

WORK-FAMILY BALANCE EXPERIENCE OF OMANI CAREER WOMEN

NAJWA ABD GHAFAR

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Management)

Faculty of Management
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

AUGUST 2017

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
 فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا
 كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him/her to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do.

(Surah An-Nahl: 97)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis would have not been possible without the support and encouragement from a number of people. I would first and foremost, like to thank Dr Norhalimah Idris who have been patiently guiding me throughout the journey. Her trust had given me latitude to explore my capabilities that I never knew before. I would also like to thank my colleagues, Dr Mat Shah Kassim and Dr. Helen Tan Sui Hong, for their kind assistance, not only when I was in Oman but also when I have returned to Malaysia. Their support and enlightening advice had indeed saved me from insanity. My gratitude to staff of UTM Faculty of Management and libraries who were always ready to attend to my enquiries whether at their front desk or when I was 5000 kilometres away.

My heartfelt gratitude to my parents, Abd Ghafar bin Othman and Zainab @ Zainah Mohd Rashid for their constant prayer and support. My deepest appreciation to my husband, Dr Hamadi Dhaou, for his encouragement and moral support at the times when I needed them the most. This thesis is a dedication to my daughters, Maryam Dhaou and Hanan Dhaou who have been my greatest inspiration. I would also like to express my deep sense of gratitude to my wonderful maid Vithana Sakuntala Jayakody. Her care for my children and understanding has allowed me to transmit my energy vehemently during this endeavour. Finally, I would like to express my 'thank you' to the conversational partners, as well as other respondents who dedicated their valuable time in the conversation and everyone who in one way or another have assisted throughout this enriching journey.

August, 2017

ABSTRACT

Little is known about work-family balance in Arab countries. The existing studies in Oman focus mainly on work-family related policies. Thus, this thesis investigates work-family interface as experienced by Omani career women, by exploring the contributing factors from internal and external environments. It investigates the support career women received from their spouses, family members and colleagues as well as challenges they experienced in juggling work and family roles. Underpinned by constructivist and interpretivist paradigms and driven by feminist ethnographic strategy, interview was the primary data collection tool. Two types of interviews were conducted: in-depth one-on-one semi-structured interviews with ten core participants and nineteen informal interviews with local people of Oman. The interview transcripts were analysed using Charmaz' Grounded Theory procedure. The key finding of the thesis is that family is the strongest and reliable support system to career women. Almost all conversational partners in this thesis were raised during the time when education was not favoured for girls and their parents had gone against the norm by supporting their daughters' education. Those parents continue their unconditional supports by taking part in raising their grandchildren. Spousal supports are highly valued and desired by every woman in the study. Women experience various forms of support, ranging from highly supportive to non-supportive. Women who experienced low to none spousal support rely on domestic helpers and family members. Experience in work domain also played significant role in providing a sense of balance in a woman's work-family experience. The finding also reveals that Oman lacks of the structural support for women workforce. The paid maternity leave is short and working mothers are suffering from lack of childcare facilities. This thesis concurs with the premise that work-family balance is a cultural construct. Theoretically, it contributes to a model that exhibits the all-pervading influence of culture in the work-family balance experience of Omani career women in the thesis. The model may serve as a guideline to organizations and human resource practitioners who wish to understand their workforce and optimize their performance. On top of this, should the government be committed in having women workforce at par with their men counterpart, improvement and enforcement of the work-family related policies are inevitable. Future research on work-family balance as experienced by women from various fields and industries are also imperative to formulate effective policies and engender healthier work-family experience.

ABSTRAK

Tidak banyak yang diketahui tentang keseimbangan kerja-keluarga di negara-negara Arab. Kajian-kajian sedia ada di Oman tertumpu kepada polisi-polisi kerja-keluarga. Oleh itu, tesis ini menyelidik isu kerja-keluarga sebagaimana yang dialami oleh wanita bekerjaya di Oman dengan meneroka faktor-faktor penyumbang daripada persekitaran dalaman dan luaran. Ia mengkaji sokongan yang diterima oleh wanita bekerjaya daripada suami, ahli keluarga dan rakan sekerja serta cabaran yang mereka alami dalam mengimbangi kerja dan keluarga. Berdasarkan paradigma konstruktivis dan interpretivis serta didorong oleh strategi etnografi feminis, temubual adalah alat pengumpulan data utama. Dua jenis temubual telah dijalankan: temubual bersemuka separa struktur yang mendalam dengan sepuluh peserta utama dan sembilan belas temubual tidak formal dengan penduduk tempatan Oman. Transkrip temubual dianalisis menggunakan prosedur *Charmaz Grounded Theory*. Dapatan utama tesis ini adalah keluarga merupakan satu sistem sokongan yang paling kukuh dan dipercayai wanita bekerjaya. Hampir kesemua rakan temubual dalam tesis ini telah membangkitkan ketika zaman di mana pendidikan tidak diberikan kepada anak perempuan dan ibu bapa mereka telah menentang norma tersebut dengan memberi sokongan kepada pendidikan anak-anak perempuan. Ibumama tersebut terus memberi sokongan dengan membantu membesarkan cucu-cucu mereka. Sokongan suami sangat dihargai dan diperlukan oleh setiap wanita dalam kajian ini. Wanita mengalami pelbagai bentuk sokongan, dari yang tinggi kepada yang tiada sokongan. Wanita yang mengalami sokongan yang rendah dan tiada langsung sokongan suami bergantung kepada pembantu rumah dan ahli keluarga yang lain. Pengalaman di tempat kerja juga memainkan peranan penting bagi wanita Oman dalam mencapai keseimbangan kerjaya dan keluarga. Dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa di Oman terdapat kekurangan sokongan struktural bagi tenaga kerja wanita. Cuti bersalin bergaji adalah pendek dan ibu-ibu yang bekerja merana kerana kurangnya kemudahan penjagaan kanak-kanak. Tesis ini berpendapat bahawa persoalan kerja-keluarga merupakan konstruk budaya. Secara teoretikal, ia menyumbang kepada satu model yang menunjukkan pengaruh budaya yang sedia ada terhadap pengalaman keseimbangan kerja-keluarga. Model ini boleh menjadi satu garis panduan kepada organisasi dan pengamal sumber manusia yang berhasrat untuk memahami tenaga kerja dan mengoptimumkan prestasi mereka. Selain itu, sekiranya kerajaan komited untuk mempunyai tenaga kerja wanita yang setaraf dengan rakan kerja lelaki mereka, penambahbaikan dan penguatkuasaan polisi-polisi berkaitan kerja-keluarga perlu dilakukan. Kajian masa depan tentang keseimbangan kerja-keluarga seperti yang dialami wanita daripada pelbagai bidang dan industri adalah juga penting bagi membentuk polisi-polisi yang efektif dan menghasilkan pengalaman kerja-keluarga yang lebih sihat.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	ii
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	xv
	LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xviii
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xiv
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Background of the Study	1
	1.3 Rationale of the Study	5
	1.4 Statement of the Problem	6
	1.5 Significance of the Research	10
	1.6 Research Aim and Objectives	10
	1.7 Research Questions	11
	1.8 Definitions	12
	1.8.1 Definition of Work and Family	12
	1.8.2 Perspectives on Balance and Definition	13
	1.8.3 Definition of Omani Career Women	14
	1.9 Scope of the Study	14
	1.10 Thesis Structure and Organization	14

1.11	Summary and Conclusion	15
2	OMAN: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY	16
2.1	Introduction	16
2.2	Omani Society	16
2.3	Omani Family	20
2.4	Omani Women	22
2.5	Summary and Conclusion	25
3	REVIEW OF LITERATURE	26
3.1	Introduction	26
3.2	Working Mothers	26
3.2.1	Internal Environment	28
3.2.1.1	Spousal Support	28
3.2.1.2	Support from Family Members	30
3.2.2	External environment	31
3.2.2.1	Omani Women in Career	32
3.3	Omani Women in Career	32
3.3.1	Men's Negative Perception towards Working Women	33
3.3.2	Women's Negative Self-image	33
3.3.3	Lack of Access to Networking	34
3.3.4	Lack of Support and Access to Mentoring	35
3.3.5	Unsupportive Policies	36
3.3.6	Work-family Role Conflict	36
3.4	Work-family Interface: Perspectives	38
3.4.1	Conflict Perspective	38
3.4.2	Enrichment Perspective	40
3.4.3	Balance perspective	42
3.5	Work-family Balance and Culture	44
3.6	Work-family Balance: Relevant Theories	47
3.6.1	Role Theory	47
3.6.1.1	Role Strain Theory	47
3.6.1.2	Role Accumulation Theory	49

3.6.1.3	Role Balance Theory	50
3.6.2	Identity Theory	51
3.6.3	Boundary Theory	54
3.7	Underpinning Theory of the Study: Work/Family Border Theory	57
3.7.1	Proposed Model of the Study	60
3.8	Summary and Conclusion	62
4	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	63
4.1	Introduction	63
4.2	The Research Approach	64
4.3	The Research Paradigm	64
4.3.1	Ontological and Epistemological Assumption	66
4.4	The Research Strategy	66
4.4.1	Ethnography	67
4.4.2	Feminist Ethnography	69
4.5	Sampling Scheme	71
4.6	The Research Tools	72
4.7	Summary and Conclusion	72
5	DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE	73
5.1	Introduction	73
5.2	Data Management	73
5.3	Qualitative Data Analysis	73
5.4	Grounded Theory (GT) Analysis	74
5.5	Constructivist GT Analysis	76
5.5.1	Constructivist Coding Procedure	77
5.6	Developing a Constructivist Grounded Theory of Work-family Balance of Omani Career Women	78
5.6.1	Initial/Line-by-line Coding	79
5.6.2	Selective/Focused Coding	81
5.6.3	Developing Core Categories	82
5.6.4	Developing Conceptual/Explanatory Framework	83

	5.6.5 Writing and Analyzing Memos	83
	5.7 Summary and Conclusion	85
6	PILOT STUDY AND EXPLORATORY FINDINGS	86
	6.1 Introduction	86
	6.2 The Pilot Interview and Fieldwork	86
	6.2.1 Participants in the Pilot Study	87
	6.2.2 The Modus Operandi of the Pilot Study	89
	6.3 Data Analysis of the Pilot Study	89
	6.4 Findings from the Pilot Study	89
	6.4.1 Economic Pressure and Material Aspiration to Provide Better Living for Family	90
	6.4.2 Individual Drives to Gain Respect from Family Members and Aspire Others	90
	6.4.3 Support from Family Members	91
	6.4.4 Support from Domestic Helpers and Issues with Them	93
	6.4.5 Challenges to Fulfil Social Obligations	98
	6.4.6 Organizational Culture and Support	99
	6.4.7 Distance between Home and Workplace	97
	6.4.8 Need for Childcare Facilities at Work	98
	6.4.9 Perceptions on the Duration of Maternity Leave	98
	6.4.10 Intention to Breastfeed Baby	99
	6.5 Summary and Conclusion	100
7	MODUS OPERANDI OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW	101
	7.1 Introduction	101
	7.2 In-depth Interview	101
	7.2.1 Strengths and Weakness of In-depth Interview	103
	7.3 Issues Arose from Using In-depth Interview	105
	7.4 Responsive Interviewing Model	106
	7.5 Study Cohorts and Population	107
	7.6 Modus Operandi of the In-depth Interviews	110
	7.6.1 Selecting and Recruiting Conversational Partners	110

