

# ‘No tits in the pits!’ An exploratory analysis of the challenges and coping mechanisms experienced by women decision makers in motorsports in the United States



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## *Abstract*

**Background:** This study explored the lived experiences of women who broke the glass ceiling and are decision makers in the motorsports industry in the United States.

**Purpose:** The purpose was to enlighten the experiences of women who broke the glass ceiling in this unexplored and male-dominated industry.

**Methods:** The challenges women encounter in their careers in motorsports, along with the mechanisms they employed to navigate those, were assessed via in-depth semi-structured interview with sixteen participants. The data collected was then analyzed via a constant comparison thematic analysis. Challenges and coping mechanisms were classified according to the four levels (i.e., individual, interpersonal, organizational, and societal) in the analytic framework proposed by Ragins and Sundstrom (1989), offering a motorsport-specific model.

**Results:** Findings illuminated that challenges at the societal and individual levels were the most prominent. Coping mechanisms used to navigate these challenges were described as informal, mainly concentrated at the interpersonal and individual levels, and particular to motorsports, i.e., racing community and the racing lifestyle.

**Conclusions:** The present findings prompted discussions about the experiences of women and gender

issues on the management side of sports with a focus on motorsports, which is an industry that has received very limited academic attention. Contributions are therefore made to literature concerning women on the management side of sports, motorsports, and male-dominated fields.

***Keywords: motorsport, women in sport management, gender issues in sport***

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## 1. Introduction

Although changing landscapes, legal mandates, social pressure and movements, and newer generations demand more focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion in sports (Cunningham et al., 2021), the management side of the industry has not seen substantial change. Burton (2015) offered a comprehensive review on topics related to women in sports and echoed that ‘despite increased participation opportunities for girls and women in sport, they are underrepresented in leadership positions at all levels of sport’ (p. 155). To illustrate, according to the 2019-2020 Racial and Gender Reports led by The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES), women do not hold any CEO or President positions in the Major League Baseball (MLB) or Major League Soccer (MLS), they represent only 9.1% of these roles in the National Football League (NFL), 12.5% in the National Basketball Association (NBA), and 58.3% in the Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA). These figures support that women remain underrepresented in important decision-making roles in sports, and the reality remains unchanged since Burton’s review (see Wells, 2021 for a more recent analysis).

Despite the benefits of welcoming diversity on the management side of sport organizations (Cunningham & Fink, 2006; Fink et al., 2001, 2003; Wicker et al., 2012, 2020), the underrepresentation of women and the poor treatment they receive when in top levels (compared to men) are still realities (Cosentino et al., 2021; Cunningham & Sagas, 2008; Weight et al., 2021;

Wells, 2021). Over 35 years ago, Bryson (1987) investigated the effect of sport on women’s lives across the globe and noted that ‘sport is a powerful institution through which male hegemony is constructed and reconstructed and it is only through understanding and confronting these processes that we can hope to break this domination’ (p. 349). This proposition still holds true and, due to its social relevance beyond the field, calls for attention (Fink, 2008).

Sport organizations’ culture favours men (Weight et al., 2021), and identifying deterring attitudes towards minorities can be challenging given that discriminatory practices tend to be hidden in traditional structures and systems (Katz, et al., 2018). For instance, gender stereotypes are deemed to be the one of the most pertinent challenges hindering women’s professional advancement due to its effect across levels (Heilman, 2012; Peus et al., 2015). DiTomaso (2015) added that deterring attitudes stemming from stereotypes, such as bias and discrimination, are hard to spot given that they tend to be hidden in organizational policies and structures. Nonetheless, novel methods to examine the lived experiences of minorities are needed.

Besides, most studies on gender issues in sport management have focused on-the-field disparities, largely ignoring the management side (Cosentino et al., 2021; Welty Peachey et al., 2015). Yet experiences of leaders on the field (e.g., coaches) do not reflect the experiences of managers on the business side of sports (Weight et al., 2021). For instance, coaches are concerned with on-the-

field decisions and performance, whereas managers are responsible for off-the field decisions concerned with organizational performance.

Similarly, college athletics have been heavily emphasized in previous literature, underlying the experiences of coaches, athletic directors, and administrators (e.g., Burton, 2015; Burton & Leberman, 2017; Hancock et al., 2018; Norman, et al., 2018; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007; Stangl & Kane, 1991; Taylor & Wells, 2017; Wells et al., 2021). The experiences of decision makers and leaders vary by sport and level, which means they do not translate to other contexts, such as pro sports or motorsports (Cunningham & Sagas, 2008); thus, calling for explorations in novel contexts beyond college athletics (e.g., Cosentino et al., 2021; Hindman & Walker, 2021). In sum, there is a need for more investigations on the management side of sports beyond college athletics that emphasize the experience of minorities given the benefits for organizations and the industry that stem from gender diversity in those roles (Cunningham & Fink, 2006; Cunningham & Melton, 2011; Fink et al., 2001, 2003).

The present study aimed at shedding light on the experiences of women in the highly unexplored male-dominated industry of motorsports (Messner, 2002). The interest in this field emerged, beyond the researcher's interest and background, because several pro teams do not have any women in senior management roles (Kochanek et al., 2021). Although gender diversity data in this industry is scarce, ESPN recently surveyed Formula 1 teams. Among the few teams that provided data on diversity in senior roles,

Mercedes, which is the largest team in the series, has 117 female (of 1000) employees, of which 31% are in senior management (Lewis, 2021).

