2012 CAREER PATTERNS OF WOMEN IN LOGISTICS

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings from the sixteenth annual survey of Career Patterns of Women in Logistics. The purpose of the study was to collect information about the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP) female members. Specifically, we sought to obtain insight into the following questions:

What are the demographic profiles of female logistics executives?

What are the work environment profiles of the female logistics executives?

What are the career patterns of the female logistics executives?

What are the perspectives and attitudes of the female logistics executives?

What role has mentoring played in the development of the female logistics executives?

What management styles do the logistics/SCM executives utilize?

These questions are addressed following a brief explanation of the methodology of the study.

METHODOLOGY

Email addresses of 1119 current female members were obtained in June of 2012 from CSCMP. A questionnaire was designed and posted on a web site. Of these email addresses, 26 were undeliverable for a final sample of 1093. First these women received an email indicating the nature of the survey and asking them to visit a web site to complete the survey. A second email request was sent one week later and a third request four weeks later. We did not attempt mail contact with those whose email addresses were undeliverable. The results reported here are based on 185 usable responses, for a response rate of 16.9%.

The reader is cautioned to avoid generalizing the results of this survey to other women members of CSCMP or to women in the general practice areas of logistics or supply chain management. The reader should note that the most frequently stated responses are listed in several of the figures. The “other” category may at times be omitted to provide greater clarity for the major categories of responses.

WHAT ARE THE FEMALE LOGISTICS EXECUTIVES DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES?
Respondents were asked about the extent of their experience in the logistics field and membership in CSCMP. Fifty three percent (53%) of respondents have been members of CSCMP for three or fewer years, while seventeen percent (17%) have been members for twelve or more years as shown in Figure 1. Thirty five percent of the respondents (35%) have attended at least one local roundtable meeting in the past year, while 51% indicated that they have not attended any local meetings. (See Figure 2.)

Respondents were also asked their ages, marital status, and levels of education. Over half of respondents are thirty-one to fifty years old (59%). Fifteen percent (15%) are thirty or under, while many (26%) are over fifty. (See Figure 3.) The average age of the respondents is 43 years. Figure 4 indicates that over two-thirds (71%) of the respondents are married. Twenty percent (20%) are single women who have never married and nine percent (9%) are divorced, in partnership, or not specified. Fifty-five percent of the respondents (55%) felt it was somewhat difficult or very difficult to balance a career and family. This is the highest percentage in several years. In 2005, 53% considered it difficult or very difficult to balance work and family. In between, the numbers have ranged from 39% last year to 49% in 2008. This may be the result of a smaller response pool this year or may, in fact, reflect more challenging work and home environments. Twenty-two percent (22%) felt it was not difficult at all or not too difficult, down from 24% in 2011. The balance still falls on more difficult rather than less difficult (55% vs. 22%). Twenty three percent (23%) of respondents indicated moderate difficulty. (See Figure 5.)

The highest degrees attained for most respondents are the undergraduate level (46.0%) and the graduate level (44.5%), with 7.9% of all respondents having additional certifications. The MBA is the most frequent graduate degree, although other masters and doctorates are also represented as the highest degrees. Almost a third (30.2%) of respondents have a degree or concentration in logistics at either the undergraduate or graduate levels. (See Figure 6.) Note: These figures should not be directly compared with percentages in other recent reports as counting of multiple degrees/certifications for the same person may have occurred that was rectified in the 2010 report. Also, those with certifications were previously included in the cumulative percentages. Respondents could check all choices in order to count certifications as well as degrees.

WHAT ARE THE WORK ENVIRONMENT PROFILES OF THE FEMALE LOGISTICS EXECUTIVES?