7.6.2	Building and Maintaining Conversational Partnership	111
7.6.3	Choosing Interview Location	111
7.6.4	My Appearance	112
7.7	Summary and Conclusion	113
8	PRESENTATION OF MAJOR FINDINGS FROM IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS	114
8.1	Introduction	114
8.2	Work-family Balance Experience	114
8.2.1	Living with Dilemmas	115
8.2.1.1	Coping with Long Trip to Work	115
8.2.1.2	Having Unfulfilled Desire and Wishes	116
8.2.1.3	Having Unfulfilled Expectation and Hope	119
8.2.2	Motivations to Work	124
8.2.2.1	Aspiration to Have Better Financial Condition	124
8.2.2.2	Aspiration to Provide Better Education and Schooling Experience for Children	127
8.2.2.3	Ambition and Need for Self-Actualization	129
8.2.3	Variation of Coping Strategies	131
8.2.3.1	Hiring Domestic Helper/s	131
8.2.3.2	Relocating Home and Work to be Close to Extended Family	133
8.2.3.3	Managing Time and Role Changing	135
8.2.3.4	Reaffirming Faith in Religion	137
8.3	Internal Environment: Support from Spouse, Extended Family Members and Domestic Helper	138
8.3.1	Variation of Spousal Support	139
8.3.2	Variation of Support from Extended Family Members	143
8.3.3	Assistance and Challenges from Domestic Helper	146
8.4	External Environment: Support from Colleagues and Work-family Facilities	151

8.4.1	Work Culture and Support from Colleagues	151
8.4.2	Work-family Policies and Facilities	154
8.5	Summary and Conclusion	158
9	MODUS OPERANDI AND FINDINGS FROM INFORMAL CONVERSATION	159
9.1	Introduction	159
9.2	Informal Conversation	159
9.3	Strengths and Weaknesses of Informal Conversation	160
9.4	Issues Arose from using Informal Conversation	160
9.5	Modus Operandi of the Informal Conversation	160
9.6	Findings from Informal Conversation	161
9.6.1	Girls' Education is Important	161
9.6.2	Working Women are More Preferred for Marriage than the Non-Working Women	162
9.6.3	Women are Significant Income Earner for Family	163
9.6.4	Women's Earning is the Main Strategy for Family to Cope with Inflation	165
9.6.5	Women Work to Improve Living Standard	166
9.6.6	Employment Provides Means for Economic and Social Independence	168
9.6.7	Employment as Insurance Against Misfortune	169
9.6.8	Extended Family is the Main Resource for Children	170
9.7	Summary and Conclusion	172
10	DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS	173
10.1	Introduction	173
10.2	Background of the Conversational Partners	173
10.2.1	Fatimah	173
10.2.2	Haifaa	174
10.2.3	Ibtihal	175
10.2.4	Maithaa'	176
10.2.5	Malak	176

10.2.6 Raihan	178
10.2.7 Riwaa	179
10.2.8 Sausan	180
10.2.9 Sumaiyyah	180
10.2.10 Zahra	181
10.3 Data Triangulation of the Study	183
10.3.1 Variants of Data	185
10.4 Discussion of the Broad Themes	187
10.4.1 Living with Dilemmas	187
10.4.2 Motivations to Work	189
10.4.3 Variation of Coping Strategies	190
10.4.4 Variation of Spousal Support	192
10.4.5 Variation of Family Support	195
10.4.6 Assistance and Challenges from Domestic Helper	196
10.4.7 Support from Colleagues and Work-family Facilities	197
10.5 Model of Omani Career Women Work-family Balance	203
10.6 Summary and Conclusion	207
11 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	208
11.1 Introduction	208
11.2 Answers to Research Questions	208
11.3 Reflections on the Participant Observation	213
11.4 Reflections on the Feminist Interview	214
11.5 Contribution of Methodology	215
11.5.1 Recommendations for Future Research	216
11.5.1.1 Omani Men's Perception on Women's Job, Career, and Work-family Roles	216
11.5.1.2 Change in Gender-based Social Roles	217
11.5.1.3 Consanguineous Marriage and Work-family Experience	217
11.6 The Way Forward Towards Better Work-Family	218

Experience	
11.6.1 Omani Women: Employment and Motherhood	218
11.6.2 Omani Women: Career and Marriage	220
11.6.3 Omani Women: Consanguineous marriage and Spousal Support	221
11.6.4 Omani Women: Embracing New Role, New Identity	223
11.7 Contribution of the Study	224
11.8 Recommendations for Policy Makers	225
11.8.1 Formulate and Promulgate Empowering Policies	225
11.8.2 Childcare Facilities are Prerequisite for Women's Work-family Balance	226
11.8.3 Set an Effective Plan for Mothers Who Return to Work	227
11.9 Summary and Conclusion	227
REFERENCES	228
Appendices A-D	259-262

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
3.1	Number of female candidates and the elected to the Consultative Councils from first until eight terms.	35
3.2	Types of conflict and their examples	39
3.3	Constructs representing enrichment perspective and their definitions	42
5.1	Stages of grounded theory analysis procedure, terms and their definitions	77
5.2	Examples of initial/line-by-line coding	80
5.3	Examples of selective/focused coding	81
5.4	Example of 'dilemma' and its properties	82
6.1	Findings from the pilot study	100
7.1	Researches adopting in-depth interview method, their authors, years of publication, and researches' objectives	103
7.2	Pseudonyms of conversational partners, duration of their work experience, marriage, and number of children	108
7.3	Pseudonyms of participants, numbers of interview, numbers and modes of contact	109
7.4	Pseudonyms of participant, numbers of interview and the summation of length of each interview	109
8.1	Findings from the in-depth interviews	158
9.1	Pseudonym of participants, their background and statuses	161
9.2	Findings from the informal interviews	172
10.1	Profile of the conversational partners	182
10.2	The comparison of findings from the three data:	184

	Pilot interview, in-depth interviews and informal conversations	
10.3	A list showing reorganization of the findings in categories and new broad themes	196
10.4	Key themes and the main findings	199

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	Omani women's employment in public and private sectors	7
1.2	Female labour force participation for the years 1993, 2001 and 2010	8
3.1	Illustration of the segmented-integrated role continuum by Ashforth et al. (2000)	55
3.2	Figure 3.2: A pictorial representation and list of central concepts and their characteristics by Clark (2000)	58
3.3	Initial proposed model of Omani career women work-family balance experience	61
5.1	Constructivist GT process (Adopted from Charmaz, 2006)	77
5.2	GT analysis process in the study of work-family balance of Omani career women	79
10.1	An illustration of findings depicting the surrounding environments of Omani career women work-family balance experience	202
10.2	A revised model of work-family balance experience of Omani career women	204

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	-	Asian Development Bank
MENA	-	Middle East and North Africa region
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
MOM	-	Ministry of Manpower
MONE	-	Ministry of National Economy
NCSI	-	National Center for Statistic Information
RO	-	Riyal Oman
RM	-	Ringgit Malaysia
UN	-	United Nations

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
A	Pilot study interview protocol	259
B	In-depth interview protocol	261
C	Informal interview protocol	263
D	Rough sketch of the themes generated from analysis	265

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The prime objective of this thesis is to establish an informed understanding of work-family balance experience among Omani career women. This chapter serves as the backdrop of the study. It presents the study background, statement of the problem, the study aim and objectives, the research questions, and the definitions of the main terms in the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Work and family have always been essential domains of adult life. Both are demanding institutions, requiring incessant attention, limitless time and energy. As such they are always perceived as in conflict, rather than in concert. In regards to work and women, Kessler-Harris (1981, cited in Tan, 2008) stated,

Women have always worked – in their home and the home of others, in fields, factories, shops, stores, and offices. The kind of work done has varied for women of different classes, races, ethnic groups, and geographical locations. And the nature of women's work has changed over time with urbanization and industrialization. What remains the same is the ways in which

women have worked involve a constant tension between two areas of women's lives: the home and the marketplace. (p.10)

For most of the 20th century, work and family were considered as independent domains and have little to do with each other. This perception is due to the breadwinner-homemaker ideology that perceives men as the breadwinners working outside the home and women as the caregivers, running domestic duties inside the home (Gutek *et al.*, 1981; Lerner, 1994; ILO-UNDP, 2009). Balance is understood as each domain being taken care of by one person. This perception entails policies and practices governing employment based on the image of ideal worker as male, with his wife taking care of his domestic affairs (Bailyn *et al.*, 2001). However, when women entered labour force and their participation increases both quantitatively and qualitatively, this balance is severely disrupted.

Maternal employment had been assumed detrimental to children's well-being. Based on this assumption, abundant of studies had been carried out to study the effects of maternal employment to children and adolescences. Studies spanned across disciplines, with steady interest most notably from the fields of psychology, sociology, and economics. To generate solid conclusion many meta-analyses on such studies have been done. Stolz (1960) did a meta-analysis of 52 studies carried out from 1910's to 1950's on effects of maternal employment on a) delinquency, b) adjustment of adolescents, c) adjustment of elementary school children, d) achievement of children in school, e) development and adjustment of pre-school children, f) infant development, and g) perceptions and attitudes of children towards gender roles. I am afraid discussing the findings would be beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, I would like to underline Stolz's conclusion that researches on maternal employment and children upbringing had produced divergent findings (*ibid*, p.779). Maternal employment had been associated with both positive and negative outcomes: delinquency and non-delinquency, withdrawal as well as dominant behaviour, and good adjustment and poor adjustment among pre-school children and school children (*ibid*, p.772-778).

Another noteworthy meta-analysis was carried out by Goldberg *et al.* (2008) on 68 studies carried out between 1960's to 2000's. In their study, maternal employment variables were operationalized as any employment versus no employment as well as full-time compared to part-time and each compared to no employment, and their association with four achievement outcomes: a) formal tests of achievement, b) intellectual functioning, c) grades, and d) teacher ratings of cognitive competence. The meta-analysis also yielded nonsignificant difference between any variables of maternal employment and achievement outcomes. Much to solidifying Stolz's and Goldberg *et al.* studies, the most recent studies maintained that the relationship between maternal employment and children's learning growth (Youn *et al.*, 2012), infant development (Kim and Wickrama, 2013) and adolescent study habits (Ghosh, 2017) are enormously complex that no simple association can be established.

Despite this, the underlying skepticism was clear – a family whose mother works outside the home may neglect their families and women get to be successful only at the expense of their families. Working mothers were also labeled as non-ideal workers, since domestic roles were often considered as barriers to their job assignments. Employers often assume women with children unable to put extra hours or long travel time, which sometimes necessary for career advancement (Burn, 2005; Hutchings *et al.*, 2010; Napasri and Yukongdi, 2015).

Today, the negative perception on maternal employment has eroded over time. Improved access to education, greater autonomy in determining the family size and birth spacing have made women's advancement into labour market irreversible. Women's identity is no longer confined to domestic domain, and their capabilities in the workforce have long been acknowledged. Many international organizations like IBM, Google, Colgate-Palmolive and Johnson & Johnson have credited women their integral workforce (Adam, 2015; Dill, 2015). Women strategize. Some choose to focus on family first, and return later to work as children reach their school-age, while others opt not to have more than two children so they can advance in their career and attend to their family at the same time (Hakim, 2000; 2006). Whatever and however they do it, the motive is one – to achieve balance.

Achieving balance nevertheless remains a struggle. In many countries, family-friendly policies enable women to have both motherhood and career life (the Nordic and the Scandinavian in particular [see ILO-UNDP, 2009]). In Scandinavian countries, childcare facilities are highly accessible and affordable, contributing to the most developed economies with the highest percentage of working mothers (Sara, 2014). Mothers are entitled for 17-week maternity leave and fathers are entitled up to 14 weeks of paternity leave. Unfortunately, even where work-family policies are considered utopian, working mothers are not relieved from work-family stress. Parenting remains largely female responsibility and the majority of flexible parental leave still tends to be taken by the mothers. Men's involvement in childcare is highly valued in Sweden, but their time spent on other household tasks is less cherished: reflecting the persistent embedded gender norms, where women are still expected to spend more time on housework and childcare even when both of them work full-time (Kitterød and Rønsen, 2012; Evertsson, 2014). Therefore, Seierstad and Kirton (2015) finding was not a surprise. Their interviews with 46 Norwegian working women highlighted that the participants emphasized equality and support from their spouses at home as essential for combining a high commitment career and a family. Several women in the study emphasized the importance of consciously choosing 'the right man': someone who would support their career and who would be willing to do some of the household duties, and doing active parenting like taking a larger part of parental leave, and delivering and picking up children to/from nursery/school.

