by most working mothers.

Barriers and Opportunities

There are several barriers inhibiting performing arts organizations from creating or improving work-life policies. The majority of these organizations are understaffed, with one employee doing the work of two. Employers may feel there is little room for flexibility, given the time demands and the work load. Performing arts revolve around live events, which often require evening hours. Being present for evening events, which have the potential to conflict with family duties, can provide a valuable connection time with artists and patrons.

Numerous survey respondents and interviewees felt there were only a small number of mothers (with school age children) within their organization. They observed that most of their female colleagues (single and partnered) had no children, or their children were grown up. This absence of mothers may cause employers to not recognize, or to willfully ignore, the work-life challenges present in their organization.

The production oriented nature of the performing arts does offer some work-life policy opportunities. One interviewee mentioned her ability to bank time to be used at a later date. For example, if she spent an evening working an event at the theatre, she was able to bank a few of the hours, perhaps using them to come in late another day after taking the kids to school. Survey respondents also discussed the occasional perks of production calendars. Some months are extraordinarily busy while others involve more planning and less event work. This presents opportunities for increased telecommuting during the off

season and bankable hours or compressed work weeks in the busy season. Performing arts organizations are increasing their education efforts, partnering with schools and community organizations. There seems to be potential for partnering with a childcare organization or daycare to sponsor or offset childcare expenses, or perhaps just provide staff with a curated list of community resources.

Further Research

There is great need for further research on the topic of work-life balance in performing arts administration. The survey generated a high level of response, proving that this is an issue people are eager to discuss. This research focused on issues surrounding motherhood and childcare. Work-life balance is multi-faceted. Mental and physical health, spirituality, creativity, artistic expression and partner relationships also play a part in achieving balance. There is also much to explore about those who must take leave or adjust their schedule for elder care, to care for a sick child or partner, or to take care of a parent. This current research could be duplicated in specific performing arts disciplines, and a discipline comparison could be made.

The field would greatly benefit from a study of mothers' career advancement and wage history. A study of mother's challenges and successes, separated by organization department (management, marketing, development, education, operations, production), could provide additional insights. It would be instructive to find an organization that trumpets a culture of work-life balance and take a look at its policies, speak with employees, and determine how other arts organizations might do the same.

Conclusion

As the national debate about "leaning in" and "having it all" continues, it is vital that arts administrators add their voices to the discussion. As the arts field continues to grapple with issues of diversity, it would be foolhardy to ignore the role of work-life policies. There is potential for the arts to partner with work-life organizations to pioneer new initiatives or obtain knowledge on how to improve policies. Work-life policies are essential for deepening gender diversity in the field and advancing the careers of highly educated and qualified women.

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