Respondents were asked several questions about their work environments, including current title and responsibilities and salary. Respondents tend to be in the upper management levels as indicated in Figure 7. The largest category is directors (29.3%), followed by managers (28.8%), and vice presidents (16.3%). This is the second year where directors and managers were close and the second time that there were slightly more directors than managers. Four percent (4.3%) are at the head of their organizations and seven percent (7.1%) indicated that they are analysts. The “Other” category primarily consisted of those involved in education and training and with other senior or middle management titles. The reader is again cautioned about generalizing results. This is a biased sample since CSCMP is the premier logistics and supply chain
management (SCM) organization and our respondents may not represent the general population of women in logistics or SCM.

The responsibilities of the respondents varied among primarily direct, advisory, and a combination of the two. Figure 8 indicates that twenty two percent (22%) have direct responsibility for logistics functions, thirty percent (30%) have advisory responsibility, and forty-eight percent (48%) indicated that they have both direct and advisory logistics responsibilities.

About forty-five percent (44.6%) of the logistics activities in respondents’ companies are structured as a combination of divisional and centralized organizations. However, 19.6% had a centralized logistics staff, 10.7% had logistics housed in each division, and six percent (6%) had a separate logistics division as indicated in Figure 9. Some respondents (7.1%) indicated that their whole firm performed logistics activities or provided other services. The other category included logistics services firms, including consultants, and other forms of organization as viewed by the respondents.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of those responding had a female supervisor and 13% had a female for their immediate supervisor’s supervisor. The percent of respondents indicating a female supervisor was stable with 2011 at 22% but higher compared with 15% and 16% for 2009 and 2010, respectively. Results are similar for the percent of females as the supervisor’s supervisor at 10%, 9%, and 15% for 2009, 2010 and 2011, respectively.

The salary levels reported in Figure 10 were divided into quartiles. This was done to give the reader a sense of the ranges for the title categories of vice-president, director, manager, and analyst. The median is reported which is the middle salary for the quartile. When interpreting the salary levels, the reader should consider that respondents are from varying industries, company sizes, and regions of the world. For example, the median salaries for managers ranged from $69,000 in the first quartile to $142,500 in the fourth quartile. Note: There must be at least three respondents per quartile in order to preserve anonymity for a title to be reported.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT AND FUTURE CAREER PATTERNS OF THE FEMALE LOGISTICS EXECUTIVES?

Female executives responding to the survey tend to have a participative management style (48.4%), while about one third felt that they have a combination of participative and directive management styles (31.7%), and twenty percent (20%) felt that their management styles tend to be directive. (See Figure 11.) The respondents are much more likely (66.6%) to facilitate decision-making than to directly tell subordinates what to do (6.1%), while twenty seven point two percent (27.2%) felt they use a combination of approaches. (See Figure 12.) This is somewhat similar to 2011 (46%, 3%, 51%), 2010 (47%, 6%, 47%), and 2009 (51%, 3%, 46%).

Most respondents (49%) take the lead, while (33%) employ a combination of taking the lead and building consensus and eighteen percent (18%) decide primarily by consensus. (See Figure 13.) While respondents are much less likely to tell subordinates what to do, they do take the lead in
accomplishing tasks, as noted above. The executives characterized their overall firm management environments as centralized (36%), decentralized (15%), and a combination (49%) of centralized and decentralized, as shown in Figure 14. These percentages are rather consistent with 2011 (33%, 22%, 45%), 2010 (33%, 23%, 44%) and similar to 2009 (39%, 19%, 42%).

WHAT ARE THE PERSPECTIVES AND ATTITUDES OF THE FEMALE LOGISTICS EXECUTIVES?

Most respondents (77%) are satisfied with their current positions as shown in Figure 15, this is higher than 2011 (70.4%) and 2010 (70%), but consistent with 2009 (77%). They feel the opportunities for building a sound professional career in logistics are better (86%) today than ever before, in the range of 2011 (88%), 2010 (86.2%) and 2009 (84%). (See Figure 16.)

The aspect of being a logistics professional that the respondents liked best is that it is fast paced, changing environment (30.3%) and that the work is challenging (29.2%). (See Figure 17.) Working in a fast paced, changing environment and having a challenging career have been the top two selections since 2009. In 2008, a challenging career was only selected by 7% of respondents. Lack of senior management understanding of logistics was the primary (36%) aspect cited that they liked least and has held this ranking for many of the years since this study was undertaken. (See Figure 18.) The other category contained a variety of different responses with no central themes. For both questions, respondents could only select one answer.