Compared to other regions in the world, workers in Asia have the longest working hours, ranging between 44 to 49 hours per week (Nurlita, 2017). This has been described not only as devotion to work, but also as adherence to traditional values where paid employment is considered a means to ensure family prosperity and financial security (Lu *et al.*, 2008; Lu *et al.*, 2010; Canlas, 2015). Asian women, therefore, are shouldering expectations to be devoted to both of their family and work roles. At work, they are expected to perform at par with their male counterpart (Canlas, 2015) and this certainly leads to conflict if there is no support either at the workplace or at home. At home, Asian women maintained as the primary executors of household work and caregiving even as they participate in the labour force. A study on South Korean working mothers found that they spend several more hours on

the weekends dealing with domestic tasks than stay-at-home mothers; catching up on the housework that piled over the week (Chung-un, 2015). Though they spend three hours less than full-time mothers on weekdays for housework, on average, they work two hours longer in terms of the length of labour both at work and home, and also have about an hour and fifty minutes less leisure time than full-time mothers. This gets aggravated with a shortage of dependable childcare facilities, not only in South Korea, but also in Japan; leading to women withdrawal from workforce due to childbirth and childcare (Wingfield-Hayes, 2013; Kim, 2015). Indeed, the turnover intention was found low where there are well-organised childcare facilities (Kim and Kim, 2013) resulting aggressive call towards establishment of childcare facilities. Spousal support was also found positively associated with South Korean and Singaporean women's retention in the workforce and work-family role satisfaction (Kim and Kim, 2013; Canlas, 2015). In Japan, where childcare facilities are severely lacking and spousal support is the lowest, women's retention was found the lowest where seventy per cent of Japanese women quit working after the birth of their first child (Wingfield-Hayes, 2013).

1.3 Rationale of the Study

The motivation for this study came about due to my own work-family struggle few years ago as I became a mother in the third year of my profession as a lecturer. While the arrival of my daughter gave me an endless joy, I found myself miserable in the desperate attempt to embrace the roles as a professional and a mother. I suddenly felt the two roles incompatible albeit the fact that I had always known that someday I would be working and having children. I did all I thought I could. Yet the feelings of not doing enough as mother and the incapability to fulfill expectations from either at home or at the workplace were exhausting. The worst was the sense of fighting a losing battle as I was feeling the failure was no one's but mine and yet I had no idea of how to correct it.

Soon before my daughter's first birthday, I decided to take unpaid leave and my husband took a job as a lecturer in Oman. The friendly ambiance in 'Ibri and the

hospitality during *qahwa* (Omani social practice where women sit together and have coffee) were exhilarating, but I was constantly being reminded of the helpless feeling I once had. The look in the faces of women I met and the tone of their voices pushed me into retrospective of the battle I lost. I sensed that they were going through what I had experienced. The empathy eventually turned into curiosity to understand how and why women experience what they experience. This study, therefore, was conducted to gain insight and inform understanding on issues and challenges surrounding work and family interface as experienced by Omani career women in the land I called home for 9 years.

This study is ethnographic for two reasons. First, it subscribes to the argument that work-family interface experience is shaped by and embedded in culture (Hofstede, 1984; Zaynab, 2005; Powell *et al.*, 2009), making the concept of 'balance' a cultural construct (Carlson *et al.*, 2009). Second, the fact that I, a Malaysian and have been in the country for almost a decade has made me a full-time participant-cum-observant researcher – an elemental tool in an ethnographic inquiry. The study participants who – borrowing from Rubin and Rubin's (2012) term – I called 'conversational partners' were 10 women from various professional backgrounds. In addition to this, as this thesis is about the experience that women live, it is therefore naturally feminist. It has been attentive to an issue (work-family balance) women face, and conscientious in its ultimate objectives to engender improvement in the experience.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

In the year 2010, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the Sultan of Oman declared (NCSI, 2010, p.67):

We call upon Omani women everywhere, in the villages and the cities, in both urban and *bedu* communities, in the hills and mountains, to roll up their sleeves and contribute to the process of economic and social development....We call upon Omani women

to shoulder this vital role in the community, and are confident that they will respond to the call.

Apparently, the call has been responded positively. Data from the Ministry of National Economy revealed the steady rise of women's participation in the workforce. Times of Oman (2016) reported that the number of working Omani mothers at work has quadrupled from 8,000 in 1985 to 37,000 in 2015. Figure 1.1 depicts the rising trend of women's employment in both public and private sectors (Public Authority for Social Insurance, 2014). New social landscape emerged in the society: younger women get married at a later age than their parents, choose to have lesser number of children than their mothers' and plan for birth-spacing (Thuwayba and Tayfour, 2007; Maryam, 2015). This is revealed through the dramatic change in Oman reproductive behavior with more than five births decline per woman within a period of just two decades, after the introduction of the birth spacing program in 1994 (M Mazharul Islam, 2014). Obviously, there are deliberate strategies adopted by working mothers in order to balance their career and family. However, while the strategies work for some, they are not feasible for the other.

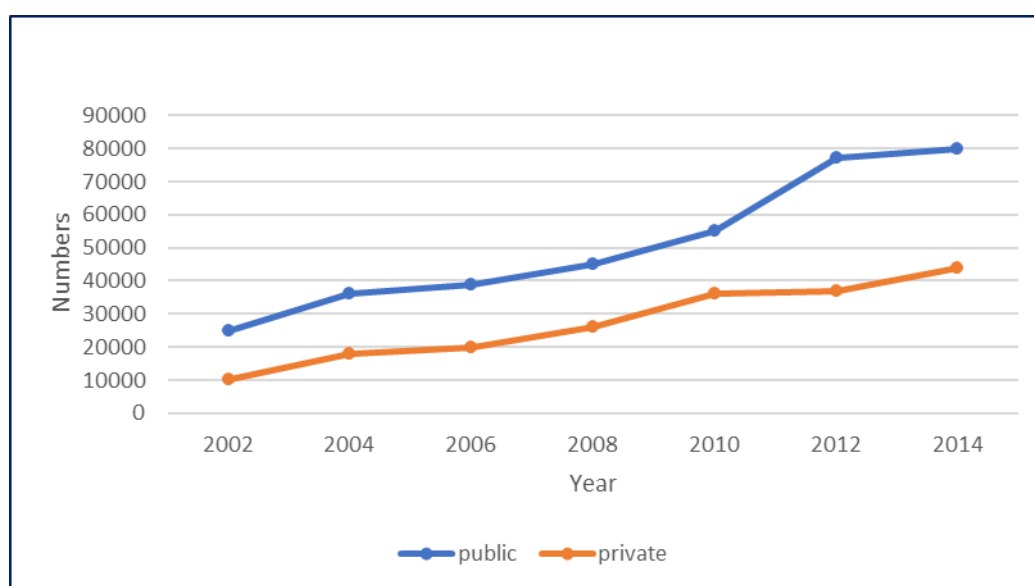


Figure 1.1: Omani women's employment in public and private sectors

A government report published in 2011 revealed a significant percentage of premature withdrawal from work among young women professionals (Ministry of National Economy, 2011). The report, entitled Omani Working Women: Realities

and Challenges presented data of the years 1993, 2003 and 2010. The data are presented in Figure 1.2.

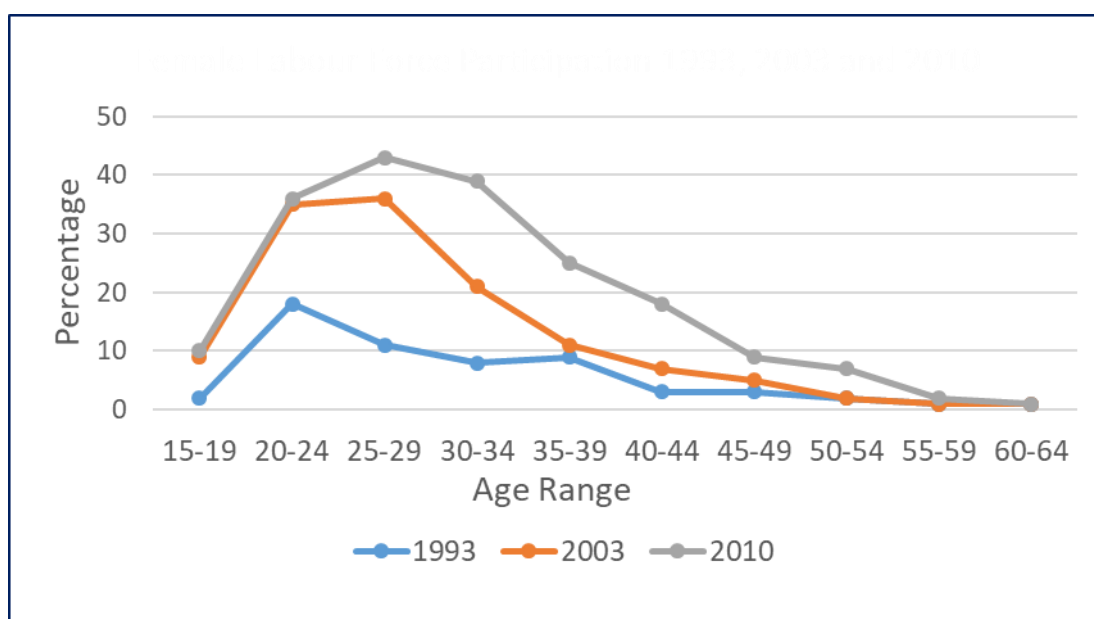


Figure 1.2: Female labour force participation for the years 1993, 2001 and 2010

There are two important points can be discerned from the report. First, there is a distinguishable trend of women withdrawing from work as they approach 30 years old. Second, data based on the three years evidently show that this trend is persisting and growing year by year. As Omani women get married at the average age of 26 (*ibid*, p.21) it explains the withdrawal, which coincides with the timing when the family is growing. The latest report published by Public Authority of Social Insurance (2014) also revealed a high percentage (73%) of women resigning from their jobs in private sector. While the report does not explain the reasons for the resignation, the percentage corresponds to the argument that longer working hours in private sector – as compared to public sector – is among the factors that make it less preferable for women (Maryam, 2015).

Indeed, work-family conflict is not a new issue in Oman. It has been mentioned a number of times in several articles written by Omani authors and non-Omani academicians residing in Oman. Salma (1999), Auhod (2004) Asya (2007) and Goveas and Aslam (2011) have explicitly named work and family issue as the factor challenging Omani women's job retention and career advancement. However,

as seen here, the articles were written about a decade ago. The issue, therefore, remains unheeded due to the dearth of succeeding research.

The dearth could be associated to several factors. First, Omani culture perceives that family-related matter is private and personal. This implies that work-family interface might be a sensitive issue to be discussed and elaborated in detail, resulting in a lack of depth in the existing studies. Second, the delicate nature of the topic also has shifted the focus more towards less sensitive aspects of the work-family interface, which are family-friendly policies (Belwal and Belwal, 2014) and work-life balance policies (Ruksana, 2015). While these studies succeeded to establish the significance of policies in affecting employees' satisfaction, another contemporaneous study (Maryam, 2015) found that when family's influence is taken into account, it proves that it overweighs the role of the policies. Her study found that women's career choice is often governed by their father's, brother's and husband's and their career paths are clearly influenced by their family (*ibid*, p.168). This highlights the dominance of family institution in collective society and Oman is certainly not an exception. However, again, Maryam's study merely unfolds the influence of the society in general (as in gender role and social expectation) without examining the support and pressure they experience at home and at the workplace. My study, therefore, was aiming to fill the huge gap by getting broader and deeper understanding of Omani career women's work-family balance experience.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The substantial dearth of study on Omani career women's work-family experience warrants the significance of this study. Based on the background of the study and the problem statement, the thesis is significant in at least three aspects:

1) Context.