Glass and Cook (2016) suggested that 'by identifying challenges that limit female leaders' success we can inform policy and practice in ways that limit bias and support women's mobility and success' (p. 52). Accordingly, the purpose of the study was to identify the challenges women encountered throughout their careers on the management side of motorsports, and the coping mechanisms they used to navigate and overcome those. By investigating the experiences of women who broke the glass ceiling and are decision makers, e.g., managers and owners (Frisch, 2011; Rogers & Blenko, 2006; Stamarzski & Son Hing, 2015) in U.S. motorsports, this study contributes to literature on this previously almost invisible population and context. Besides, few studies across disciplines have had access to women who broke the glass ceiling and are in top management roles.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

Fink (2008) suggested that male hegemony is constructed and reconstructed through sports (p. 146), highlighting that gendered experiences are faced at multiple and across levels (Shaw & Frisby 2006). Ragins and Sundstrom (1989) advanced an analytical framework with four levels (i.e., societal, organizational, interpersonal, and individual), which is a useful tool to analyze the multiple factors women encounter in their career paths towards top management roles. The present study utilized the

framework and attended a call for multi-level analyses on the management side of sports (Burton, 2015; Welty Peachy et al., 2015).

### 3. Method

Although there is extensive academic work analyzing women in management, less is known about the experiences of women who passed beyond the glass ceiling and reached top roles (Glass & Cook, 2016). The numerous challenges women face in the workplace especially in male dominated fields have been associated to an obstacle course (Kanter, 1977), or a career labyrinth (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Thus, women who achieve top roles represent exceptional cases of survivors (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989).

Within male dominated fields, the experiences of women on the management side of motorsports are largely inexistent in academic literature (Matthews & Pike, 2016). The main purpose of the present study was therefore to fill this gap by examining the lived experiences of women who are decision makers in motorsports in the United States. Additionally, offer results that represent a motorsport-specific model. For that purpose, two main research questions guided the research process:

RQ1: What are the main challenges women encounter on the management side of motorsports in the United States?

RQ1.1: How do women navigate and overcome these challenges?

#### *Research Approach*

Given the aim to draw a comprehensive picture from the experiences of an unexplored population, a qualitative approach was preferred.

The findings of the present study aimed to reflect participants' descriptions of their own lived experiences. Lived experiences are rooted in personal stories, backgrounds, motivations, and emotions, which were shared by participants and then reconstructed, yet never fully understood, by the researcher (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). This approach agrees with constructivism, when research findings are reproduced by the researcher but anchored on participants' views.

The chosen approach attended a call for studies portraying the experiences of underrepresented groups in sport management (Singer et al., 2019; Slack, 1996; Olafson, 1990), while paralleling methods previously used to assess women's experiences on the management side of sports (e.g., Hovden, 2010). Carton and Rosette (2011) underlined the importance of individualizing information through qualitative approaches to minimize the application of stereotypes. By emphasizing lived experiences, individual motivations and accomplishments are highlighted, which are key when reviewing stories of minorities.

A phenomenological research design was followed (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994) to account for the context while investigating women's careers (Powell & Maniero, 1992). The context of motorsports in the United States set the boundary for the study. The nuances of the industry were considered in the research design and the methods chosen. In particular, how singularities of the industry may affect the experiences of women. This industry and its community present several unique factors that deserved consideration (Anderson, 2018).

**Context.** Motorsports include a wide range of competitive sporting events that involve the use of motorized vehicles (e.g., auto and motorcycle racing). The definition extends to the entire racing industry, such as to include the engineering and service businesses that support racing (Cobbs & Hylton, 2012). Motorsports are amongst the largest types of sports in the United States and internationally (Ross et al., 2009). The most famous and popular motorsports globally are auto racing competitions promoted through different series, e.g., Formula 1 and NASCAR (Cobbs & Hylton, 2012; Pflugfelder, 2009).

#### *Data Collection*

Interviews were conducted over a three-week period by the researcher herself and lasted between 45-75min. The timing of the data collection coincided with an extremely busy time in the racing season: the Indy 500 2022. This event limited the time participants had for meetings and made the recruitment of participants harder. All interviews, including the two pilot interviews to test the efficacy of the interview protocol, were conducted via the online software Zoom given time and travel constraints. The platform was chosen given its user-friendliness, accessible interface, cost- and time-effectiveness, data and security management options

(Archibald et al., 2019; Gray et al., 2020).

#### *Participants*

The sample comprised women who held roles with decision-making power, such as managers, directors, and owners, in U.S. motorsports. Participants worked across different types of organizations, e.g., teams, sanctioning bodies, and tracks, and among different racing series, e.g., IndyCar, NASCAR. Recruiting participants that fulfilled all criteria was challenging given the small number of women on the management side of U.S. motorsports. Recruitment started with connections of the researcher, followed by snowball sampling (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participants were sixteen of the highest-ranking women on the management side of motorsports in the United States, with the average of twenty-two years of work experience in the field. These women were prominent names in the industry and held key decision-making roles.

Detailed information about participants is found in Table 1. Some participants did not disclose their exact roles because of the sensitive information shared (e.g., sexual harassment) given their notoriety in the field and that most people know each other in motorsports. Besides, participants felt they would be easily identified because of the sparse number of female decision makers in the industry.