The respondents felt that several attributes contributed to their success and they could check as many as were applicable. These included a mix of leadership ability and management skills involving interpersonal skills and personal traits, as well as job-related analytical skills. Dedication, hard work, and determination ranked first in number of mentions, the same as 2011, 2010 and 2008, although it was cited sixth of eight choices in 2009. Good communication, strong interpersonal skills, understanding the big picture, leadership skills, and analytical ability are all important. Having a good education in logistics or operations and having a mentor were also a plus. (See Figure 19.) Respondents either agreed or strongly agreed (92%) that future logistics requirements will include a high level of information/technology skills. (See Figure 20.)

WHAT ROLE HAS MENTORING PLAYED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FEMALE LOGISTICS EXECUTIVE?

Most respondents (75%) reported that they have had a mentor at some point in their careers, the same as 75% in 2011, down slightly from 77% in 2010 and 80% in 2009. (See Figure 21.) Sixty seven percent of those responding (67%) have had only male mentors, while thirty three percent (33%) had only female mentors, as shown in Figure 22. Thirty nine percent (39%) of these mentors were immediate supervisors, while sixty one percent (61%) were some other individual. (See Figure 23.) The mentors provided assistance in the form of guidance, advice, constructive criticism, moral support, understanding politics, networking, and help finding a job. (See Figure 24.)
Seventy four percent (74%) of female logistics or SCM executives have been mentors to others. (See Figure 25.) This is slightly up from 2011 (73%) and 2010 (70%) but still down from 2009 (77%). Forty five percent (45%) have been mentors two to three times, followed by 26% being mentors four to six times. (See Figure 26.)

**WHAT MANAGEMENT STYLES DO THE FEMALE LOGISTICS/SCM EXECUTIVES UTILIZE?**

This year we looked at management styles more in-depth than the few questions asked in previous years elsewhere in the survey and reported in Figures 11-14. One aspect considered was whether the work environment is more individualistic or group-oriented (the literature uses collectivist). Figures 27 and 28 contain the responses to these questions. In general, respondents tend to agree or strongly agree with the individualistic scale items where individual performance is rewarded. They also tend to agree with the collectivistic statements but do not strongly agree with them. In addition, many disagree with these statements, which include treating employees like members of the family and taking care of their overall welfare. Several also disagreed that the company keeps them informed about major decisions affecting the success of the company.

Aspects of management decision-making style were investigated. Each aspect had five specific statements associated with the kinds of decision-making style. Figure 29 indicates that most respondents agree or strongly agree that they are rational, careful, and systematic in how they reach decisions and consider the options in the decision process. Managers are more mixed in their responses to making decisions that feel right, such as trusting their intuition, as displayed in Figure 30. However, it appears that the rational decision would win over intuition for many respondents. Managers generally agreed that they consult others when making important decisions, although they disagreed about having someone steer them in a particular direction. (See Figure 31.)

Logistics and supply chain managers were quite clear that they do not avoid important decisions (Figure 32). They do not tend to make snap, spur of the moment, or impulsive decisions but will make quick decisions, as shown in Figure 33. Logistics and SCM managers operate in a real-time, fast moving environment and have to make quick decisions at times; however, they are as measured as possible in the process.

**CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

The female logistics executives are well educated, with as many achieving graduate degrees as undergraduate degrees. More than one quarter of respondents have degrees in logistics or SCM at the undergraduate or graduate levels. They attribute their success to a number of factors that are a combination of interpersonal skills and analytical skills needed for their positions. The management style tends to facilitate decision-making but can also be a combination of
facilitation and directing others what to do. They are willing to take the lead to accomplish tasks and goals.

