

MOTHERHOOD

IN OUR ACADEMY:
RESULTS OF A
NATIONAL SURVEY

HELLO!

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DISCLOSURES

Amanda Stead

Financial – receives salary from Pacific University as an Associate Professor

Non-Financial – Became pregnant in PhD program and had two children on the tenure track (pre-tenure)

Kerry Mandulak

Financial – receives salary from Pacific University as an Associate Professor

Non-Financial – Became pregnant in PhD program and had two children on the tenure track (pre-tenure)

1.

WHY ARE WE HAVING THIS
CONVERSATION?



EVIDENCE

- ✘ As women advance through faculty ranks, they suffer from:
 - higher family dissolution rates and
 - lower rates of family formation

- ✘ In the landmark National Science Foundation's (NSF) research study "Do Babies Matter," investigators found that PhD students had persistent concerns that future employers, advisors and even peers would take them less seriously once they had a family (Mason, Wolfinger, & Goulden, 2013).

- ✘ The NSF researchers also found that a woman's income incrementally decreases 1 percent for each child she has while a man's remains unaffected. Over many years and several children, the compounding is significant.

Academia and motherhood: We can have both

In the Ivory Tower, Men Only

For men, having children is a career advantage. For women, it's a career killer.

Ignore the headlines. Here's the real truth about motherhood and work.

***The Costs of Motherhood Are Rising,
and Catching Women Off Guard***

The Baby Penalty

The Pregnancy Penalty



FINANCIAL IMPACT

Men and women retire at about the same age, but women salaries at retirement are, on average, 29 percent lower



There is a pervasive attitude that the female graduate student in question must now prove to the faculty that she is capable of completing her degree, even when prior to the pregnancy there were absolutely no doubts about her capabilities and ambition.

Mason, M. A. (2013). *Do Babies Matter?: Gender and Family in the Ivory Tower*. Rutgers University Press.



When I told my faculty advisor in my PhD., that my husband and I were 'expecting,' she asked, 'expecting what?' When I responded that I was expecting a baby, she sighed deeply and said, 'Oh..., I thought you wanted to be a researcher...'

2.

“LEAKY PIPELINE”



WHAT IS THE “LEAKY PIPELINE?”

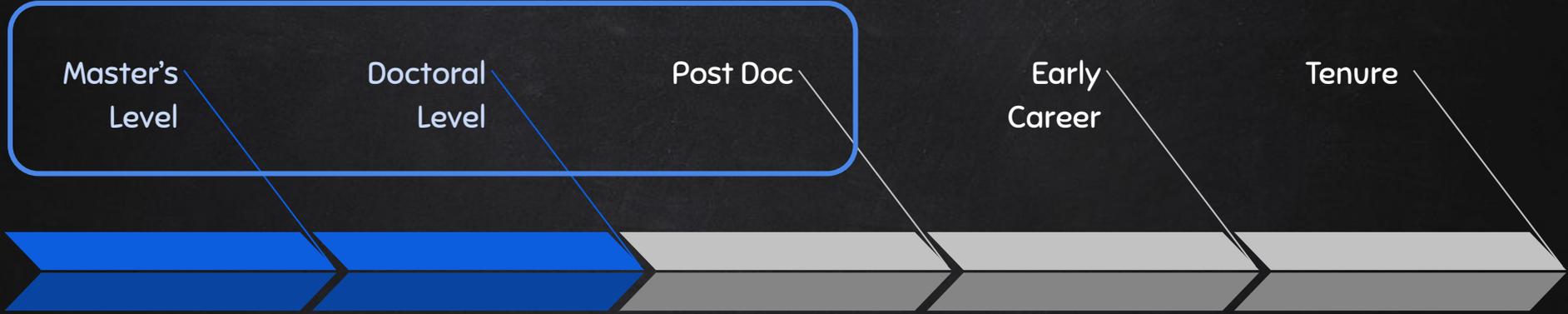
- ✘ The “leaky pipeline” refers to the loss of women in STEM careers at a significantly higher rate than men (Wagner et al., 2019)
- ✘ There is a specific bachelor’s-to-PhD pipeline in which women face lots of barriers to continuing careers in science (Miller, 2015)



“... one of the main reasons women leave academia stems from the perception that colleges and universities are unfriendly to the growth and maintenance of a family.”

