

## Special Issue: Call for Papers

### Challenging the Narrative of Unseemly Female Bodies: Centering Women’s Reproductive Health and Work

**Guest Editors:** Winny Shen (York University), Nitya Chawla (University of Minnesota), Allison Gabriel (Purdue University), Ivona Hideg (University of Oxford & York University), Kristen Jones (University of Memphis), Jamie Ladge (Northeastern University & University of Exeter Business School), Kristen Shockley (Auburn University), and Jennifer Wessel (University of Maryland)

#### Background and Rationale for the Special Issue

Feminist scholars have theorized that modern work organizations continue to remain as gendered spaces. Namely, organizational structures are designed based on ideal worker bodies and norms that are masculine. Thus, even though women now comprise half of the workforce in many developed nations, women continue to experience exclusion and marginalization, and their unique (bodily) experiences are still widely deemed as “irrelevant” or “inappropriate” workplace topics (Acker, 1990). Supporting these arguments, Grandey et al. (2020) highlighted that there is still a dearth of organizational research on the three M’s that represent distinctive and pervasive bodily experiences for women<sup>1</sup>: menstruation, maternity, and menopause. Consequently, the overarching goal of this special issue is to begin overturning these masculine defaults and to normalize and amplify research on issues related to the intersection of women’s reproductive health and work.

Of the three M’s, maternity – particularly pregnancy – has received the most research attention to date (Arena et al., 2023), with a particular emphasis on the topics of discrimination, support, and disclosure. This is likely due to the presence of legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of (potential) pregnancy in many countries (Myors et al., 2008). Although this work is sorely needed, many aspects of the postpartum experience remain under examined, including how to best support women in their return to work from parental leave (Gatrell, 2013; Hideg et al., 2018; Ladge & Greenberg, 2015; Ladge et al., 2018), challenges associated with breastfeeding when working (Gabriel et al., 2020), and navigating work with unique postpartum experiences (e.g., postpartum depression; Gabriel et al., 2023). Moreover, some couples may struggle to become pregnant and need to balance working with fertility treatments (Sohrab & Basir, 2021). Others may experience pregnancy loss (Gilbert et al., 2023) or choose to terminate their pregnancy

---

<sup>1</sup> We acknowledge that by circumstance or choice not all women will experience the 3 M’s. Additionally, we also recognize that there may be individuals who do not identify as women who experience the 3 M’s, including intersex people, transmen, and non-binary individuals. The current special issue welcomes research that focuses on the intersection of the three M’s and work as experienced by these populations too.

(Bergman et al., 2023). We particularly welcome research on the intersection of infertility, pregnancy loss, and abortion with work given their taboo and understudied nature.

Similarly, research on menstruation at work remains scarce (for an exception, see Motro et al., 2019). However, Grandey et al. (2020) argue that these experiences may be particularly impactful amongst younger women who are beginning their careers. Finally, research on menopause and work is also limited, and management and organizational scholars have been at the periphery, rather than leading, the existing body of research (Verdonk et al., 2022). Yet, Grandey et al. (2020) posit that understanding how menopause affects leadership may be particularly generative given the convergence of timing between these two events in many women's lives. Research tackling these topics would be a strong fit for the current special issue.

In line with the scope of *JOB*, research focusing on these topics within and across individual, group, and organizational levels of analysis are all welcome. For example, this might include experience-sampling designs examining within-person associations between menopausal symptoms and leadership behaviors or investigating when organizational policies that specifically provide time off for menstruation affect the relationship between menstruation pain and presenteeism. Research that incorporates qualitative data, quantitative data, or are mixed-method are all appropriate for this special issue. We note that the special issue is open to research that explores either direction—that is, how women's reproductive health and experiences affect workplace attitudes and behaviours, as well as how workplace experiences and policies influence women's reproductive health or the three M's.

Given evidence that women themselves can be affected by stereotypes surrounding the three M's that can color their recollections (Grandey et al., 2020), research that incorporates other sources of data (i.e., physiological, other-reports who are blind to women's three M experiences) that clarify whether effects are due solely to self-beliefs are seen as particularly powerful. Furthermore, we recognize that there is likely significant and meaningful variation across women's experiences. Therefore, research that explores intersectionality is seen as especially valuable. For example, the workplace experiences of lower SES women, who may most struggle to access or afford menstrual hygiene products (i.e., "period poverty"), may differ significantly from higher SES women (Traylor et al., 2020). Finally, although these bodily experiences may create challenges for working women, we are open to the possibility that they may also generate opportunities and look forward to receiving submissions that take this perspective.