Female executives are willing to put forth the effort needed to succeed in the logistics and supply chain management fields. They do have to make work and life balancing decisions. They experience a considerable amount of individualism in their environments but there is also some view that the organization does care about them. They are rational decision makers who do consider intuition and may have to make quick decisions in the fast-paced world of logistics and SCM.
Figure 1  
Length of CSCMP membership

- More than 12 Years: 17%
- 8 to 12 Years: 12%
- 4 to 7 Years: 18%
- 0 to 3 Years: 53%

Figure 2  
Number of Meetings Attended

- 0 Meetings: 51%
- 1 to 3 Meetings: 35%
- 4 to 6 Meetings: 8%
- More than 6 Meetings: 6%
- 0 Meetings: 51%
Figure 3
Age of CSCMP Members

Figure 4
Marital Status

- Married: 71%
- Single (Never Married): 20%
- Divorced, not specified/other: 9%
Figure 5
Balancing Career and Family

- Very Difficult: 16%
- Somewhat Difficult: 39%
- Moderate: 23%
- Not Too Difficult: 15%
- Not Difficult At All: 7%

Figure 6
Educational Background

- Ph.D. with Logistics Major/Minor: 3.4%
- Ph.D.: 3.0%
- Master's Degree with Logistics Major/Minor: 4.5%
- Master's Degree: 10.9%
- MBA with Logistics Major/Minor: 5.3%
- MBA: 17.4%
- Undergraduate with Logistics Major/Minor: 5.3%
- Undergraduate: 31.3%
- Some College with Logistics Major/Minor: 0.4%
- Some College: 6.4%
- High School with Logistics Major/Minor: 0.4%
- High School: 0.4%
Figure 7
Current Position

- President: 4.3%
- Vice President: 16.3%
- Director: 29.3%
- Manager: 28.8%
- Supervisor: 1.1%
- Analyst: 7.1%
- Other: 13.0%

Figure 8
Position Responsibility

- Direct: 22%
- Mixture: 48%
- Advisory: 30%
Figure 9
Firm's Organization of Logistics Activities

- Combination of Centralized/Division Activities: 44.6%
- Centralized Logistics Staff: 19.6%
- Part of Each Corporate Division: 10.7%
- Separate Logistics Firm: 7.1%
- Separate Logistics Division: 6.0%
- Other: 11.9%

Figure 10
Salary Profile

- Vice President
  - 4th Quartile: $377,500
  - 3rd Quartile: $257,500
  - 2nd Quartile: $165,000
  - 1st Quartile: $101,500
- Director
  - 4th Quartile: $235,000
  - 3rd Quartile: $162,500
  - 2nd Quartile: $135,000
  - 1st Quartile: $95,000
- Manager
  - 4th Quartile: $142,500
  - 3rd Quartile: $103,500
  - 2nd Quartile: $91,500
  - 1st Quartile: $69,000
- Analyst
  - 4th Quartile: $102,000
  - 3rd Quartile: $82,000
  - 2nd Quartile: $63,000
  - 1st Quartile: $52,000
Figure 11
Management Style Directive vs Participative

Figure 12
Management Style
Tell Subordinates What to Do Vs. Facilitate Decision-Making
Figure 13
Management Style
Taking the Lead vs. Decide by Consensus

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Figure 14
Management Style of Firm
Centralized vs. Decentralized

- 中央化 (Centralized): 36%
- 分散化 (Decentralized): 15%
- 混合 (Mixture): 49%
Figure 15
I am generally satisfied with my current position.

Strongly Disagree: 2%
Disagree: 13%
No Opinion: 8%
Agree: 53%
Strongly Agree: 24%

Figure 16
The opportunities for building a sound professional career in logistics are better today than ever before.