Calisi & A Working Group of Mothers in Science, 2018

"LEAKY PIPELINE"



Financial Impact
& Time to Degree

Financial Impact
& Time to Degree
Applications,
interviewing,
navigating
negotiations

Applications,
interviewing,
navigating
negotiations

Research
expectations,
perfecting
teaching, service
load

SECURITY



THE BABY PENALTY

- ✘ Widespread perception amongst female scholars and professionals that academia is incompatible with family life (Mason, 2013; Calisi et al., 2018)
- ✘ Culture of inequity for families (and mothers especially because of social pressures for childcare demands) (Calisi et al., 2018)
- ✘ Married mothers with PhDs in STEM earn significantly less than male counterparts with and without children (Cheuk, 2017)
- ✘ Family formation has been shown to negatively impact women's careers and positively impact men's careers (Brody, n.d.; Mason, 2013)



THE BABY PENALTY

- ✘ Bottom line – if women are expected to be the primary caregivers to their children, then there is a professional penalty on mothers compared to male counterparts
- ✘ When academic and professional advantages are not made accessible or inclusive to parents, then parents have to sacrifice on career-furthering opportunities (such as engaging in research or attending important conferences)



THE BABY PENALTY

- ✘ However, the baby penalty in academia does not just begin when you have a baby – it starts when pregnancy begins – or even before.

17%

Women in our survey that reported impact from fertility
or miscarriage

1 IN 4 OR 5 PREGNANCIES

End in miscarriage (85% before 12 weeks)

1 IN 6

Families struggle with infertility

4.5%

Of ASHA Membership identifies as Male

22.7%

Of Male ASHA members have a PhD

16-22%

Of PhD Program Students Identify as Male



GENDER STEREOTYPES IN ADVANCEMENT

Ranks

Men are overrepresented relative to their proportion of ASHA members at all faculty ranks.

Awards

Men receive 33% of the ASHA Fellows of the Association awards

Leadership

Men occupy 29% of the departmental chair positions in speech-language pathology and audiology programs