Table 1

*Participants*

<b>Partici- pant</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>	<b># of Kids</b>	<b>Former driver</b>	<b>Racing family</b>	<b>Highest Degree</b>	<b>Years in motor- sports</b>	<b>Current Role</b>	<b>Interview duration (min)</b>
Ayla	51	Divorced	1	No	No (early intro)	Associate Business	22	Director Busi- ness Develop- ment	62
Bia	62	Sepa- rated	1	No	No (early intro)	Masters in Kinesiol- ogy	30	CE	45
Diana	48	Single	0	No	No (early intro)	MBA	12	Upper Manage- ment	45
Ella	42	Single	0	No	No (early intro)	BA Psy- chology	13	VP, Business Development	55
Gianna	55	Single	1	No	No (early intro)	BAS	35	Sponsorship Consultant	52
Heidi	44	Married	1	No	Yes	Doctorate	25	Director of Mar- keting	56
Joy	52	Married	4	No	No	BSBA	13	CFO and Co- owner	48
Kia	42	Divorced	3	No	Yes	Bachelors	2	President and founder	45
Lola	46	Married	2	Hobby	Yes	BBA Mar- keting	25	Owner/President	60
Maria	47	Married	0	Yes	Yes	BA Com- munica- tions	30	COO	45
Nina	32	Single	0	No	No	BS Sports Manage- ment	10	Director, Part- nership Market- ing	60
Paige	44	Single	0	No	No	BS	21	President/VP	45
Rosie	60	Single	0	No	Yes	Incomplete college	40	CEO	60
Sofia	65	Widow	1	Yes	No (early intro)	Incomplete college	51	Mid/Upper Man- agement	60
Yara	36	Married	0	No	Yes	Bachelor of Arts	16	VP, Events Op- eration	75
Zaya	52	Married	6	No	No (early intro)	BBA	7	Product Man- ager	60



After sixteen participants had been interviewed, interviews transcribed verbatim [i.e., to ensure that participant's intended language and speech was preserved (Giorgi, 2009)], and the data analyzed, no new themes were emerging; thus, it was determined that no new participants were needed. The researcher then had a peer-debriefing session with a more experienced qualitative researcher, and together it was concluded that saturation of information had been reached as major categories and themes were well-supported and developed, and all the research questions proposed had been fully addressed by the data collected (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

#### 4. Data Analysis

##### *Coding*

Direct quotes from interviews (i.e., in vivo codes), sentiments and emotions (i.e., descriptive codes), attendant to the research questions were gathered. Coding helped the researcher make sense of the data collected and select relevant information from interviews to answer the research questions in the data analysis (Creswell, 2012). While priori codes were not forced into the analysis, ideas from previous studies helped guide the themes. Once all interviews had been coded, patterns that emerged across interviews were combined into higher order themes that answered the research questions (Percy et al., 2015).

##### *Thematic Analysis*

A thematic analysis with constant comparison, as suggested by Percy et al. (2015), was followed. This procedure is iterative and the researcher 'goes back and forth between sections to rethink, revise, and sometimes recast and rewrite' patterns (Charmaz, 2014, p. 285). The present findings are therefore true to participants' voices and experiences since themes emerged from the data collected and represent patterns across interviews that depict participants' descriptions of their own lived experiences (Boyatzis, 1998).

##### *Themes RQ1*

Since challenges that women face in the workplace have been vastly researched in parent disciplines (e.g., management and psychology), the researcher evaluated whether challenges identified aligned with previous studies. For instance, if a pattern evidenced the enactment of stereotypes, the theme was named after this concept, and so on. Notably, all challenges identified aligned with previous research.

To ensure readability of findings, the concepts and ideas used to cluster themes and delimit emergent patterns were defined according to previous literature. Themes that answered both research questions were classified across the levels offered in the framework in Ragins and Sundstrom (1989) and are summarized in Figure 1. This structure enhances the readability of findings and allows present findings to be compared and associated with results from previous studies.



### *Sub-themes RQ1.1*

The sub-themes that answered RQ1.1 emerged as informal mechanisms, similar to Sarathchandra et al., 2018. Given the lack of research on coping mechanisms that women benefit from in the workplace, these factors were broadly defined, and pre-determined definitions were not used. Several of these factors were described as particular to motorsports as well, e.g., the community in racing, concepts yet to be explored in academic research.

**Positionality.** The positionality of the researcher as a research and interpretation tool is acknowledged, such as her role in co-constructing stories during data collection and analysis, her influence in the research process and how she was influenced by it (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Both the context and the topic chosen for the research came from the author's personal interest and industry connections in motorsports. The author grew up in a family with a professional motocross athlete, and she identifies as a woman interested in investigating gender issues in sport management and foster gender diversity in the industry. Participants knew that she could comprehend the lingo and relate to their stories, such as when they described experiences at the racetrack or the community. Furthermore, she is Latina, which echoes her interest in producing knowledge through voices of underrepresented groups via qualitative approaches.

**Trustworthiness.** The validation of a qualitative study is a process that attempts to reach accuracy and trustworthiness of findings. Trustworthiness is concerned with the acceptability and usefulness of these findings (Nowell et al., 2017). Several steps were followed to ensure trustworthiness, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

## **5. Results**

The purpose of the study was to identify the challenges women who are in decision-making positions faced throughout their careers in motorsports (RQ1), in addition to uncovering how they navigated and overcame these challenges (RQ2). Building upon the research questions proposed, an interview protocol was developed, and sixteen women were interviewed. The results of the thematic analysis are comprehensively discussed and presented in a contextualized manner under the discussion section. Moreover, additional supporting quotes from interviews are found in Table 2.

Figure 1 summarizes the findings in a motorsport-specific model. Challenges (identified by a '-') and coping mechanisms (identified by a '+') are classified amongst the levels in the analytical framework from Ragins and Sundstrom (1989). The next section suggests how these factors relate to previous studies, and how some of those challenges and coping mechanisms manifest differently in sports and motorsports.