Strongly Disagree: 0%
Disagree: 3%
No Opinion: 11%
Agree: 57%
Strongly Agree: 29%
Figure 17
What is Liked Best about Being a Logistics Professional

- Fast paced, changing environment: 30.3%
- Challenging: 29.2%
- Making a difference: 14.6%
- Many different areas of expertise utilized: 12.4%
- Other functional interactions: 6.5%
- Customer contact: 3.8%
- The chance to teach & train and to be taught: 2.2%
- Other: 1.1%

Figure 18
What is Liked Least about Being a Logistics Professional

- Lack of senior management understanding of logistics: 36%
- Stress/pressure/demanding: 21%
- Hard to keep up with constant changes: 18%
- Other: 14%
- Long hours: 11%

Percentage of Responses
Figure 19
Characteristics that Contributed Most to Success

- Dedication, hard work, determination: 133
- Good communication: 115
- Strong inter-personal skills: 114
- Big picture understanding ability: 110
- Leadership, management skills: 107
- Analytical ability: 105
- Good education in logistics/operations: 54
- Having a mentor: 42
- Other: 5

Number of Respondents

Figure 20
Future logistics requirements will include a high level of information/technology skills

- Strongly Agree: 48%
- Agree: 44%
- No Opinion: 4%
- Disagree: 4%
- Strongly Disagree: 0%
Figure 21
Have you had a Mentor?

Yes
75%

No
25%

Figure 22
Gender of the Mentor

Male
67%

Female
33%
Figure 23
Mentor Type

Immediate Supervisor 39%
Other 61%

Figure 24
Help Provided by Mentors

8
Helped find a job
23
Helped with networking, helped "learn the ropes"
75
Helped deal with and understand politics
93
Provided moral support, encouragement
97
Provided constructive criticism
99
Gave advice on how to handle situations
106
Offered guidance
121

Figure 25
Have you been a Mentor to anyone?

Yes 74%
No 26%

Figure 26
How many times have you been a Mentor?

2 to 3 times 45%
4 to 6 times 26%
1 time 15%
more than 6 times 14%
Figure 27
Individualistic Work Environment

- Individuals who stand out in a high performing group are recognized
- Employees value independence in their job.
- People with good ideas make sure management knows the idea was theirs.
- Employees' ability to think for themselves is valued.
- Competition between employees is accepted.
- Each worker is encouraged to realize his or her own unique potential.

Figure 28
Collectivistic Work Environment

- Management and supervisors are protective of and generous to loyal workers.
- Decisions about changes in work methods are taken jointly by supervisors and employees.
- Employees are taken care of like members of a family.
- Everyone shares responsibility for the organizations' failures as well as success.
- Regardless of hierarchical level, employees take each other's views into consideration.
- Once someone is hired, the organization takes care of that person's overall welfare.
- Everyone is kept informed about major decisions that affect the success of the company.
Figure 29
Rational Decision Making

- I double-check my information sources to be sure I have the right facts before making decisions.
- I make decisions in a logical and systematic way.
- My decision-making requires careful thought.
- When making a decision, I consider various options in terms of a specific goal.
- I usually have a rational basis for making decisions.

Figure 30
Intuitive Decision Making

- When making a decision, I rely upon my instincts.
- When I make decisions, I tend to rely on my intuition.
- I generally make decisions that feel right to me.
- When I make a decision, it is more important for me to feel the decision is right than to have a rational reason for it.
- When I make a decision, I trust my inner feelings and reactions.
Figure 31
Dependent Decision Making

- I often need the assistance of other people when making important decisions.
- I rarely make important decisions without consulting other people.
- If I have the support of others, it is easier for me to make important decisions.
- I use the advice of other people in making my important decisions.
- I like to have someone to steer me in the right direction when I am faced with important decisions.

Figure 32
Avoidant Decision Making

- I avoid making important decisions until the pressure is on.
- I postpone decision making whenever possible.
- I often procrastinate when it comes to making important decisions.
- I generally make important decisions at the last minute.
- I put off making many decisions because thinking about them makes me uneasy.
Figure 33
Spontaneous Decision Making

- I generally make snap decisions.
- I often make decisions on the spur of the moment.
- I make quick decisions.
- I often make impulsive decisions.
- When making decisions, I do what seems natural at the moment.