38% vs 25%

Male vs. Female Full Professors

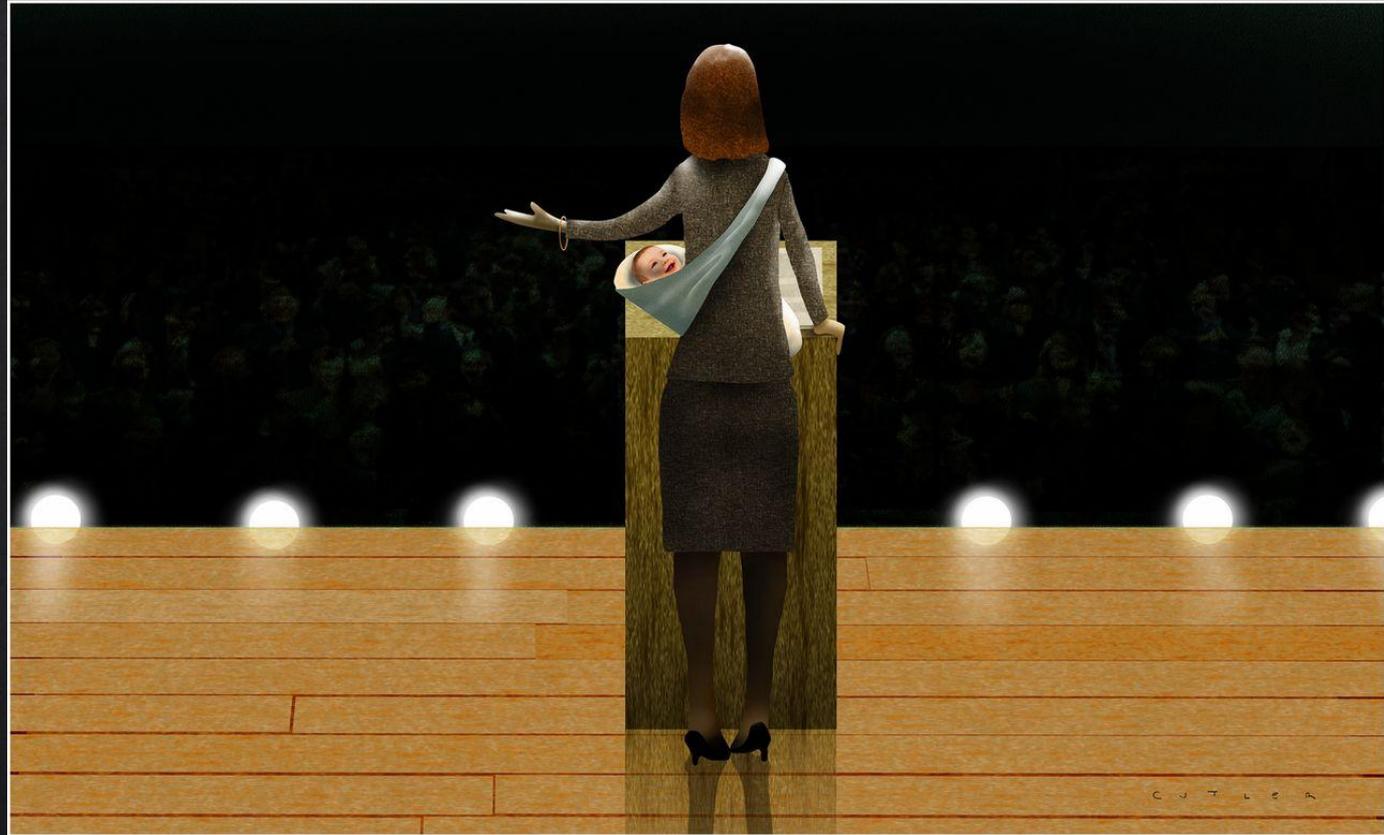
That's a Big difference...Significant in fact, $p < .0001$.



37% vs 26%

Male vs. Female Professors on the Tenure Track
Significant difference $p < .0001$.

“Losing early career scholars is a great loss in trained talent, but also the loss of a major economic investment “



3.

ACADEMIC MOTHERS' PERSPECTIVES

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ✘ How would you describe your perception of “balance” as an academic mother?
- ✘ In a few sentences, please describe your lived experiences as an academic mother.
- ✘ Can you describe an anecdote that you feel represents your experience as an academic mother?
- ✘ What solutions would you suggest for creating a more family-friendly academic environment?

METHODS

- ✘ Survey transcripts were analyzed and coded in Nvivo 12 software by lead researcher and two graduate assistants
- ✘ Transcripts were reviewed to familiarize team with the data
- ✘ Statements in response to the first question were coded individually by the three team members
- ✘ The team reviewed individual coding to develop a codebook for the subsequent transcript responses
- ✘ The team engaged in a multi-stage, focused-coding process
- ✘ Themes emerged through the coding process

PARTICIPANTS

| Current Institution | % |
|---------------------|-------|
| Public R1 | 31.3% |
| Public R2 | 18.1% |
| Public R3 | 13.3% |
| Private | 25.3% |
| Other | 12.0% |

✘ Average age: 41.7 years old

✘ Average number of children: 2

| Current Position | % |
|---------------------|-------|
| Assistant Professor | 39.8% |
| Associate Professor | 26.5% |
| Full Professor | 7.2% |
| Clinical Faculty | 10.8% |
| Other | 13.3% |
| Staff | 2.4% |

| Themes | Subthemes |
|--------------|--|
| Balance | Definitions Choice (+/-) Flexibility (+/-) Separation (+/-) Time (+/-) |
| Expectations | External (+/-) Internal (+/-) |
| Support | External (+/-) Internal (+/-) |
| Solutions | Childcare Culture Flexible schedules Policy Current solutions |
| Fertility | Experienced Negative impact to self Negative impact to work |

Themes and subthemes from qualitative analyses

BALANCE

Choice (+/-)

Flexibility (+/-)

Separation (+/-)

Time (+/-)



BALANCE

Choice (+/-)

Flexibility (+/-)

Separation (+/-)

Time (+/-)

“Being a mother has helped me to evaluate what I say “yes” to because it always means saying “no” to something else.”