Every country that has the ambition to utilize its female manpower deserves such study. For the last three decades, there has been great attention to work-family balance issue across various disciplines. A substantial body of literature

however, concentrates on certain countries and regions, mainly in Europe, America, and to a lesser extent, Asia. The dearth of research on the work-family issue in Arab countries makes the concept of work-family balance from this part of the world remains unheeded.

2) Theory.

One of the major criticisms on work-family balance literature is the tendency to universalize women's experience despite their cultural diversity (Runté, 2009). This study, therefore, adopted women-centred lens tuned into Omani culture where their roles as mother and wife mark the principle engagement and identification in this society. Having culture as a backdrop, this study was an endeavour to uncover the dynamics of the phenomenon.

3) Method of research

Women's work-family experience is dissimilar from men's (Gerson, 2004; Runté, 2009). To women, especially those in the Arab world, work-family issues are sensitive and emotion-laden topic (Asya, 2007) thus cannot be uncovered by filling in questionnaires and running statistical analysis. As such, in-depth investigation especially the arranged, loose-structured in-depth interviews justifies the adoption of feminist ethnography as the thesis approach and strategy. The ethnographic informal interview was also conducted in order to triangulate the data gathered through in-depth interviews. The combination of these techniques deemed to add a valuable adjunct to each other, and more importantly able to compensate for other's drawbacks.

1.6 Research Aim and Objectives

Based on the research problem statement this thesis aimed to explore and to comprehend work-family balance experience of career Omani women as contributed and affected by their internal and external environments. Support from husband and extended family members are considered as support from the internal environment, while supports from colleagues and superior are considered as support from external

environment. These both environments complement each other and both are equally important

Considering balance as a cultural construct (Carlson *et al.*, 2009), this study also investigated their perceptions of balance, and how they strategize to attain it. This study was hopeful that the findings would provide meaningful insights and become one of the references for human resource policy formulation in Oman. This aim was projected to be achieved through the following research objectives:

1. To understand the concept of balance in the context of the work-family interface as experienced by career Omani women.
2. To explore issues surrounding internal environment that affects and contributes to their work-family balance experience.
3. To explore issues surrounding the external environment that affects and contributes to their work-family balance experience.
4. To explore whether an intensive case study of career Omani women can take forward a deeper understanding of how they strike a balance of work-family commitment and if appropriate to represent this process through a suitable model.

1.7 Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives, this study addressed the following questions:

1. How do career Omani women define and perceive balance in the context of work-family interface?
2. What are the surrounding issues concerning the internal environment that facilitate and impede their attempt to achieve work-family balance?

3. What are the surrounding issues concerning the external environment that facilitate and impede their attempt to achieve work-family balance?
4. How do career Omani women manage their work-family balance?

1.8 Definitions

The concepts of work, family, and balance are a cultural construct. The concepts used in the study, therefore, are as defined suitable with Omani context.

1.8.1 Definition of Work and Family

Although it has been argued that a lot of unpaid work is done alongside the paid one, thus blurs the division between paid work and work that occurs in the family domain (Kanter, 1977; Barnett and Baruch, 1985), this study restricts the term '*work*' to refer to paid work, which is defined as '*instrumental activities that provide goods and services to support life*'.

Family is generally understood as a unit consists of those individuals that one is related to through biological ties, marriage, or adoption. While to individualist societies family may exclusively refer to nucleus family members, some cultures, particularly those of collectivist societies, the family includes extended family members as well. In reference to Omani culture as the context of the study, '*family*' refers to '*both nucleus and extended family members*'.

1.8.2 Perspectives on Balance and Definition

Work-family balance is a distinctive perspective in work-family literature. It emerged as a synthesis of conflict and enrichment perspectives. Conflict perspective highlights negative outcomes of the work-family interface where having multiple roles results in conflict due to scarce resources (Goode, 1960; Kahn *et al.*, 1964; Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999). Enrichment perspective, on the other hand, suggests that resources are not necessarily depleting; they might be expanding as well (Rothbard, 2001; Greenhaus and Powell, 2006; McNall *et al.*, 2010). Balance perspective portrays a fuller picture of the work-family interface by acknowledging the co-existence of both conflict and enrichment (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2003; Grzywacz and Bass, 2003; Grzywacz and Carlson, 2007; Carlson *et al.*, 2009). Rather than a linking mechanism between work and family, work-family balance is a reflection of an overall assessment of compatibility between work and family roles (Allen, 2013).

The dynamic conception of balance has continuously made the term ‘work-family balance’ as ‘one of the most challenging concepts in the study of work and the study families’ (Clark, 2000, p.748). There are three reasons for this. First, the topic has been studied through various disciplines resulting numbers of terminology and conceptions (Runtě, 2009; Wada *et al.*, 2010). Second, considering gender as a social institution, work-family balance as perceived by women is definitely dissimilar than the way men perceive it (Gerson, 2004). Third, each word is a cultural construct, where work and family imply distinctive meanings across cultures hence various notions of what balance is (Zaynab, 2005; Carlson *et al.*, 2009; Hofstede, 2011).

This study, therefore, does not adopt the existing definition of work-family balance lest it would fail to describe the realities of Omani work-family experience thus misconstruing their meaning of balance. Considering motherhood and wifhood the two primary roles and identities of women in this society (Eickelmann, 1993; Chatty, 2000; Drysdale, 2010), ‘*balance*’ is defined as ‘*a state where a professional role is compatible and/or does not impede the performance of mother and wife*

roles'. Underpinned by balance perspective, 'work-family balance' implies the positive as well as negative experiences experienced by the participants in juggling the family role and professional role.

1.8.3 Definition of Omani Career Women

Omani career women' refers to '*Omani female nationalities that are qualified, and engaged in a paid job or a career*'.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted by using English as the main medium of interaction, and by referring to references mainly written in English. The selection of the participants was also limited to those who are able to converse in English. Other than that, as much as I wished to have more conversational partners from a vast variety of careers, the intimate nature of the study, and sensitivity of the topic had made many women I approached hesitant to participate as conversational partners. In addition to that, I believe that the fact that English is not their first language has somewhat posed a limit to their ability in expressing and articulating their thoughts and feelings.

1.10 Thesis Structure and Organization

This thesis is organised into eleven chapters. These first two chapters provide the background of the study, where the second focuses on Oman as its context. The third chapter is on the review of the literature, which details the selected theories of work-family interface. This third chapter also presents the theoretical framework of the study. The fourth chapter is on the study research methodology, while the fifth

REFERENCES

- Abdullah Juma Al-Haj. (1996). The Politics in the Gulf Cooperation Council States: The Omani Consultative Council. *Middle East Journal*. 50(4), 559-571.
- Abendroth, A. and den Dulk, L. (2011). Support for the Work-life Balance in Europe: The Impact of State, Workplace and Family Support on Work-life Balance Satisfaction. *Work, Employment & Society*. 25(2), 234-256.
- Adam, S. (2015). 10 Great Companies for Women in 2015. *Forbes*. Retrieved March 25, 2017, from <https://www.forbes.com>
- Afzalur Rahman. (2013). *Role of Muslim Women in Society*. Kuala Lumpur: A.S. Noordeen.
- Ahlam Khalfan al Subhi (2016). *Women ' s representation in majlis al shura in Oman: how do gender ideology, Islam, and tribalism matter?* Master Thesis. United States of America: Iowa State University.
- Aizat Mohd. Nasurudin and Khor Lee Hsia. (2008). The Influence of Support at Work and Home on Work-family Conflict: Does Gender Make a Difference? *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*. 16(1), 18-38.
- Alexander Jr, C.N. and Knights, G.W. (1971). Situated Identities and Social Psychological Experimentation. *Sociometry*. Mar(1), 65-82.
- Allan, H. (1997). Reflexivity: A Comment on Feminist Ethnography. *Nursing Times Research*. 2(6):455-467.

- Allen, T.D. (2013). The Work-Family Role Interface: A Synthesis of the Research from Industrial and Organizational Psychology in Irving B. Weiner (ed.) *Handbook of Psychology*, p.698-718.
- Anderson, S. E., Coffey, B. S., and Byerly, R. T. (2002). Formal Organizational Initiatives and Informal Workplace Practices: Links to Work-family Conflict and Job-related Outcomes. *Journal of Management*, 28, 787-810.
- Arian Rostami, Mehdi Ghazinour and Richter, J. (2013). Marital Satisfaction: The Differential Impact of Social Support Dependent on Situation and Gender in Medical Staff in Iran. *Global Journal of Health Science*. 5(4), 151-164.
- Aryee, S., Luk, V., Leung, A., and Lo, S. (1999). Role Stressors, Interrole Conflict, and Well-being: The Moderating Influence of Spousal Support and Coping Behaviors among Employed Parents in Hong Kong. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 54(2), 259-278.
- Ashforth, B.E., Kreiner, G.E., Fugate, M. (2000). All in a Day's Work: Boundaries and Micro Role Transitions. *Academy of Management Review*. 25(3), 472-491.
- Ashik, F. (2017, April 19). Oman family: Achieving true work-life balance. *Times of Oman*. Retrieved April 25, 2017 from <http://www.timesofoman.com>
- Asian Development Bank. (2015). *Women in the Workforce and the Pacific*. Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank.
- Asya Al-Lamky. (2004). *The Gender Empowerment Deficit: Perceptions of Working Omani Women*. Paper presented in at Women in Arabic and Islamic Countries: Between Law and Practice. The Arab Dutch Women Circle (ANVK). The Hague, 4th – 6th March, 2004. Retrieved 9th January, 2012, from <http://www.anvk.org/documents/TheGenderEmpowermentDeficit.doc>
- Asya Al-Lamky. (2007). Feminizing Leadership in Arab Societies: The Perspectives of Omani Female Leaders. *Women in Management Review*. 22(1), 49-67.

- Auhod Albelushi. (2004). Gender Issues in Teacher Development: Career Choice and Commitment in Oman. *ELTED*. 8(Autumn), 16-27.
- Bagger, J., Li, A., and Gutek, B.A. (2008). How Do You Value Your Family and Does It Matter? The Joint Effects of Family, Identity Salience, Family-Interference-with-Work, and Gender. 61(2), 187-211.
- Bailyn, L. (1993). *Breaking the Mold: Redesigning Work for Productive and Satisfying Lives*. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.
- Bailyn, L., Drago, R. and Kochan, T.A. (2001). *Integrating Work and Family Life: A Holistic Approach*. US: MIT Sloan School of Management. Retrieved January 22, 2011, from <http://web.mit.edu/workplacecenter/docs/WorkFamily.pdf>
- Baporikar, N. and Shah, I.A. (2012). Quality of Higher Education in 21st Century – A Case of Oman. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in The World*. 2(2), 9-18.
- Barnett, R. C. & Baruch, G. K. (1985). Women's Involvement in Multiple Roles and Psychological Distress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 49, 135-145.
- Barnett, R.C., Hyde, J.S. (2001). Women, Men, Work, and Family. *American Psychologist*. 56(10), 781-796.
- Barth, F. (1983). *Sohar, Culture and Society in An Omani Town*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bartley, S.J., Blanton, P.W., and Gilliard, J.L. (2005). Husbands and Wives in Dual-Earner Couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 56, 647-656.
- Baruch, G.K. and Barnett, R.C. (1986). Role Quality, Multiple Role Involvement, and Psychological Well-being in Mid-Life Women. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 53(3), 578-585.