<b>Societal</b> –Gender stereotypes –Sexism –Unconscious bias –Hegemonic masculinity –Lack-of-fit  + Societal wave of change	<b>Organizational</b> –Token status –Glass cliff  + Organizations that value DEI
<b>Interpersonal</b> –Old Boys Club –Queen Bee  + Community of women in motorsports + Role models + Allyship (men and women) + Mentors + Support systems + Social skills	<b>Individual</b> –Work-life balance –Motherhood –Impostor phenomenon  + Type A personalities (overachievers) + Well-rounded portfolio + Separating personal and professional lives + Confidence building through professional maturity + Reframe challenge as positive + Competing in the sport + Clear communication without confrontation + Be part of the change you want to see + Learn to speak the language + Intrinsic motivation + It can be a “fit” rather than a balance + Take risks

**Figure 1.** Challenges (identified by ‘-’) and coping mechanisms (identified by ‘+’) women face on the management side of U.S. motorsports

## 6. Discussion

Findings evidenced that most challenges women face on the management side of motorsports were at the societal and individual levels. Most challenges resulted from or were the enactment of gender stereotypes, agreeing with previous studies. Results aligned with previous research that concentrated on the increased challenges women face in male-dominated fields as well (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014) as well. Some examples of increased challenges paralleled in this study were the lack of mentors and development opportunities (Campuzano, 2019); scarce female role models and gender norms (Blickenstaff, 2005); sexism (Chamberlain et al., 2008); unconscious bias (Bartlett, 2009); and male hegemony (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

*Gender Stereotypes*

The most supported challenges in this study were associated with gender stereotypes and a perceived lack-of-fit between women and motorsports, agreeing with previous studies from parent disciplines (e.g., Eagly, 1987; Heilman, 2001, 2012; Koenig et al., 2011). Participants felt that they struggled to build their reputation given that they needed to prove themselves much more than men to be perceived for their individual skills, gain space, be acknowledged in meetings, and have their ideas heard. Kia described this idea by saying that,

There were always whispers and rumors, and jokes about a woman's capability. [...] There are always going to be people who think that women aren't smart enough, that they're not fast enough, that they're not savvy enough, that they don't understand cars, or that the only reason

they're into this is because their dad did this, or something like that. This idea concurs with previous authors who advanced that women are constantly questioned in fields where they are a minority, especially in the beginning of their careers (Beilock, 2019). Gender stereotypes result in unaligned expectations between women's skills and what is perceived as needed in management roles too; hence, they face a double standard (Foschi, 1996). Gendered expectations negatively impact beliefs about women's capabilities, resulting in biased and limited opportunities for them (Heilman, 2012; Hentschel et al., 2019). Limited opportunities in turn result in women's lower human capital compared to men (Lyness & Heilman, 2006). Given that their abilities were questioned, opportunities and tasks for women were described as very limited in motorsports. For instance, one participant indicated that she left the industry at one point given that she was constantly passed on for opportunities that were given to men less qualified than her. These unequal opportunities (DiTomaso, 2015) maintain and are maintained by the status quo (i.e., men's higher status) in motorsports, restricting opportunities and the career growth of women (Katz, et al., 2018; Walker & Bopp, 2010).

Challenges for women in motorsports go beyond the need to prove their abilities, they need to learn to enact masculine norms of attitudes to be heard (McIlwee and Robinson, 1992 cited by Dryburgh, 1999). To illustrate, one participant said that she had to learn to lean on masculine energy to have her ideas heard. Learning to read the room and be able to work and be confident in environments where

women are a minority, were crucial success factors in the industry. For instance, knowing the lingo and the ‘nuts and bolts’ of motorsports were described as crucial.

There is a perceived lack-of-fit between feminine traits and racing, where stereotypically masculine traits are considered the norm, e.g., aggressiveness, toughness, competitiveness (Bligh & Kohles, 2008; Heilman, 2001). For that reason, participants indicated that they notice more men leaning towards careers in motorsports than women. Some participants believe that this happens because men are socialized to be competitive and risk-takers. Hence, these masculine traits are perceived to be a better fit for motorsports than women’s traits. Heilman (2001) described prescriptive biases as expected behaviors for environments, such as the expectation to be emotionally tough to fit motorsports. Contrary, showing emotions was described as a weakness. Lola said that ‘if I’m gonna cry over a situation, or whatever, I try to make sure I’m in my car or somewhere that I’m not letting my emotions get the best of me.’ Showing emotions in public was described as unacceptable and repressed due to the negative perception that ‘women are too emotional’. Their desire was clearly to counter such female stereotypes.

Participants believed that women walk a fine line between being considered assertive and ‘difficult’. They agreed that women in that space need to be ‘tough and authoritative (like men) to be taken seriously, but they will be perceived as ‘bitches’ if they act too aggressively’ (Oakley,

2000, p. 324). Lola clearly illustrated this: ‘my boss said he was trying to get me to tone down my attitude a little bit. And he said, ‘You got to understand that you’re a woman. So you come across as a bitch. If you are a man, you’d be considered assertive.’’ They acknowledged that finding the right balance to navigate these expectations, while countering existent stereotypes of how they should and were expected to behave (Heilman, 2001, 2012) was challenging. Balancing countering such negative stereotypes, while building a reputation and personal brand for themselves was described as very tough given their authoritative roles.