“I feel like there are opportunities as an academic that I have not taken because I have been the primary caregiver for my children all of their lives.”

BALANCE

Choice (+/-)

Flexibility (+/-)

Separation (+/-)

Time (+/-)

“As an academic, the advantage is flexibility and being able to 'work from home' or take [my child] to doctor's appointments in the middle of the day as needed.”



“My university has a no kids on campus policy and a strict time management policy that doesn't allow faculty to leave early.”

BALANCE

Choice (+/-)

Flexibility (+/-)

Separation (+/-)

Time (+/-)

“I try to keep focused on work from 8 to 5, Monday through Friday, as much as possible, but I try to leave work at work when I go home and on the weekends.”



“My son...mom will you ever be here when I get home from school? Mom do you have to work again this weekend? Working on lesson plans and catching up on emails at 2:00 am.”

BALANCE

Choice (+/-)

Flexibility (+/-)

Separation (+/-)

Time (+/-)

“I think balance was doing what I could during the workday and spending evenings and weekends with family time.”



“My time with my children has been drastically reduced since I joined academia.”

EXPECTATIONS

Internal (+/-)

"I am a better teacher and researcher because I'm a mom, though. I care, in large part, about what I do because of them."

"I feel like I am not the mother I thought I would be...I feel like my son has been short-changed by my career and I have not been "present" during his early childhood."

"I constantly feel like I am disappointing my family & my administrators"

External (+/-)

"People perceive me as being well-balanced between home and work life."

"Your children should never interfere with your work week" was told to me at an annual review based on zero issues, she was just letting me know."

SUPPORT

Internal (+/-)

"I enjoy and value both being a mother and my work in academia."

"I finally head home after not seeing my kids for two days with a crushing internal conflict: I accomplished something in my work that made me feel fulfilled, but I have tremendous guilt seeing my babies' sweet faces."

External (+/-)

"the women I worked with were amazing. They gave me the support and space to try not to lose my mind."

"At the time I was tenure-track and having babies, it was horrible. My department expected me to "cover" my own maternity leave. Even taking a tenure extension (which was allowed at my university without penalty), I was judged negatively and it almost derailed my tenure."

SOLUTION-BASED THEMES

“onsite sick-child care; Have child care at night events. Explicitly state "children are welcome." Childcare at conferences”

“More affordable / subsidized, on-campus childcare for infants and toddlers.”

“Allow faculty to choose a path -- research, teaching, or teacher-scholar.”

Childcare

Culture

Flexible Schedules

Policy

Current Solutions

“Better alignment of times off with my child's school calendar. Allowing for time for parent- teacher meetings and school events; It's rare to find part-time tenure track options; more ability to work from home”

“There is sympathy but I think empathy and compassion are missing from expectations of faculty returning from maternity leave”



“... one of the main reasons women leave academia stems from the perception that colleges and universities are unfriendly to the growth and maintenance of a family.”

Calisi & A Working Group of Mothers in Science, 2018

THE TAKEAWAYS

- ✘ There is a lot of room for improvement, and academic mothers have solutions
- ✘ Respondents reported positive benefits and experiences from being both a mother and an academic
- ✘ Equity of support and experiences for academic mothers needs to improve
- ✘ These concerns, negative experiences, and penalties *must* be addressed in order to prevent a drop in academic mothers

CONCLUSIONS

- ✘ The findings of this study emphasize that patterns in the field of CSD align with extant data from STEM fields, detailing professional barriers academic mothers face within the academy.
- ✘ This is particularly concerning due to our continued critical shortage of qualified PhD candidates to fill already short staffed academic programs
- ✘ These results also raise questions about the origins of such barriers and how they persist within a discipline dedicated to family service and dominated by women.
- ✘ Evidence shows that institutions can implement strategies for retention and success of mothers and, in return, they secure their investment in talent.
- ✘ Our findings are likely further compounded by other intersectionalities such as race and cultural background.

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THANK YOU!