- Belwal, S. and Belwal, R. (2014). Work-Life Balance, Family-Friendly Policies and Quality of Work Life Issues: Studying Employers' Perspectives of Working Women in Oman. *Journal of International Women's Studies*. 15(1), 95-117.
- Berger, P.L. and Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality*. London: Penguin Group.
- Beutell, N.J. (2007). Self-employment, Work-family Conflict and Work-family Synergy: Antecedents and Consequences. *Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship*. 20(4), 325-334.
- Beutell, N.J. (2010). The Causes and Consequences of Work-Family Synergy: An Empirical Study in the United States. *International Journal of Management*. 27(3), 650-664.
- Bhattacharjee, M. (2013, March 17). Consanguineous Marriages in Oman Higher Than in Most Arab Countries. *Muscat Daily*. Retrieved July 10, 2016, from <http://www.muscaddaily.com>
- Bird, G.W. and Schnurman-Cook, A. (2005). Professional Identity and Coping Behaviors in Dual-Career Couples. *Family Relations*. 54(1), 145-160.
- Blair-Loy, M. (2003). *Competing Devotions: Career and Family among Women Executives*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Blair-Loy, M. (2013). *Competing Devotions. Career and Family Women Executives*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Blanch, A. and Aluja, A. (2012). Social Support (Family and Supervisor), Work-family Conflict, and Burnout: Sex Differences. *Human Relations*. 65(7), 811-833.
- Bliss, M.J., Cook, S.L. and Kaslow, N.J. (2006). An Ecological Approach to Understanding Incarcerated Women's Response to Abuse. *Women & Therapy*. 29(3), 97-115.
- Bontenbal, M. (2013). *Women at Work in Oman's Emerging Private Sector: Opportunities and Constraints of Female Labour Participation in a Rentier*

Economy in Transition. ERF Research Programme Female Economic Empowerment.

- Bowles, H.R. and McGinn, K.L. (2008). Untapped Potential in the Study of Negotiation and Gender Inequality in Organizations. *Academy of Management Annals*. 2, 9-132.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*. 3(2), 77-101.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological Models of Human Development. In T. Husten & T.N. Postlethwaite (Eds), *International Encyclopedia of Education* (2nd edition pp.3-27). Oxford, England: Pergamon Press.
- Brook, A.T., Garcia, J., and Fleming, M. (2008). The Effects of Multiple Identities on Psychological Well-Being. *PSPB*. 34(12), 1588-1600.
- Brooks, A. and Hesse-Biber, S.N. (2007). An Invitation to Feminist Research in Hesse-Biber S.N. and Leavy L.P. *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*. P. 1-26
- Bryant, A. and Charmaz, K. (2007). *The Handbook of Grounded Theory*. London: Sage.
- Burke, P.J. (1980). The Self: The Measurement Implications from a Symbolic Interactionist Perspective. *Social Psychology Quarterly*. 43, 18-29.
- Burke, P.J. and Reitzes, D.C. (1981). The Link Between Identity and Role Performance. *Social Psychology Quarterly*. 44(2), 83-92.
- Burke, R.J. (2006). Organizational Culture: A Key to the Success of Work-life Integration in J. Fiona, J.B. Ronald and W. Mina (Eds). *Work-life Balance: A Psychological Perspective*. Pp. 235-260.
- Burn, S. M. (2005). *Women Cultures: A Global Perspective*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Company.

- Burr, W., Leigh, C., Day, R., & Constantine, J. (1979). Symbolic Interaction and the Family. in W. Burr, R. Hill, F. Nye, & I. Reiss (Eds.) *Contemporary Theories about the Family*. (Vol. 2, pp. 42-111). New York, NY: Free Press.
- Canlas, J.M. (2015). *The Influence of Family Relationship Satisfaction and Perceived Work-Family Harmony on Mental Health among Asian Working Mothers in Singapore*. PhD Thesis. United States of America: Brigham Young University.
- Carlson, D. S., Kacmar, M. K., Wayne, J. H., & Grzywacz, J. G. (2006). Measuring the positive side of the work-family interface: Development and validation of a work-family enrichment scale. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 68(1), 131-164.
- Carlson, D.S., Grzywacz, J.G., and Zivnuska, S. (2009). Is Work-family Balance More than Conflict and Enrichment? *Human Relations*. 62(10):1459-1486.
- Carlson, D.S., Kacmar, K.M., and Stepina, L.P. (1995). An Examination of Two-Aspects of Work-family Conflict: Time and Identity. *Women in Management Review*. 10(2), 17-25.
- Chang, A., McDonald, P. and Burton, P. (2010). Methodological Choices in Work-life Balance Research 1987 to 2006: A Critical Review. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 21(13), p. 2381-2413.
- Charmaz, K. (1983). The Grounded Theory Method in Emerson, R. (Ed.) *Contemporary Field Research*, (pp. 109-126). Massachusetts: Little, Brown and Company.
- Charmaz, K. (2003). Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods in Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, 2nd Edition, (pp. 249-291). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Charmaz, K. (2004). Grounded Theory. In Hesse-Biber, S. N. and Leavy, P. (Eds.) *Approaches to Qualitative Research*, (pp. 496-521). New York: Oxford University Press. Retrieved November 20, 2012, from

<http://www.colorado.edu/ibs/pb/thornberry/socy5031/pdfs/CharmazGroundedtheory.pdf>

- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Chatty, D. (1995). *The Burqa Face Cover: An Aspect of Dress in Southern Arabia*. Retrieved August 7, 2011, from <http://nomadsinoman.com/nomadic-life/articles/the-burqa-face-cover-1997-pdf>
- Chatty, D. (2000). Women Working in Oman: Individual Choice and Cultural Constraints. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 32, 241-254.
- Chatty, D. (2006). *Multinational Oil Exploitation and Social Investment in Chatty, D Nomadic Societies in the Middle Eastern and North Africa: Entering the 21st Century*. The Netherland: Brill Academic Publishers.
- Chatty, D. (2009). Rituals and Royalty and the Elaboration of Ceremony in Oman: View from the Edge. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 41, 39-58.
- Chiu, W. C., & Ng, C. W. (1999). Women-friendly HRM and organizational commitment: A study among women and men of organizations in Hong Kong. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. 72, 485-502.
- Cho, J.Y. and Lee, E. (2014). Reducing Confusion About Grounded Theory and Qualitative Content Analysis: Similarities and Differences. *The Qualitative Report*. 19(64): 1-20.
- Chreim, S., Williams, B.E., and Hinings, C.R. (2007). Inter-level Influences on the Reconstruction of Professional Role Identity. *Academy of Management Journal*. 50(6), 1515-1539.
- Chung-un, C. (2015, July 29). Do Working Mums in Asia Struggle More for Career and Family. *AsiaOne Women*. Retrieved March 20, 2017, <http://women.asiaone.com>
- Cinamon, R. G. and Rich, Y. (2010). Work-Family Relations: Antecedents and Outcomes. *Journal of Career Assessment*. 18(1), 59-70.

- Cinamon, R.G. (2009). Role Saliense, Social Support, and Work-Family Conflict among Jewish and Arab female Teachers in Israel. *Journal of Career Development*. 36(2), 139-158.
- Clark, S.C. (2000). Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance. *Human Relations*. 53(6), 747-770.
- Clarkberg, M. (2010). *More Dual-Earner Couples, Working Harder Than Ever*. Retrieved April 1, 2012, from <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/herman/reports/futurework/conference/families/couples.htm>
- Clarke, M.C., Koch, L.C., and Hill, E.J. (2004). The Work-family Interface: Differentiating Balance and Fit. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*. 33(2): 121-140.
- Coffey, B.S., Anderson, S.T., Zhaou, S., Liu, Y., and Zhang, J. (2009). Perspectives on Work-family Issues in China: The Voices of Young Urban Professional. *Community, Work & Family*. 12(2), 197-212.
- Common, R. (2008). Administrative Change in the Gulf: Modernization in Bahrain and Oman. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*. 74(2), p.177-193.
- Common, R.K. (2011). Barriers to Developing 'Leadership' in the Sultanate of Oman. *International Journal of Leadership Studies*. 6(2), p. 215-228.
- Cooney, A. (2010). Choosing between Glaser and Strauss. *Nurse Researcher*. 17(4), 18-28.
- Corbin, J. (1990). Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canon, and Evaluative Criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*. 13(1): 3-21.
- Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. California: SAGE Publications Inc.

- Crowley-Henry, M. (2009). Ethnography: Visions and Versions in *Approaches to Qualitative Research: Theory and Its Practical Application* by Hogan, P. et al (Eds.) (pp. 37-63). Ireland: Oak Tree Press.
- Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (2003). *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. California: SAGE Publication Inc.
- Dill, K. (2015). The 25 Best Companies for Work-Life Balance. *Forbes*. Retrieved March 25, 2017, from <https://www.forbes.com>
- Dima Mohammed Radwan. (2014). *Education for Employment: Omani Graduates' Perspective Toward the 'Work Readiness' Competencies needed in the Labour Market*. Master Dissertation. The British University, Dubai.
- Dobson, J. (2001). *Bringing Up Boys: Shaping the Next Generation of Men*. US: Tyndale Momentum.
- Drysdale, A. (2010). Population Dynamics and Birth Spacing in Oman. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 42(1), 123-144.
- Duxbury, L.E., & Higgins, C.A. (1991). Gender Differences in Work-family Conflict. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 76, 60-74.
- Eaves, Y.D. (2001). A Synthesis Techniques for Grounded Theory Data Analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 35(5), 654-663.
- Ebaale, E. and Mpuga, P. (2011). Female Education, Contraceptive Use, and Fertility: Evidence from Uganda. *Consilience: The Journal of Sustainable Development*. 6(1), 20-47.
- Ebenuwa-Okoh, E.E. and Osho.E. (2015). Relationship Between Spousal Support and Marital Satisfaction among Married Bank Female Workers in Consolidated Banks in Warri Metropolis. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*. 6(6), 432-438.
- Edwards, J. R., & Rothbard, N. P. (2000). Mechanisms linking work and family: Clarifying the relationship between work and family constructs. *Academy of Management Review*. 25 (1), 178–199

- Eickelman, C. (1984). *Women and Community*. US: NYU Press.
- Eickelman, C. (1993). Fertility and Social Change in Oman: Women's Perspectives. *Middle East Journal*. 47(4), 652-666.
- Emerson, R.M., Fretz, R.I. and Shaw, L.L. (2011). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. (2nd ed.) Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Evertsson, M. (2014). Gender Ideology and the Sharing of Housework and Child Care in Sweden. *Journal of Family Issues*. 35(7), 927-949.
- Ezra, M., and Deckman, M. (1996). Balancing Work and Family Responsibilities: Flextime and Child Care in the Federal Government. *Public Administration Review*, 56, 174-179.
- Ezzeden, S.R. and Ritchey, K.G. (2008). The Men Behind the Women: A Qualitative Study of the Spousal Support Received and Valued by Executive Women. *Journal of Family Issues*. 29(9), 1107-1135.
- Farah Naqvi. (2011). Perspectives of Indian Women Managers in the Public Sector. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*. 18(3), 279-309.
- Ferguson, M., Carlson, D. Zivnuska, S., Whitten, D. (2012). Support at Work and Home: The Path to Satisfaction Through Balance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 80(2), 299-307.
- Fetterman, D.M. (2010). *Ethnography: Step-by-step*. (3rd ed.) Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Fielding, N.G. (2006). Ethnographic Interviewing in Victor Jupp (ed). *The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods*. UK: The SAGE Publications Inc. (pp.100-102).
- Fleming, P., Baum, A., and Singer, J.E. (1984). Towards an Integrative Approach to the Study of Stress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 46, 939-949.