### **Submission Instructions**

This call is open and competitive. We are interested in submissions that are original, cutting-edge, and must not be under consideration by another journal or outlet. Papers to be considered for this Special Issue should be submitted electronically via *JOB*'s online submission system. Manuscripts will be handled by the Special Issue guest editors and reviewed by at least two anonymous reviewers, who will be blind to the identity of the author(s). We encourage all submissions as long as authors believe their work fits with the objectives of the call for papers. This includes papers that have quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods empirical orientations, meta-analyses or systematic reviews, and theory pieces. Questions regarding the special issue can be directed to [wshen88@schulich.yorku.ca](mailto:wshen88@schulich.yorku.ca)

Full manuscript submissions should be made electronically through the Submission System: <https://submission.wiley.com/journal/job>. Please refer to the Author Guidelines at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/10991379/homepage/forauthors.html> before submission. Please select the ‘Research Article’ as the article type on submission. On the Additional Information page during submission, select ‘Yes, this is for a Special Issue’ and the relevant Special Issue title from the dropdown list. For questions about the submission system please contact the Editorial Office at: [JOBEdoffice@wiley.com](mailto:JOBEdoffice@wiley.com).

**Submission Window: 1-15 February, 2025**

### References

- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & Society, 4*(2), 139-158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124390004002002>
- Arena, D. F., Volpone, S. D., & Jones, K. P. (2023). (Overcoming) maternity bias in the workplace: A systematic review. *Journal of Management, 49*(1), 52-84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063221086243>
- Bergman, M. E., Gaskins, V. A., Allen, T., Cheung, H. K., Hebl, M., King, E. B., Sinclair, R. R., Siuta, R. L., Wolfe, C., & Zelin, A. I. (2023). The Dobbs Decision and the Future of Occupational Health in the US. *Occupational Health Science, 7*, 1-37. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41542-023-00143-1>
- Gabriel, A. S., Ladge, J. J., Little, L. M., MacGowan, R. L., & Stillwell, E. E. (2023). Sensemaking through the storm: How postpartum depression shapes personal work–family narratives. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0001125>
- Gabriel, A. S., Volpone, S. D., MacGowan, R. L., Butts, M. M., & Moran, C. M. (2020). When work and family blend together: Examining the daily experiences of breastfeeding mothers at work. *Academy of Management Journal, 63*(5), 1337-1369. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2017.1241>
- Gilbert, S. L., Dimoff, J. K., Brady, J. M., Macleod, R., & McPhee, T. (2023). Pregnancy loss: A qualitative exploration of an experience stigmatized in the workplace. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 142*, 103848. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2023.103848>
- Grandey, A. A., Gabriel, A. S., & King, E. B. (2020). Tackling taboo topics: A review of the three Ms in working women’s lives. *Journal of Management, 46*(1), 7-35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206319857144>
- Gatrell, C. J. (2013). Maternal body work: How women managers and professionals negotiate pregnancy and new motherhood at work. *Human Relations, 66*(5), 621-644. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872671246738>
- Hideg, I., Krstic, A., Trau, R. N. C., & Zarina, T. (2018). The unintended consequences of maternity leaves: How agency interventions mitigate the negative effects of longer legislated maternity leaves. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 103*(10), 1155-1164. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000327>

- Ladge, J. J., & Greenberg, D. N. (2015). Becoming a working mother: Managing identity and efficacy uncertainties during resocialization. *Human Resource Management, 54*(6), 977-998. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21651>
- Ladge, J. J., Humberd, B. K., Eddleston, K. A. (2018). Retaining professionally employed mothers: The importance of maternal confidence and workplace support to their intent to stay. *Human Resource Management, 57*(4), 883-900. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21889>
- Motro, D., Gabriel, A. S., & Ellis, A. P. (2019). Examining the effects of menstruation on women's helping behaviour in the workplace. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 92*(3), 695-706. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12258>
- Myors, B., Lievens, F., Schollaert, E., Van Hove, G., Cronshaw, S. F., Mladinic, A., et al. (2008). International perspective on the legal environment for selection. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice, 1*(2), 206–246. doi:10.1111/j.1754-9434.2008.00040.x
- Sohrab, S. G., & Basir, N. (2021, November 4). *Navigating work while undergoing fertility treatments*. Harvard Business Review Online. <https://hbr.org/2021/11/navigating-work-while-undergoing-fertility-treatments>
- Traylor, A. M., Ng, L. C., Corrington, A., Skorinko, J. L. M., & Hebl, M. R. (2020). Expanding research on working women more globally. *Journal of Social Issues, 76*(3), 744-772. doi:10.1111/josi.12395
- Verdonk, P., Bendien, E., & Appleman, Y. (2022). Menopause and work: A narrative literature review about menopause, work, and health. *Work, 72*(2), 483-496. DOI: 10.3233/WOR-205214