I. Ideas for upcoming WFRN conference

The Gender and Work-Family SIG plans to sponsor a few sessions at the upcoming WFRN conference. Currently, we plan to organize a panel about the unfinished gender revolution, a roundtable session on future directions in the study of gender and work-family issues, and a poster session featuring gender and work-family scholarship. Send any ideas you have for additional potential panels or sessions to Krista Lynn Minnotte at krista.minnotte@und.edu

II. Website for the Gender and Work-Family SIG

- We are excited to announce our new Gender and Work-Family SIG website, designed by Secretary/Webmaster, Katherine Y. Lin.

- The address for the website is: https://genderworkfamily.wordpress.com

- Please send ideas and suggestions for the website to Katherine Y. Lin at kylin2@wisc.edu
  - We are especially eager to hear your ideas about new website content

III. Call for Future Newsletter Submissions

- **Please submit items for our next newsletter.** The deadline for submissions is December 11, 2017. We would love to share your recent publications (books and articles) and successes (promotions, honors, and so forth) with other SIG members.

- We would also love to hear about any upcoming work-family and gender-related conferences or special issues of journals.

- If you would like to write an essay for a future newsletter, please contact us with your idea! Send ideas to Krista Lynn Minnotte at krista.minnotte@und.edu
IV. Interview with Dr. Marcello Russo

In each newsletter, we feature an interview with one of our SIG member about their current and future work. This newsletter’s interview is with Dr. Marcello Russo, Assistant Professor of Organizational Behavior and Human Resources Management, University of Bologna, Italy, and Affiliated Professor Kedge Business School, France.

1. Please tell us about one of your current projects (i.e., something not currently published) that incorporates gender into the study of work-family issues.

I am currently working on a conceptual paper that aims at extending the conceptualization of work-life balance. I believe that the way we have conceptualized and studied WLB so far, i.e. an individual goal depending mostly on personal preferences and aspirations, has contributed to gender and societal disparities, and to transform WLB into an attainable goal only for few lucky people (typically the men totally devoted to work) and an unrealistic goal for many people, especially women, who often need to sacrifice their WLB aspirations and make trade-offs between their careers and family participation.

To better illustrate my view, consider the case of an employee (in most families this employee would still be a man, unfortunately) who makes the decision to respond to work-related emails at home before dinner. Assuming the traditional approach to WLB, we would consider such a decision to have a positive impact on WLB, as it could enable the given individual to be responsive to work while being physically present at home. What I argue in my paper is that such decision does not consider the externalities generated on other stakeholders who can be impaired in their capabilities to achieve their ideal model of WLB due to such individual behavior. For instance, the partner (typically the woman) of the given individual may need to invest more effort in household activities to compensate for the lack of spousal support and will experience worse role performance and negative affect (i.e. lower work-life balance), if she values an egalitarian division of labor.

Moving from this consideration, I am working on a conceptual piece that aims at introducing a newer and broader definition of WLB, which I term relational work-life balance, that takes into account not only personal preferences, needs and aspirations in terms of balance, but also the work, family, and community stakeholders’ WLB needs, preferences and aspirations. I am currently examining what could be potential individual, organizational and societal antecedents shaping the WLB framing process, the outcomes associated with a relational view of WLB and, above all, the factors that can foster a transition from an individualistic to a relational view of balance.
2. You recently co-authored a manuscript in the Journal of Business Research that investigated whether national levels of gender inequality moderated the relationship between family-supportive supervisor behavior and motivation at work. The findings indicated that national levels of gender inequality mattered, with family-supportive supervisor behavior having stronger effects on prosocial motivation in countries with lower levels of gender inequality. What factors do you think explain this finding?

The paper, co-authored with Marie Cote Bosch, Mireia Las Heras, Marc Grau-Grau and Yasin Rofcanin, and to appear in the Journal of Business Research examines the impact of Family Supportive Supervisor Behavior (FSSB) on extrinsic and prosocial motivation at work on a sample of 2,046 employees in four different countries, namely Brazil, The Philippines, The Netherlands and Kenya. This paper contributes to existing research on FSSB as it is the first time that FSSB is associated with such an important outcome at work (i.e., motivation) and also the first time that FSSB is investigated in an African country (i.e., Kenya). The four countries considered present different levels of gender inequality as indicated by their different scores in the United Nations Gender Inequality Index, which measures the level of gender inequality using three indicators of human development: reproductive health, empowerment and economic status.

Our results demonstrate that a country’s level of gender inequality influences the relationship between FSSB and prosocial motivation. More specifically, the results indicate that the beneficial effects of FSSB on prosocial motivation are stronger in countries with lower levels of gender inequality. As we elaborate in the paper, we believe that in countries with high levels of gender inequality family supportive workplace resources, like working with a family supportive supervisor, might be perceived as less salient and beneficial because unpaid work is generally less valued and supported in such countries than paid work. Consequently, receiving resources that help conciliating paid and unpaid work is less useful and salient for employees working in countries with higher levels of gender inequality.