- Frone, M.R. (2003). Work-family Balance. In J.C. Quick & L.E. Tetrick (Eds.). *Handbook of Occupational Health Psychology* (pp. 77-94). New York: Plenum Press.
- Frone, M.R., Russel, M. Cooper, M.L. (1992). Prevalence of Work-family Conflict: Are Work and Family Boundaries Asymmetrically Permeable? *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. 14, 545-558.
- Fuwa, M. (2004). Macro-level Gender Inequality and the Division of Household Labor in 22 Countries. *American Sociological Review*. 69(6), 751-767.
- Galal M.H. Afifi and Nashwa al-Sherif. (2014). Women Occupational Empowerment in the Omani Tourism Sector. *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation*. 5(1), 53-84.
- Gardiner, I. (2006). *In the Service of the Sultan: A First-Hand Account of Dhofar Insurgency*. UK: Pen & Sword Military.
- Gerson, K. (2004). Understanding Work and Family Through a Gender Lens. *Community, Work & Family*. 7(2), 163-178.
- Ghosh, S.M.L. (2017). Impact of Maternal Employment on Adolescent Study Habits. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*. 4(2), 86-94.
- Gilgun, J.F. (2012). Enduring Themes of Qualitative Family Research. *Journal of Family Theory and & Review*. 4(2), p. 80-95.
- Glaser, B.G. (1992). *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis: Emergence Vs Forcing*. California: Sociology Press.
- Glavin, P. and Schieman, S. (2012). Work-family Role Blurring and Work-family Conflict: The Moderating Influence of Job Resources and Job Demands. 39(1), 71-98.
- Goldberg, W.A., Pranse, J., Lucas-Thompson, R., and Himsel, A. (2008). Maternal employment and Children's Achievement in Context: A Meta-Analysis of Four Decades of Research. *Psychological Bulletin*. 13(1), 77-108.

- Goode, W.J. (1960). A Theory of Role Strain. *American Sociological Review*. 25(4), 483-496.
- Gorgievski, M. J. and Hobfoll, S.E. (2008). Work Can Burn Us Out or Fire Us Up” Conservation of Resources in Burnout and Engagement. In Jonathan R.B. Halbesleben (Ed.), *Handbook of Stress and Burnout in Health Care*. P. 7-22.
- Goveas, S. and Aslam, N. (2011). A Role and Contributions of Women in the Sultanate of Oman. *International Journal of Business and Management*. 6(3). Retrieved July 7, 2011, from <http://www.ccsenet.org/ijbm>
- Grandey, A.A. and Cropanza, R. (1999). The Conservation of Resources Model Applied to Work Conflict and Strain. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 54, 350-370.
- Greenhaus, J.H. and Beutell, N.J. (1985). Sources of Conflict between Work and Family Roles. *The Academy of Management Review*. 10(1), 76-88.
- Greenhaus, J.H. and Parasuraman, S. (1999). Research on Work, Family and Gender: Current Status and Future Direction. In G.N. Powell (Ed.). *Handbook of Gender and Work*. (pp. 391-412). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Greenhaus, J.H. and Powell, G.N. (2006). When Work and Family are Allies: A Theory of Work-family Enrichment. *Academy of Management Review*. 31(1), 72-92.
- Greenhaus, J.H., Allen, T.D., and Spector, P.E. (2006). Health Consequences of Work-family Conflict: The Dark Side of the Work-family Interface. *Employee Health, Coping and Methodologies Research in Occupational Stress and Well Being*. 5, 61-98.
- Greenhaus, J.H., Collins, K.M. and Shaw, J.D. (2003). The Relation between Work-family Balance and Quality of Life. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 63(3), 510-531.

- Grzywacz, J. and Bass, B. L. (2003). Work, Family, and Mental Health: Testing Different Models of Work-family Fit. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 65(1), 248-262.
- Grzywacz, J. G. & Marks, N. F. (2000). Reconceptualizing the Work-family Interface: An Ecological Perspective on the Correlates of Positive and Negative Spillover Between Work and Family. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*. 5(1), 111-126.
- Grzywacz, J.G. and Carlson. (2007). Conceptualizing Work-family Balance: Implications for Practice and Research. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*. 9(4): 455-471.
- Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, (1994). Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 105-117). London: Sage. Retrieved October 10, 2012 from <http://www.uncg.edu/hdf/facultystaff/Tudge/Guba%20&%20Lincoln%201994.pdf>
- Gubrium, J.F. and Holstein, J.A. (2003). Analyzing Interpretive Practice in Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, 2nd Edition, (pp. 214-248). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Guest, G., Namey, E.E. ad Mitchell, M.L. (2013). *Collecting Qualitative Data: A Field Manual for Applied Research*. California: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Gurbuz, S. Turunc, O. and Celik, M. (2012). The Impact of Perceived Organizational Support on Work-family Conflict: Does Role Overload Have a Mediating Role? *Economic and Industrial Democracy*. 34(1), 145-160.
- Gutek, B.A., Nakamura, C.Y., & Nieva, V. (1981). The Interdependence of Work and Family Roles. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, 2(1), 1-16.
- Haider Al-Lawati. (2013, October 22). Issues of Domestic Workers Need Urgent Solution. *Oman Daily Observer*. Retrieved January 10, 2016, from <http://www.omanobserver.om>

- Hajar Namayandeh, Siti Nor Yaacob and Rumaya Juhari. (2010). The Influences of Work Support and Family Support (W-FC) Among Married Female Nurses in Shiraz-Iran. *Journal of American Science*. 6(12), 534-540.
- Hakim, C. (2000). *Work-lifestyle Choices in the 21st Century: Preference Theory*. OUP Oxford.
- Hakim, C. (2006). Women, Careers, and Work-life Preferences. *British Journal of Guidance and Counseling*. 34(3), 279-294.
- Halpern, D. F. (2005). How Time-flexible Work Policies Can Reduce Stress, Improve Health, and Save Money. *Stress & Health*. 21, 157-168
- Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in Practice 3rd Edition*. New York: Routledge.
- Harding, S. (1987). Introduction. In Sandra Harding (Ed.), *Feminism and Methodology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. P. 1-14
- Heise, D.R. (1987). Affect Control Theory: Concepts and Model. *Journal of Mathematical Sociology*. 13(1-2), 1-33.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N. and Leavy, P.L. (2007). *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Hill, E.J., Allen, S., Jacob, J., Bair, A.F., Bikhazi, S.C., Langeveld, A.V., Martinengo, G., Parker, T.T., and Walker, E. (2007). Work-Family Facilitation: Expanding Theoretical Understanding Through Qualitative Exploration. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*. 9(4), 507-526.
- Hirschmann, N.J. (2015). Equality, Freedom and the Sexual Division of Labour. In Francesca Bettio and Silvia Sansonetti *Visions for Gender Equality*. European Commission.
- Hisham Sharabi. (1988). *Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society*. USA: Oxford University Press.

- Hobfoll, S.E. (2001). The Influence of Culture, Community, and the Nested-Self in the Stress Process: Advancing Conservation of Resources Theory. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*. 50(3), 337-421.
- Hobfoll.S.E. (1989). Conservation of Resources: A New Attempt at Conceptualising Stress. *American Psychologist*. 44(3), 513-524.
- Hofstede, G. (1984). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-related Values*. SAGE Publications.
- Hofstede, G. (1991). *Software of the Mind*. Maidenhead, UK: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*. 2(1). Retrieved March 3, 2011, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>
- Hofstede, G. and Hostede, G.J. (1997). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill. Retrieved March 3, 2011, from http://www.psyking.net/HTMLobj-3864/ethnographic_research.pdf
- Hughes, J. and Jones, S. (2003). Reflections on the Use of Grounded Theory in Interpretive Information Systems Research. *Electronic Journal of Information System Evaluation*. 1
- Hutchings, K., Metcalfe, B. D., & Cooper, B. (2010). Exploring Arab Middle Eastern Women's Perceptions of Barriers to, and Facilitators of International Management Development. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 21(2), 61-83.
- ILO-UNDP (2009). *Work-Family: Towards New Forms of Reconciliation with Social Responsibility*. Santiago: ILO-UNDP.
- International Labor Organization. (2015). *Gaining Momentum: Women in Business and Management*. ILO. Retrieved July 10, 2016, from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_334882.pdf

- Inter-parliamentary Union. (2013). Women in Parliament: The Year in Review. Retrieved July 10, 2016, from <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/WIP2013-e.pdf>
- Jones, R. and Noble, G. (2007). Grounded Theory and Management Research: A Lack of Integrity? *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*. 2(2), 84-103.
- Kahn, R.L., Wolfe, D.M., Quinn, R.P., Snoek, J.D., and Rosenthal, R.A. (1964). *Organizational Stress: Studies in Role Conflict and Ambiguity*. New York: John Wiley.
- Kanter, R.M. (1977). *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: BasicBooks.
- Kéchichian, J.A. (2008). A Vision of Oman: State of the Sultanate Speeches by Qaboos bin Said, 1970 – 2006. *Middle East Policy*. 15(4), 112-133.
- Kerlinger, F.N. (1964). *Foundations of Behavioral Research: Educational and Psychological Inquiry*. California: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Khalid M. Al-Azri. (2013). *Social and Gender Inequality in Oman: The Power of Religious and Political Tradition*. Routledge.
- Kim, J. and Wickrama, K.A.S. (2013). Mothers' Working Status and Infant Development: Mediational Processes. *Journal of Family Issues*. 35(11), 1473-1496.
- Kim, Y. (2010). The Pilot Study in Qualitative Inquiry: Identifying Issues and Learning Lessons for Culturally Competent Research. *Qualitative Social Work*. 10(2): 190-206.
- Kim, Y.M. and Kim, M.Y. (2013). Difficulties Faced by Working Mothers and Potential Solutions to these Problems: A Survey of Nursing Personnel in a Korean Teaching Hospital. *Perspectives in Nursing Science*. 10(2), 151-157.
- Kitterød, R.H. and Rønsen, M. (2012). Non-traditional Dual Earners in Norway: When Does She Work at Least as Much as He? *Work, Employment and Society*. 26(4), 657-675.

- Kreiner, G.E., Hollense, E.C. and Sheep, M.L. (2009). Balancing Borders and Bridges: Negotiating the Work-Home Interface via Boundary Work Tactics. *Academy of Management Journal*. 52(4), 704-730.
- Lacey, R. (2009). *Inside the Kingdom*. United Kingdom: Random House.
- Lamk Al-Lamki. (2010). Stress in the Medical Profession and Its Roots in Medical School. *SQU Medical Journal*. 10(1), 156-159.
- Lapierre, L.M. and Allen, T.D. (2012). Control at Work, Control at Home, and Planning Behavior: Implications for Work-family Conflict. *Journal of Management*. 38(5), 1500-1516.
- LaRossa, R., & Reitzes, D. C. (1993). Symbolic Interactionism and Family Studies in P. G. Boss, W. J. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. R. Schumm, & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.) *Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods: A Contextual Approach*. (pp.135- 163). New York, NY: Plenum.
- Lazarus, R.S. and Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, Appraisal, and Coping*. New York: Springer.
- Lee, N. Y., Zvonkovic, A.M., Crawford, D.W. (2013). The Impact of Work-family Conflict and Facilitation on Women's Perceptions of Role Balance. *Journal of Family Issues*. 35(9), 1252-1274.
- Lerner, J.V. (1994). *Working Women and Their Families*. California: Sage.
- Letherby, G. (2003). *Feminist Research in Theory and Practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Leung, L. and Chan, K. (2012). A Family-friendly policy for Hong Kong: Lessons from three international experiences. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*. 32(1), 82-95.
- Limbirt, M.E. (2008). The Sacred Date: Gifts of God in Omani Town. *Ethnos*. 72(3), 361-376.

