

Final Report to AFAANZ

(1) Name, Position, Contact Details for each applicant

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(2) Project Title

Women Professors in Accounting and Finance: Their Paths and Influence

(3) Updated Project Summary (500 words) including any variations between the project undertaken and the original application

While there has been widespread debate about gender equality for women, many organisations are struggling to ensure women are represented fairly in top management. In accounting and finance academe, prior studies find there to be an over representation of women in the lower ranks and an under-representation of women professors at Australian universities. The purpose of this study is to examine the individual, organisational and societal influences and outcomes on women accounting and finance professors across their career journey.

Our study employed in-depth semi-structured interviews with 25 women accounting and finance professors selected from a range of universities in Australia. We draw on the framework of agency in faculty professional lives (Campbell and O'Meara, 2014), which incorporates the strategic and intentional actions or perspectives taken towards goals that are of importance to oneself. The framework also recognises that faculty agency can be influenced by a variety of individual, organisational and societal forces, and may have outcomes at the individual level and lead to changes at the organisational and societal levels.

We find women adopt a variety of strategic actions in order to enhance their chances of career progression, such as changing universities and moving geographically, actively working with a range of purposefully selected mentors, and electing to work long hours. Critical strategic perspectives adopted by the women in our study include a high degree of confidence and the belief that they were as good as, or better than, their male counterparts. Key influences at the individual level include high levels of emotional intelligence, social capital and the propensity to successfully work with a diverse range of people. At the organisational level, key influences include the availability of monetary resources and access to strategic personnel such as international visiting scholars. For the women with children included in our study, access to quality child care was critical to their career progression. A key outcome from strategic actions and perspectives adopted by our participants was a high level of job satisfaction, the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills, and the opportunity to have an impact on the accounting profession and/or society, particularly in the later stages of their career.

Our study further extends understanding of the framework of agency in faculty professional lives by identifying the critical importance of emotional intelligence, and social capital in career progression. While some studies have explored women in the accounting profession, no known studies have examined the academic career journey of women accounting and finance professors. Given the

under-representation of women in professorial roles, together with current initiatives by universities to address this imbalance, it is timely that these journeys be studied to provide insights into how women's careers in academe can be supported and progressed.

(4) Funds Granted

\$6000

(5) Detailed Report on Expenditure of Funds against Budget Items, with variations explained

| Details | Budget | Actual |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| <p>Transcription of interview Data Original budget was for 20 interviews of 1-hour duration X \$122 per recorded hour. Actual interviews conducted was 25, the majority of which were longer than 1 hour.</p> | 2440.00 | 3021.62 |
| <p>Research Assistant (Research support, data entry, assistance with qualitative analysis) Data entry was completed by the investigators.</p> | 3505.70 | 0 |
| <p>Travel for Interstate Interviews (Sydney, Brisbane) Original budget was for 1 trip to Sydney and 1 trip to Brisbane. Additional trips needed to be made due to the limited availability of interviewees. In order to keep costs to a minimum, flights were booked using frequent points where possible. Flight costs were also significantly higher than budgeted due to the spring racing carnival and AFL football finals.</p> | 1300.00 | 3,300.00 |
| TOTAL BUDGET | 7245.70* | 6321.61 |

Grant money awarded was \$6000, not \$7245.70 as requested

(6) Outcomes, for example, working papers, presentations and publications (give full details, including abstracts)

A working paper has been prepared and was accepted for presentation at the 2020 British Accounting and Finance Accounting Education Special Interest Group. This conference was later cancelled due to COVID-19.

(7) Future Intentions for this Project (give full details)

a. Conference submissions

It is intended to submit a paper based on the findings from this study to the 2021 AFAANZ Conference.

b. Journal submissions

Targeted journals to report the findings of this research are *Accounting and Finance* and/or *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*.

c. Grant applications

No further applications have been made for additional funds.

d. Projects

No further projects are planned.

(8) Summary of Outcomes and Benefits

The funding enabled the majority of the interviews to be conducted in a face-to-face manner with participants located in Sydney and Brisbane. Face-to-face interviews were considered to be crucial to the research objectives of this study to uncover the meanings and felt experiences of participants towards the dynamic and unspoken reproduction of gender inequity in social interactions (Adapa, Rindfleish, & Sheridan, 2016).

The funding also enabled the recorded interviews to be professionally transcribed.

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