Instead, in countries characterized by lower levels of gender inequality, employees might appreciate more the condition of working with a family supportive supervisor as FSSB represents an instrumental resource that helps people to conciliate both paid and unpaid work. Thus, in countries with lower levels of gender inequality it is possible that employees are more likely to respond favorably to the positive treatment received at work by their supervisor, for instance, with an enhanced willingness to aid others at work (i.e., prosocial motivation).

This result is important as it suggests that FSSB is not equally beneficial for all employees, but its usefulness can depend on the country in which one lives as demonstrated in our study, or on the personal situation—prior research has demonstrated that the effects of FSSB vary according to the employees’ family situation (Matthews et al., 2014) or individual need for caring (Russo et al., 2015).
3. What do you view as promising future directions in the gender and work-family area of study?

As a work-family scholar, and a father of a 2-year daughter, I often feel a real paradox (and a little bit of embarrassment) thinking about the numerous progresses made in our studies and few progresses made in two fundamental aspects of contemporary society: (i) the way people allocate their time and energy between work and non-work roles and (ii) the gender division of labor, with women who still devote most of their time to the family, even in the most advanced gender egalitarian countries.

Regarding the first point, a paper I've recently read by Williams, Berdahl and Vandello (published in 2016 in the Annual Review of Psychology) argued that the corporate world is still dominated by the ‘ideal worker’ ideology that depicts the ideal worker as an individual totally devoted to work and with a stay-at-home partner, a role typically performed by a woman. Albeit the ideal worker role has been typically considered a man, recent studies evidence some changes as, in some cases, the ideal worker can also coincide with a woman, particularly when single or childless.

Regarding the second point, Keizer and Komter (2015) have found that even in the most advanced gender egalitarian countries, like the Netherlands, men’s career is still prioritized in comparison with women’s career when couples need to make important work-family decisions, like for instance whether to relocate or not.

In light of these considerations, I think a promising direction for future research would be the examination of specific interventions that could favor a cultural shift in our families, organizations and communities in order to promote a more equal participation of both men and women in all the meaningful domains of our lives.

I also believe that continuing examining the impact of technologies on the way people manage the work-life interface is an important line of inquiry for the future of our field as our lives are increasingly shaped by technologies that may cause frequent episodes of role blurring and family time to be totally dominated by work. Interestingly, a recent study by McDaniel and Coyne (2016) indicates that 75% of women perceive that technology is harming their relationship: sampled women admitted that one of the greatest challenges they are currently facing is to be more interesting to their partners than a smartphone. To this end, I think that a promising line of inquiry for the future would consist of examining what specific strategies individuals use to protect the permeability of their work-non-work boundaries from the pervasiveness of connectivity technologies. An exemplary contribution in this direction is the paper by Ariane Ollier-Malaterre, Nancy Rothbard and Justin Berg published in Academy of Management Review (2013) that examines individual boundary management decisions in online social networks.
4. Can you tell us about a few gender and work-family publications that have been especially influential in your work?

During my work, I started to do research in the work and family area mostly inspired by my Catholic faith. I have been raised with the belief that working hard is important, but it is also fundamental to rest and devote time and energy to other life interests, such as family, friends, personal interests and community.

Thus, the seminal contribution published in Academy of Management Review by Jeff Greenhaus and Gary Powell (2006) on work-family enrichment (“When Work and Family are Allies: A Theory of Work-Family Enrichment) and the book written in 2008 by Stew Friedman (“Total Leadership: Be a Better Leader, Have a Richer Life”), which both support the idea that having a successful career and a rich personal life is beneficial, beyond being possible, represent the two publications that have been especially influential in my work. Now they are must-read publications that I recommend to any doctoral student who approaches me with an interest in the work-family area.

If I have to mention a more recent publication, I found the recent book by Jeff and Gary (2017), entitled “Making work and family work: From hard choices to smart choices” very inspiring and full of ideas and insights that can shape future research agendas.

V. Recent Publications by Work-Family and Gender SIG members


modern workplace: Interdisciplinary perspectives from work-family research, law and policy (pp. 27-50). Wolters Kluwer.


• Smith, N. (2017). More of us could work in part-time roles if they were designed better. *The Conversation.* http://theconversation.com/more-of-us-could-work-in-part-time-roles-if-they-were-designed-better-82436.


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VI. Opportunities

• The 9th European Society on Family Relations Conference will take place at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences in Porto, Portugal, 5th - 8th September 2018. The general theme will be "Families through the Lens of Diversity." The Conference site will be available shortly.

• InGRID-2 offers travel grants to help provide transnational access to research infrastructures to those studying poverty and living conditions. Further details can be found at [http://www.inclusivegrowth.eu/visiting-grants](http://www.inclusivegrowth.eu/visiting-grants)