- Lowther, E. and Thornton, C. (2015). Election 2015: Number of Women in Parliament Rises by a Third. Retrieved July 10, 2016, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-32601280>
- Lu, L., Kao, S., Chang, T., Wu, H. and Cooper, C.L. (2008). Work/Family Demands, Work Flexibility, Work/ Family Conflict, and Their Consequences at Work: A National Probability Sample in Taiwan. *International Journal of Stress Management*. 15(1), 1-21.
- Lu, L., Cooper, C.L., Kao, S., Chang, T., Allen, T.D., Lapierre, L.M., O'Driscoll, M.P., Poelmans, S.A.Y., Sanchez, J.I., and Spector, P.E. (2010). Cross-cultural Differences on Work-to-family Conflict and Role Satisfaction, a Taiwanese-British Comparison. *Human Resource Management*. 49(1), 67-85.
- Lyness, K. S., & Thompson, D. E. (2000). Climbing the Corporate Ladder: Do Female and Male Executives Follow the Same Route? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85, 86-101
- M Mazharul Islam. (2012). The Practice of Consanguineous Marriage in Oman: Prevalence, Trends and Determinants. *Journal of Biosocial Science*. 44(5), 571-594.
- M Mazharul Islam. (2014). Oman Sees Sharp Decline in Fertility Rate. *Horizon*. Issue 301., p.4.
- Majid Al-Suleimany (2013, June 4). Working Women in the Field. *Oman Daily Observer*. P.31.
- Marks, S.R. and MacDermid, S.M. (1996). Multiple Roles and the Self: A Theory of Role Balance. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 58(2), 417-432.
- Marshall, R. and Pauline, B. (1987). Employment and Earnings of Women: Historical Perspective in *Working Women: Past, Present, Future* by Koziara et al (eds). Washington DC: The Bureau of National Affairs.
- Maryam Hamed Hamood Al Hasani. (2015). *Women's Employment in Oman*. PhD Thesis. Australia: The University of Queensland.

- Maryam Khan. (2014, February 4). Primary School Enrolment in Oman Better Than Other Arab States. *Muscat Daily*. Retrieved July 10, 2016, from <http://www.muscatdaily.com>
- Matherly, L.L. and Hodgson, S. (2014). Implementing Employment Quotas to Develop Human Resource Capital: A Comparison of Oman and the UAE. *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*. 2(7), 75-90.
- McCall, G.J., and Simmons, J.L. (1966). *Identities and Interactions*. New York: Free Press.
- McMillan, H.S., Morris, M.L., and Atchley, E.K. (2011). Constructs of the Work/Life Interface: A Synthesis of the Literature and Introduction of the Concept of Work/Life Harmony. *Human Resource Development Review*. 10(1), 6-25.
- McNall, L.A., Nicklin, J.M., Masuda, A.D. (2010). A Meta-Analytic Review of the Consequences Associated with Work-family Enrichment. *Journal of Business Psychology*. 25(3), 381-396.
- Mesmer-Magnus, J., and Viswesvaran, C. (2005). Convergence Between Measures of Work-to-Family and Family-to-Work Conflict: A Meta-Analytic Examination. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 67, 215-232.
- Metcalf, B.D. (2007). Gender and Human Resource Management in the Middle East. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 18(1), 54-74.
- Miller, V.D. and Jablin, F.M. (1996). The Maternity Leave as a Role Negotiation Process. *Journal of Managerial Issues*. 8, 286-309.
- Ministry of Education. (2016). *Private Schools*. Retrieved August 15, 2016, from http://www.moe.gov.om/portal/sitebuilder/sites/eps/english/ips/right_menu/edu_system/edusystem/priv.aspx
- Ministry of Manpower. (2003). *Oman Human Development Report*. Muscat: Ministry of Manpower.
- Ministry of National Economy, Oman. (2003). *Oman Human Development Report*.

- Ministry of National Economy, Oman. (2010). *40 Glorious Year: 1970-2010*. Retrieved February 12, 2011, from <http://www.mone.gov.om/PublicationAttachment/40e.pdf>
- Ministry of National Economy, Oman. (2011). *Omani Women in the Labor Market and the Challenges They Face (Arabic)*. Retrieved January 8, 2012 from <http://www.mone.gov.om/PublicationAttachment/WOMAN%20AT%20WORK.pdf>
- Ministry of National Economy, Oman. (2013). *Statistical Year Book 2012*. Retrieved March 12, 2013 from <http://www.ncsi.gov.om/book/SYB2012/2-population.pdf>
- Mohammed Anwar Al-Balushi. (2014, October 22). Seeking Quality Education. *Oman Daily Observer*. Retrieved July 15, 2016 from <http://omanobserver.om>
- Mohammed I. At-Twajiri and Ibrahim A. Al-Muhaiza. (1996). Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions in the GCC Countries: An Empirical Investigation. *International Journal of Value-based Management*. 9, 121-131.
- Morse, J.M. (1994). Designing Funded Qualitative Research. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp.220-235). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Moza Said Al-Balushi, Ahmed, M.S., M Mazharul Islam and Md Hasinur Rahaman Khan. (2015). Determinants of Contraceptive Use in Oman. *Far East Journal of Theoretical Statistics*. 50(1), 51-64.
- Munsch, C.L. (2015). Her Support, His Support: Money, Masculinity, and Marital Infidelity. *American Sociological Review*. 80(3), 469-495.
- Murchison, J. (2010). *Ethnography Essentials: Designing, Conducting, and Presenting Your Research*. US: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Murchison, J.M. (2010). *Ethnography Essentials*. California: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

- Najm A. Najm. Arab Culture Dimensions in the International and Arab Models. *American Journal of Business, Economics and Management*. 3(6), 423-431.
- Napasri, T. and Yukongdi, V. (2015). A Study of Thai Female Executives Perceived Barriers to Career Advancement. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*. 4(3), 108-120.
- National Center for Statistics and Information. (2010). *Forty Glorious Years*. Retrieved February 10, 2011 from http://www.ncsi.gov.om/NCSI_website/PublicationAttachment/40e.pdf
- National Center of Statistics and Information. (2014). *Information Reports: Workforce in the Sultanate*. Retrieved May 23, 2016 from http://ncsi.gov.om/NCSI_website/PublicationAttachment/infor_report10.pdf
- National Center of Statistics and Information. (2016). *Millennium Development Goals: The Fourth National Report*. Retrieved April 19, 2017 from https://www.ncsi.gov.om/Elibrary/LibraryContentDoc/ben_Millennium%20Development%20Goals_The%20Fourth%20National%20Report_4cc73fdf-c5a8-4b80-b948-2587ff96cdb3.pdf
- Neal, M. and Finlay, J.L. (2008). American Hegemony and Business Education in the Arab World. *Journal of Management Education*. 32(1), 38-83.
- Neal, M., Finlay, J.L., Catana, G.H., and Catana, D. (2007). A Comparison of Leadership Prototypes of Arab and European Females. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*. 7(3), 291-316.
- Nizar Al-Musalmy. (2011, April 19). Working Women. *Oman Daily Observer*. Retrieved December 15, 2011, from <http://main.omanobserver.om/node/47879>
- Nunan, D. (1992). *Research Methods in Language Learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nurlita. (2017, March 6). Impact of Overtime Hours on Employee Productivity in Asia. *HR in Asia*. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from <http://www.hrinasia.com>

- O'Reilly, K. (2005). *Ethnographic Methods*. New York: Routledge.
- O'Reilly, K. (2009). *Key Concepts in Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications Inc.
- OECD. (2016). *Employment Outlook 2016*. Retrieved March 20, 2017, from <https://www.oecd.org>
- Oman Daily Observer, (2014, October 16). 4 Omani Business Women on Forbes' Power List. Oman Daily Observer. Retrieved August 10, 2016, from <http://www.omanobserver.om>
- Oman: Make A Bigger Hole in Pocket for Hiring Maid. (2012, November 12). *Times of Oman*. Retrieved July 8, 2016, from <http://www.timesofoman.com>
- Oman: The Basic Statute of the State. (2002). *Arab Law Quarterly*. 17(1), p.56-72. Brill Publishing.
- Ona. (2016, July, 16). Omani Women Playing a Larger Role in Public and Private Sector. *Times of Oman*. Retrieved August 10, 2016, from <http://www.timesofoman.com>
- Owens, T.J., Robinson, D.T., and Smith-Lovin, L. (2010). Three Faces of Identity. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 36, 477-499.
- Ozutku, H. and Altindis, S. (2013). The Relations between Work Intensity and Work-Family Conflict in Collectivist Culture: Evidence from Turkish Health Care Professionals'. *Journal of Health Management*. 15(3), 361-382.
- Parasuraman, S., Greenhaus, J.H. and Granrose, C.S. (1992). Role Stressors, Social Support and Well-being Among Two-career Couples. *Journal of Organization Behavior*. 13(4), 339-356.
- Parasuraman, S., Purohit, Y.S., and Godshalk, V.M. (1996). Work and Family Variables, Entrepreneurial Career Success and Psychological Well-being. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 48, 275-300.
- Peterson, J.E. (1977). Tribes and Politics in Eastern Arabia. *Middle East Journal*. 31(3), 297-312.

- Peterson, J.E. (2004a). Oman's Diverse Society: Northern Oman. *Middle East Journal*. 58(1), 31-51.
- Peterson, J.E. (2004b). Oman's Diverse Society: Southern Oman. *Middle East Journal*. 58(2), 254-269.
- Peterson, J.E. (2004c). Oman: Three and Half Decades of Change and Development. *Middle East Policy*. 11(2), 125-137.
- Peterson, J.E. (2011). Oman Faces the Twenty-first Century in Tétréault, M. Okruhlik, G., and Kapiszewski, A. (eds) *Political Change in the Arab Gulf States*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers. Retrieved December 18, 2011, from www.jepeterson.net/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/Peterson_Oman_Faces_21st_Century.pdf.
- Pettigrew, S.F. (2000). Ethnography and Grounded Theory: A Happy Marriage? *Advances in Consumer Research Volume*. 27, 256-260. Retrieved January 19, 2012, from www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/display.asp?id=8400
- Phillips, W. (1971). *Unknown Oman*. Beirut: Librairie Du Liban.
- Phillips-Miller, D.L., Campbell, N.J., and Morrison, C.R. (2000). Work and Family: Satisfaction, Stress, and Spousal Support. *Journal of Employment Counselling*. 37(1), 16-30.
- Poelmans, S., Spector, P.E., Cooper, C.L., Allen, T.D., Michael, O., Sanchez, J.I. (2003). A Cross-National Comparative Study of Work/Family Demands and Resources. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*. 3(3), 275-288.
- Powell, G.N. Francesco, A.M., and Yan Ling. (2009). Toward Culture-sensitive Theories of the Work-family Interface. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. 30(5), 597-616.

- Public Authority for Social Insurance. (2014). *The 21st Annual Report*. Retrieved April 12, 2017, from <https://www.pasi.gov.om/en/PASI.../Anuual%20Report%20-%202014En.pdf>
- Rafiah Al-Talei. (2010). *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa 2010 – Oman*. Retrieved May 24, 2011, from <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4b99011f86.html>
- Rahma Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, C. and Faisal Al-Maamari. (2016). Omani Parents' Involvement in Their Children's English Education. *SAGE Open*. January-March: 1-12.
- Rothbard, N.P. (2001). Enriching or Depleting?: The Dynamics of Engagement in Work and Family Roles. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 46(4), 655-684.
- Rothbard, N.P. and Edwards, J.R. (2003). Investment in Work and Family Roles: A Test of Identity and Utilitarian Motives. *Personnel Psychology*. 56(3), 699-729.
- Rothbard, N.P., Dumas, T.L. and Phillips, K.W. (2001). The Long Arm of the Organization: Work-family Policies, Employees Preferences for Segmentation, and Satisfaction and Commitment. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, A1-A6.
- Rothbard, N.P., Phillips, K.W. and Dumas, T.L. (2005). Managing Multiple Roles: Work-family Policies and Individuals' Desires for Segmentation. *Organization Science*. 16(3), 243-258.
- Rubin, H.J. and Rubin, I.S. (2012). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. London: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Ruderman, M. N., Ohlott, P. J., Panzer, K., & King, S. (2002). Benefits of multiple roles for work and family. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*. 5(1), 111-126.