#### *Stereotypes and Early Socialization in Motorsports*

Gendered expectations and stereotypes are learned, and people behave in gender-appropriate ways based on the environment around them and the media (Deaux & LaFrance, 1998). Findings illuminated different patterns of stereotypes experienced by women who grew up in racing versus those who entered the field later. On one hand, participants who did not have ties to motorsports early on, felt a need to prove their intentions given that women are expected to join this industry to ‘marry a driver’. On the other hand, participants who grew up in racing, felt the need to prove that they earned their roles and they were not there ‘because of their dads’. Participants who had known family names in racing confessed not disclosing their family names early in their careers to prevent

expectations tied to the family from being created, and so they could build their own reputation. These women also reported that their roles and position of authority were doubted. Several of them had been told they were ‘given’ their roles.

These participants who grew up in racing families reported lower perceptions of gender stereotypes and being ‘raised as equals’ to brothers and boys in the pits. For instance, a participant illustrated this by saying that she wore her brother’s clothes growing up, and a second participant shared that she was raised as ‘the son her father never had.’ Nonetheless, an early socialization into racing, through family or close peers, led participants to develop thick skin early on. These participants reported less challenges at the societal level, given that they were not socialized to perceive gender differences. These findings support that experiences of women are highly impacted by the context and relationships (Powell & Maniero, 1992).

#### *Racing Experience > Other Credentials*

A novel finding, which is unique to sports, is that stereotyping reflects judgements that women are incompetent for management roles when they have not competed in the sport they work in. This idea is a misinterpretation women encounter in American football too. Several participants indicated that they were fans of racing and interested in the business of it, but never aspired to compete. Lacking competition experience may have made their career paths more difficult, though. Despite impressive credentials, such as doctoral and master’s degrees, not having competed in auto racing boosted

backlashes against participants’ abilities to manage organizations in motorsports. Sofia, a former race car driver, extensively discussed how this experience helped her career on the management side of the industry. She stated that ‘being a race car driver is a powerful thing. It sets you aside. [...] That’s when you walk into a room, people know that you’re a race car driver, you have a different reception, they know that you have capabilities that most other people did not have.’ Only two participants had had experience competing, while others had previously raced as a hobby. Maria said that racing allowed her to better understand the business of racing and racers’ needs. Likewise, Lola, who races for fun, shared that racing helps her develop her business by thinking as a racer and an owner at the same time.

This idea is key to understanding why women may hold extraordinary credentials, but still suffer to get to top management roles in sports. In this study, having raced competitively was an experience regarded above education and other job credentials. Beyond the scope of this study, considering how gender stereotypes may be keeping women from competing in certain sports, e.g., auto racing and American football, could help further develop this idea.

#### *Lack-of-fit*

Resulting from a perceived lack-of-fit between women and motorsports (Heilman, 2001, 2012), participants believed that women feel unwelcome to enter the male-dominated industry of motorsports. Agreeing with Beilock (2019), who described that due to gender stereotypes women feel like they do not belong in male-dominated fields, several participants shared

that women do not even consider a career in motorsports given the perceived lack-of-fit for women in racing. Although women are a remarkable share of racing fans, in addition to the perceived misfit between women and racing, there is lack of awareness of women who are in the field (i.e., role models), making it difficult for women to see possible future selves in the space. This lack of women role models is partly due to their demanding careers. Participants offered that for long they had been too busy working and immersed in the lifestyle and failed to look around and notice the lack of diversity, i.e., they failed to tell their stories and make themselves visible. They acknowledged that successful role models would be key to personify attainable future selves for other women, and to counteract the perceived misfit of women in racing (Midgley et al., 2021).

Participants echoed that there are women who work in motorsports, but they are more concentrated in certain roles and departments without decision-making power. They tend to be in administration, public relations, and marketing roles. This occupational concentration supports that women end up in roles and departments that fit the female stereotype (Bentley & Oh, 2019; Eagly, 1987), but those tend to be dead end roles that do not lead to decision-making (Kanter, 1977). Still, there was no consensus in the study whether personal choices or occupational segregation explained the lack of women in decision-making in the field.

#### *Lack-of-fit and Early Socialization in Motorsports*

A novel finding that emerged in this study is the idea that participants who had an early

socialization into racing and were introduced to the business side of the industry early on did not assume a lack-of-fit for women in racing. Some of these participants started working in racing as children with their families and friends, and they acknowledged several benefits from their early socialization towards building their career in the field, such as having a network built, knowing the lingo, understanding the nuts and bolts of these sports, and the lifestyle that working in racing would entail. These advantages of the early socialization are unique to motorsports (and not all sports), given that those were specifically linked to *understanding the racing lifestyle*.

Although scholars have seemingly ignored socialization agents, support systems, and how they may affect women's careers in sports, 'socialization agents are important because they influence people and in turn they are drawn to certain activities and away from others' (Mercado, 2008, p. 179). Most participants in this study shared that their fathers or male friends were their main socialization agents into sports, and motorsports became a shared passion and bond between participants and their loved ones (similar to Mercado, 2008). Participants shared that their multifaceted emotional attachment to motorsports was a major motivator in pursuing a career in the field and to keep pushing amidst difficulties. Likewise, Waltemeyer (2018) found that the introduction to motorsports through family and peers was a principal factor that influenced women to pursue a career in the field.

#### *Impostor Phenomenon*



Participants who joined the industry later in their careers reported lower self-confidence compared to those who were socialized into motorsports as kids. The impostor phenomenon is associated with gender stereotypes and defines self-doubt and psychological fraudulence feelings that have been reported to be especially prominent for high-achieving women (Clance & Imes, 1978, p. 1). The phenomenon is characterized by the internalization of a misfit between one's capabilities and the environments, resulting in a lack of confidence in oneself (Mak et al., 2019).

