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**Skilled Migrant Women: Social Agents in Work-Life Balance**

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Abstract:

The aim of my PhD study is to develop a conceptual framework for the exploration of how skilled migrant women negotiate a work-life balance. There is little research which examines the pre and post migration narrative alongside work, home and life experiences of professional women. Recent migration studies have highlighted women’s imbalance of managing work and life post migration and propose a need to better understand a more diverse set of employee’s professional worlds. This study can add value in improving quality of life for skilled migrant women by providing negotiation strategies that support daily challenges and ensures improved integration of socio-cultural experiences in the work-home and personal life interface. Drawing on Archer’s morphogenetic approach my PhD research critically explores the day to day practices and negotiations of skilled migrant women in navigating the structural inequalities faced in their efforts to construct a work-life balance. By means of a qualitative and intersectional investigation with 29 diverse skilled migrant women based in London this research provides critical value in an individual, structural and institutional level. The analysis of biographical interviews advances research in this area by revealing significant challenges skilled migrant women face, agency of negotiating their environments and practical outcomes. The purpose of this presentation is to outline skilled migrant women’s structural and cultural challenges and to define the practical consequences of their migration trajectories while confronting inequalities posed for each challenge. These include, unattainable employment, lack of resources, increased domestic obligations, unreliable networks, reduced professional accreditation, developing new language skills, an imbalance to account for employer’s job requirements, unsteady career advancement, gender constraints, temporal constraints, adjustments to organizational culture, marginalization of labour market conditions and reduced time for leisure. This research greatly advances current understanding of intersectionality of skilled migrant women’s identities around work and life and contributes to practice and policy debates regarding support, ambition and quality of life for skilled migrant women.