- Ruksana Banu. (2015). *The Impact of Work-life Balance Policies and Work-life Balance Issues on Employee's Satisfaction in Oman*. PhD thesis. Malaysia: Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.
- Runté, M. (2009). *Work-family Conflict: Fighting the 'Good Fight'*. Retrieved August 31, 2012, from http://www.igs.ocha.ac.jp/igs/IGS_publication/journal/12/19-34.pdf
- Runté, M., and Mills, A.J. (2006). Cold War, Chilly Climate: Exploring the Roots of Gendered Discourse in Organization and Management Theory. *Human Relations*. 59(5), 695-720.
- Safdar Ullah Khan. (2014). *What Determines Women's Autonomy: Theory and Evidence*. Doctor Philosophy. Queensland, Australia: Bond University.
- Sale, J.E.M., Lohfeld, L.H. and Brazil, K. (2002). Revisiting the Quantitative-Qualitative Debate: Implications for Mixed-Methods Research. *Quality and Quantity*. 36(1), p.43-53.
- Salma M. Al-Lamki. (1999). Paradigm Shift: A Perspective on Omani Women in Management in the Sultanate of Oman. *Advancing Women in Leadership*. 5. Retrieved December 10, 2010, from <http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/spring99/Al-Lamki/allamk.html>
- Salma Mohammed Al-Lamki. (2000). Omanization: A Three Tier Strategic Framework for Human Resource Management and Training in the Sultanate of Oman. *Journal of Comparative International Management*. 3(1). Retrieved July 10, 2016, from <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCIM/article/view/462/771>
- Salmela-Aro, K., Nurmi, J. and Saisto, T. (2010). Spousal Support for Personal Goals and Relationship Satisfaction Among Women During the Transition to Parenthood. *International Journal of Behaviour Development*. 34(3), 229-237.

- Samaher Al-Harrasi and Rahma Al-Mahrooqi. (2014). Investigating Omani Parents' Involvement in Their Children's Schooling. *European Journal of Scientific Research*. 117, 272-286.
- Sandberg, S. (2013). *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*. U.S.: Knopf.
- Sara Mojthehedzadeh. (2014, October 26). What Does Universal Child-care Mean for Working Women? *Thestar.com*. Retrieved March 20, 2017, from <https://www.thestar.com>
- Schwarzer, R., and Gutiérrez-Doña, B. (2005). More Spousal Support for Men than for Women: A Comparison of Sources and Types of Support. *Sex Roles*. 52, 523–532.
- Seierstad, C. and Kirton, G. (2015). Having It All? Women in High Commitment Careers and Work-Life Balance in Norway. *Gender, Work and Organization*. 22(4), 390-404.
- Shaffer, M.A., Joplin, J.R.W. and Hsu, Y. (2011). Expanding the Boundaries of Work-family Research: A Review and Agenda for Future Research. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*. 11(2), 221-268.
- Shockley, K.M., and Singla, N. (2011). Reconsidering Work-Family Interactions and Satisfaction: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Management*. 37(3), 861-886.
- Sieber, S. (1974). Toward a Theory of Role Accumulation. *American Sociological Review*. 39(4), 567-578.
- Siti Fatimah Bahari. (2010). Qualitative Versus Quantitative Research Strategies: Contrasting Epistemological and Ontological Assumptions. *Jurnal Teknologi*. 52(Mei): 17-28.
- Slevitch, L. (2011). Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies Compared: Ontological and Epistemological Perspectives. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism*. 12(1), p.73-81.
- Smith, R. (1988). Oman: Leaping across the Centuries. *British Medical Journal*. 297(20-27 August), p. 540-547.

- Sorrell, J.M. and Redmond, G.M. (1995). Interviews in Qualitative Nursing Research: Differing Approaches for Ethnographic and Phenomenological Studies. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 21, 1117-1122.
- Stacey, J. (1988). Can there be a Feminist Ethnography? *Women's Studies International Forum*. 11(1), 21-27.
- Stets, J.E. and Burke, P.J. (2000). Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*. Sep (1), 224-37.
- Stolz, L.M. (1960). Effects of Maternal Employment on Children: Evidence from Research. *Society for Research in Child Development*. 31(4), 749-782.
- Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. London: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Strauss, A.L. (1987). *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientist*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Stryker, S. (1968). Identity Salience and Role Performance. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 4, 558-564.
- Sultan Qabus and Miller, J. (1997). Modern Oman: An Interview with Sultan Qabus. *Foreign Affairs*. 76(3), 13-18.
- Sümer, S., Smithson, J., Guerreiro, M., and Granlund, M. (2008). Becoming Working Mothers: Reconciling Work and Family at Three Particular Workplaces in Norway, the UK., and Portugal. *Community, Work & Family*. 11(4), 365-384.
- Swearer, S.M. and Dolls, B. (2001). Bullying in Schools: An Ecological Framework. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*. 2(23), 7-23.
- Tajfel, H. and Turner, J.C. (1979). An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. 33(47), 74.

- Tan, S.J. (2008). The Myth and Realities of Maternal Employment. in Marcus-Newhall, A., Halpern, D.F. and Tan, S.J. (Eds.), *The Changing Realities of Work and Family*. US: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing.
- Tedlock, B. (2003). Ethnography and Ethnographic Representation in in Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, 2nd Edition, (pp. 165-213). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications Inc.
- The World Bank Group (2016). *Fertility Rate*. U.S.: Washington DC. Retrieved on July 20, 2016, from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN>
- Thoits, P.A. (1983). Multiple Identities and Psychological Well-being: A Reformulation and Test of the Social Isolation Hypothesis. *American Sociology*. 48, 174-187.
- Thompson, C.A., Beauvais, L.L. and Lyness, K.S. (1999). When Work-family Benefits are not Enough: The Influence of Work-family Culture on Benefit Utilization, Organizational Attachment, and Work-Family Conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 54(3), 392-415.
- Thurston, W.E. and Vissandjée, B. (2005). An Ecological Model of Understanding Culture as a Determinant of Women's Health. *Critical Public Health*. 15(3), 229-242.
- Thuwayba Al-Barwani and Tayfour S. Albeely. (2007). The Omani Family: Strengths and Challenges. *Marriage and Family Review*. 41(1-2), 119-142.
- Thuwayba Al-Barwani, Tayfour S. Albeely and Humaira Al-Suleimani. (2012). Parental Involvement in Highers Education in Oman. *Jurnal Pendidikan Malaysia*. 37(1), 13-24.
- Tiedje, L.B., Wortman, C.B., Downey, G., Emmons, C., Biernat M., Lang, E. (1990). Women with Multiple Roles: Role-compatibility Perceptions, Satisfaction, and Mental Health. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 52(1), 63-72.
- Times of Oman (2016, July 21). *Working Mothers in Oman Increase Fourfold*. Retrieved August 10, 2016, from <http://www.timesofoman.com>

- Trask, B.S. (2010). *Globalization and Families: Accelerated Systemic Social Change*. New York: Springer.
- Turkiya Al-'Omairi and Ismail Hussein Amzat. (2012). Women in Omani Society: Education and Participation. *International Journal of Sustainable Development*. 3(5), 63-80.
- Turner, B.A. (1983). The Use of Grounded Theory for the Qualitative Analysis of Organisational Behaviour. *Journal of Management Studies*. 20(3), 333-348
- Turner, J.H. (2013). *Contemporary Sociological Theory*. U.S.: Sage Publications, Inc.
- United Nations. (2014). *World Fertility Report 2013: Fertility at the Extremes*. New York: United Nations. Retrieved on July 10th, 2016, from <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/fertility/worldFertilityReport2013.pdf>
- Valk, R. and Srinivasan, V. (2011). Work-family Balance of Indian Women Software Professionals: A Qualitative Study. *IIMB Management Review*. 23, 39-50.
- Voydanoff, P. (2002). Linkages between the Work-family Interface and Work, Family, and Individual Outcomes: An Integrative Model. *Journal of Family Issues*. 23(1), 138-164.
- Voydanoff, P. (2008). A Conceptual Model of the Work-family Interface in *Handbook of Work-family Integration: Research Theory, and Best Practices*. US: Elsevier.
- Wada, M., Backman, C.L., and Forwell, S.J. (2010). Theoretical Perspectives of Balance and The Influence of Gender Ideologies. *Journal of Occupational Sciences*. 17, 92-103.
- Walker, D., and Myrick, F. (2006). Grounded Theory: An Exploration of Process and Procedure. *Qualitative Health Research*. 16(4), 547-559.

- Wallace, J.E. and Jovanovic, A. (2011). Occupational Similarity and Spousal Support: A Study of the Importance of Gender and Spouse's Occupation. *Industrial Relations*. 66(2), 235-255
- Wang, P., and Walumbwa, F. O. (2007). Family-friendly Programs, Organizational Commitment, and Work Withdrawal: The Moderating role of Transformational Leadership. *Personnel Psychology*, 60, 397-427
- Waqas Younus. (2016, March, 28). Women – Indispensable to Successful Economy. *Times of Oman*. Retrieved 2017, April 25 from <http://timesofoman.com>
- Wardatul Akmam. (2002). Women's Education and Fertility Rates in Developing Countries: Special reference to Bangladesh. *Eubios Journal of Asian and International Bioethics*. 12, 138-143.
- Wayne, J.H., Grzywacz, J.G., Carlson, D., Kacmar, K.M. (2007). Work-family Facilitation: A Theoretical Explanation and Model of Primary Antecedents and Consequences. *Human Resource Management Review*. 17, 63-76.
- Wayne, J.H., Randel, E. A., and Stevens, J. (2006). The Role of Identity and Work-family Support in Work-family Enrichment and its Work-related Consequences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. 69(3), 445-461.
- Williamson, K. (2006). Research in Constructivist Frameworks Using Ethnographic Techniques. *Library Trends*. 55(1), p.83-101.
- Wingfield-Hayes, R. (2013). Japan: The Worst Developed Country for Working Mothers? *BBC News*. Retrieved March 20, 2017, from <http://www.bbc.com>
- Wolcott, H.F. (1995). *The Art of Fieldwork*. US: Altamira Press.
- Wolcott, H.F. (1997). Ethnographic Research in Education. Retrieved on 20th July, 2012 from
- Zaynab Aycan and Mehmet Eskin. (2005). Relative Contributions of Childcare, Spousal Support, and Organizational Support in Reducing Work-family Conflict for Men and Women: The Case of Turkey. *Sex Roles*. 53(7/8), 453-471.

- Zaynab Aycan. (2005). *Cross-cultural Approaches to Work-family Conflict*. Paper presented at Conference on Work and Family Interface, Barcelona, Spain. Retrieved January 2, 2011, from [http://www.workfamilyconflict.ca/cms/.../47/cc_wfc_chapter - finalized.doc](http://www.workfamilyconflict.ca/cms/.../47/cc_wfc_chapter_-_finalized.doc)
- Zaynab Mohamed Jabur. (2008). *A Qualitative Study of Omani Muslim Women's Perceived Experiences as Writers in English as Second Language*. PhD Thesis. United States of America: Indiana University of Pennsylvania.
- Zerovec, M. and Bontenbal, M. (2011). Labor Nationalization Policies in Oman: Implications for Omani and Migrant Women Workers. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*. 20(3-4), 365-387.
- Zuo, J. and Jiang, Y. (2012). Work-to-Family Conflict and Women's Construction of Work/Family Roles in Post-Mao China. In *Social Production and Reproduction at the Interface of Public and Private Spheres* (pp. 139-164).