Contrary, the social cognitive career theory states that women benefit from enhanced career self-efficacy when introduced to a field at an early age (Flores & O'Brien, 2002). This premise was supported by participants with an early socialization into motorsports, who revealed higher perceived self-efficacy. Findings therefore illuminated that the early socialization of women into sports may help prevent the self-doubt and lack of confidence that characterize the impostor phenomenon. Preventing feelings associated with this phenomenon is important given the negative outcomes that have been associated with it, both at work and personally, such as lower performance, anxiety, and depression (Palmer, 2021). Although well-being variables are beyond the scope of this study, some participants felt that self-doubt and the underestimation of their potential led them to decline job opportunities, which hindered their career advancement (similar to Chen et

al., 2021).

Participants who grew up in racing revealed a different facet of the impostor phenomenon. Instead of internalizing their success, they tended to designate accomplishments to others, such as peers or family members. This reflects an aspect of the female socialization that complicates confidence building and agrees with results in Sarathchandra et al. (2018), where women feel mostly lucky and grateful, rather than recognizing their own hard work and accomplishments when achieving career success.

#### *Work-life balance and motherhood*

All participants revealed difficulties throughout their whole careers to manage and establish work-life balance, agreeing that women's personal and professional lives are highly permeable (Powell & Maniero, 1992). 'Managing both domestic and professional responsibilities is a difficult task that places stressful demands on the women's time' (Guendouzi, 2006, p. 907) as is. Particular to sports, those working in the field report added work demands that put extra pressure on the work-life balance, such as traveling to competitions and a competitive mentality to win at the racetrack and on the business-side.

Hence, people working in sports predominantly have a competitive personality, with a drive to win (on- and off-the-track), representing an added stress that is not seen in other industries. These lofty expectations reflect the mentality that *we are here to win*. Diana describes this by saying that 'in motorsports, everyone up and down that paddock, usually we're all type A personalities, we're all overachievers. You don't get to be in the Indy 500 unless you're an overachiever. So, then it's like the overachiever group gets together.' All participants



agreed that those who work in motorsports are overachievers with high expectations to excel. This overachiever personality at work contradicts social expectations that women should be caregivers first and prioritize family over work (Hewlett and Luce, 2005).

**Motherhood.** Mothers in the study reported having limited time for family activities due to high career demands, resulting in *mom guilt*. Kia expressed that ‘mom guilt is real’, while Bia explained the source of her guilt: ‘It’s my biggest regret [not being a present mother] [...] I just loved what I was doing, and I was making good money [...] It’s a matter of choice: what’s most important to you. And I chose my work to be the most important.’ Although ‘good mothering ... is a cultural invention’ (Thurer, 1995, p. 300), motherhood expectations were perceived as a major source of stress. Career demands, passion for motorsports and the lifestyle, and the fact that it ‘is not a job, it is a lifestyle’, as Joy described, formed a multifaceted paradox for mothers in balancing their work and personal selves. The motherhood stress factor was more pertinent for women without a support system. Support systems were described as key in managing stress related to family and personal matters. Participants without a support system, such as Bia, justified the focus on work as means to provide a better future for their children, concurrent with an economic justification (Swanson and Johnson, 2003).

#### *RQ1.1 Coping Mechanisms*

‘While the challenges women face are well-documented, less understood are the factors that shape the experience and success of women who, against significant odds, rise above the glass ceiling’ (Glass & Cook, 2016, p. 51). Remarkably, none of the participants talked

about formal mechanisms that helped them succeed in organizations or the industry. Success factors discussed largely reflected features of the motorsports industry. Lola described that the industry as ‘a very tight group. It is a very small industry. And everybody knows everybody, that is a good and a bad thing. But I think that just makes it like it’s almost local.’ The particularities of the close-knit racing community were stressed by all participants. Moreover, individual traits, typical of those who work in sports, were heavily discussed as necessary to survive in the field.

#### *Individual Level Factors*

**Personality traits.** To counter stereotypes, women who get to high positions in male-dominated fields have been found to be overperformers (Leslie et al., 2017). This idea was supported in the present study, where participants described themselves as overachievers. Participants suggested that they had to be an overachiever to prove their skills, build their reputation, and counter existent stereotypes of women in racing. This idea is associated with the token theory in which minority group members need to prove their skills and intentions more than the majority, or the old boys’ club (Kanter, 1977).

Racing has a lot of risk involved, consequently a high tolerance for risk matches the field and its lifestyle. Joy explained this feature of the industry that she considers unique: ‘there’s genuine risk involved, which means that there’s really high emotions, which means you have to work really hard to be perfect to keep people safe. So there’s just a lot of these pressure factors that make for this incredible bonding experience, it’s completely unique.’ Nonetheless, building confidence was described as

necessary to advance professionally in motorsports (Waltemeyer, 2018).

**Different home and work personas.** Powell and Mainiero (1992) suggested that women's careers cannot be fully understood if their non-work lives are disregarded. Some mothers stated that they found beneficial to define separate identities at home and at work, which differs from mothers in other fields, e.g., academia, who find difficult separating personal and professional lives (Swanson & Johnson, 2003). Participants expressed difficulties to integrate those areas because of the unique lifestyle in racing, which was described as completely different from 'mom life'. Establishing separate identities was a tool some used to be fully present at work and at home, as a mom or a girlfriend, for example. Differently, some of participants took the permeability between work and personal spheres to the extreme and disclosed that they completely merged their personal lives with their careers. For example, by bringing their families to races with them and living fulltime on the road in a motorhome.

**Mentors.** All participants highlighted the key role of mentors as part of their professional development (Sarathchandra et al., 2018) agreeing that 'understanding oneself as increasingly connected to others in more complex and sophisticated ways' (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005, citing Kram, 1996, p. 114). Even women who did not have women mentors said that they became mentors themselves for women entering the industry. They shared that advocating for other women contributed to their own confidence- and network-building.

**Allyship.** Due to the lack of women in motorsports, participants highlighted important male leaders who they looked up to and received support from. Similarly, Melton (2012)

evidenced the importance of allyship from majority-group members to help minority-group members succeed in sport organizations. All participants described men, such as fathers and leaders, as important advocates in shaping their career and its advancement.

**Role models.** Peus et al. (2015) found that interpersonal level factors, such as role models, were important success factor for women managers across cultures. Particularly for the US, their study advanced that female role models were important to women in the workplace, for example, allowing to observe their actions and ask for advice. This study found parallel positive attitudes towards female role models. Similarly, Forsyth et al. (2019) found evidence to the importance of role models for the professional success of women entering the sports industry, and Midgley et al. (2021) advanced that same gender role models were key for women athletes to perceive successful future selves. Participants in the study agreed with these premises and offered their desire to be role models themselves. For instance, participants commented that the success of their teams in races was used to highlight women in the space, and to make themselves more visible.

#### *Interpersonal Relationships in Motorsports*

Remaining in motorsports and pushing through challenges was mostly due to important interpersonal relationships in the industry. This idea illuminates the sense of belonging and community in sports. These sentiments are shared by fans of sports as well, such as group and team identification, which have been previously investigated in sport marketing literature

(e.g., Delia & James, 2017). Thus, success factors for women to remain in sports differ from those in other industries (Peus et al., 2015). Particularly, the uniqueness and strong bond of the racing community emerged as a key factor.

## 7. Practical Implications

Firstly, one of the most supported themes evidenced that participants did not perceive working in motorsports as a viable career option due to the underrepresentation and lack-of-fit between women and motorsports resulting from gender stereotypes. By taking advantage of the momentum in society towards welcoming more diversity across industries and roles, finding creative ways to expose opportunities and role models in motorsports would be beneficial for the industry to attract a more diverse pool of candidates. Given the numerous advantages of early socialization into male-dominated fields discussed, exposing young girls to motorsports and the possibilities of working in racing would be an avenue to attract more women to the management side of the industry. For example, teams and racetracks could partner with schools and allow girls to spend the day at the track or with a team and explain the possible career paths that are available in racing. The popularity of the *Drive to Survive* series on Netflix exemplifies the growth of motorsports' consumption in the media in the American market. The show presents another avenue for exposure to new market segments (Richards, 2022). Other media, including social media, could be used

to normalize women working in motorsports too.

Secondly, managing work-life balance given the racing lifestyle was highlighted as a major difficulty that has been a problem throughout the whole career of participants and is still a difficulty to this day. Labor market research suggests that fields that saw an increase on the representation of women from 1970 to 2017 reported work flexibility as a crucial factor (Bentley & Oh, 2019). Although work flexibility could be compromised due to the amount of traveling for races, organizations could be more welcoming and modify towards a more family-friendly industry. According to participants, races are not always welcoming environments to families. Nonetheless, family-oriented solutions for the office and race days could lessen the work-life balance burden.

Moreover, parenting is still more heavily levied on mothers. Although the number of hours that fathers spent on childcare has more than tripled in the last 40 years, mothers still report significantly higher work-family guilt and work-interfering-with-family guilt compared to fathers in the United States (Borelli et al., 2017). For organizations, better work-life balance has been found to have positive spill overs on women's professional selves (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). One of the difficulties with regards to this discussion is finding ways that women can normalize parenting as it suits them and their careers, deconstructing the 'good mothering' (Guendouzi, 2006). Establishing communities of 'mothers in racing' could offer a space

for these women to discuss and normalize motherhood and offer mutual support. This suggestion follows that informal and community-based mechanisms emerged as important success factors in motorsports both in this study and in Waltemeyer (2018).

Combining these two notions, participants noted that if more women were in charge of decision-making in motorsports, more family-inclusive environment for those working in racing would follow (solving the second challenge). Lola, who owns a track, is an example of that. She talked about her ongoing projects to make the track more welcoming to everyone, not just racers. The renovations include planting trees and adding more family-friendly accommodations. She summarized these ideas,

I think if there were more women, innately they would be bringing in other things for people in the families to do, in ways that would make it more of a family situation. Now it seems like a kind of exclusive thing where men don't want women there because there's not that much to do and then they feel like they have to entertain their wives. [...] I think that one of the changes could be women making that whole environment something that is more family-friendly. All participants alluded to the benefits of welcoming women in the industry and allowing their traits and skills to surface, because to 'continually build momentum in dominant organizational cultures, women leaders must be able to fully, rather than just strategically, engage in their unique,

feminine, creative, and innate approaches to leadership' (Campuzano, 2019, p. 457).

Women's potential is still widely unutilized in the sports industry, motorsports being an extreme case (Mikkonen, 2019). A shift in the organization culture towards focusing more than only on those traditionally interested in racing is an example of a positive change that welcoming more women in management could create. Such as welcoming families, and non-traditional fans. Since 'a better awareness of structural factors that shape women's success might be especially pertinent in fields that are male-dominated' (Sarathchandra et al., 2018, p. 12).

## 8. Conclusion

The present study advanced an exploration of the almost invisible women who are decision makers in motorsports in the United States. The focus was uncovering challenges they faced in their careers in the industry and how they overcame them. The most prominent challenges were at the societal (i.e., gender stereotypes, lack-of-fit); and individual levels (i.e., work-life balance, motherhood, and impostor phenomenon), while coping mechanisms to navigate those were found to be informal mechanisms mainly at the interpersonal level, such as the community of women in racing, support systems, mentors, and role models. These findings are represented in Figure 1, while the quotes supporting each of the themes are detailed in Table 2.

The study attended a call for studies centering on women's experiences in management of specific and novel contexts in sports (Evans & Pfister, 2021; Knoppers and Anthonissen, 2008). The emphasis in motorsports opens a future path for sport management scholars to move beyond college athletics, into a novel context within sport management. Moreover, by presenting the findings as a model (Figure 1), classified according to the analytical framework offered in Ragins and Sundstrom (1989), it advanced a motorsport-specific model that accounted for particularities of the context (Costa, 2005; Fink, 2013). Finally, for the industry to benefit from the advantages of gender diversity, scholars and practitioners need to continue investigating what shapes minorities' experiences across contexts (Bower et al., 2015; Martin & Barnard, 2013).

## 9. Future Research

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The present study conducted interviews with sixteen women who are decision makers in motorsports in the United States. Applying the same research methods used in this analysis in different contexts, for instance, given the current success of Formula 1 around the globe and nuances of the all-female W Series, studies examining women on the management side of motorsports in other countries and other series are advised. Extending this study towards a cross-country analysis with more participants would allow for a more comprehensive picture of the lived experiences of women in motorsports glob-

ally as well. Similar to Peus et al. (2015), gathering challenges and success factors that are prominent in different countries could inform how challenges have been tackled and evidenced coping mechanisms used in different countries in order to inform possible change across the board. Moreover, extending the analysis and consider other motorsports, such as boat and motorcycle racing, could yield interesting results as well.



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## Appendix A

The following terms related to motorsports were used across the research and are paramount for the reader to understand ideas conveyed in the present study:

*Auto racing or car racing* – Differences in car design define different competitions, with single-seater open-wheeled cars used for competitions in series such as Formula 1 (F1) and IndyCar; and multi-seated closed-wheeled in NASCAR (Waltemeyer, 2018). NASCAR, which stands for *National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing*, is the sanctioning organization for stock car racing in the United States and other countries (Amato et al., 2005).

*Motorsports*— Motorsports, or motor racing, are a wide range a group of competitive sporting events, which involve the use of motorized vehicles (e.g., auto racing), as well as two-wheel motor vehicles (i.e., motorcycle racing), off-road competitions (e.g., motocross, supercross and rally). It encompasses the automotive racing industry, the engineering and service businesses that support the sporting discipline of automotive racing in its definition as well (Cobbs & Hylton, 2012).

## Appendix B

Table 2

*Themes and Descriptions RQ 1 & RQ 2*

## Societal

<b>Societal</b>		
<b>Code</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Coping Mechanisms</b>
<p><b>Gender stereotypes</b> -Preconceived societal expectations of how women and men are expected to behave. For example, women are expected to be caring, nurturing, and prioritize social skills, which is why they are assumed to fit and thrive in environments and roles that require such skills, e.g., education and mid-management. Differently, men are perceived to be task- and achievement-oriented, aggressive and emotionally tough, which is why they are expected to thrive in fields that align with those traits, such as motorsports (Koenig et al., 2011).</p>	<p><b>“I mean, no question - It's a man's world. And there's no questioning that because you're in this garage area with all these young guys all the time. There's always the rumors, there was always battling the, “Is she really here because she wants to work? Or is she here to marry a rich driver?” Heidi</b></p> <p><b>Feeling invisible</b> Rosie - the majority of men wouldn't necessarily put you down to your face. I was just invisible. And, you know, “okay, little lady. Come on. You can write with me.,” like I wasn't capable of writing on my own.”</p> <p>Paige - they talked around me, they talked through me like there was, and there were so many acronyms being thrown out. [...] that was amplified by the fact that I was a female, in my opinion, and because I was new.</p> <p><b>Underestimated capabilities</b> Diana - I don't want you to think that I don't know the answer because I'm a woman. [...] Or be perceived as stu-</p>	<p><b>Type A personalities (overachievers)</b> Diana – in motorsports, everyone up and down that paddock, usually we're all type A personalities, we're all overachievers. You don't get to be in the Indy 500 unless you're an overachiever. So, then it's like the overachiever group gets together. Ella – I feel like I'm on gas all the time.</p> <p>Zaya - Specially in these types of environments, where you have not only men, but you have very type A personalities, very strong personalities. I mean, that just goes with racing, right? Where you have this very, very competitive, dangerous sport, when you think about it, it is not everyone that has the personalities that go with that, which makes sense, right?</p> <p>Zaya - I wish that I could turn it off sometimes. [...] But here I am because this is important to me.</p> <p><b>Mentors</b> Paige - He really helped me navigate the team and when needed, to set the tone if I</p>

	<p>pid. We don't want to be perceived as not enough and [...] I don't want to be asked a question that I don't know the answer to.</p> <p><b>Kia - There were always whispers and rumors, and jokes about a woman's capability. [...] There are always going to be people who think that women aren't smart enough, that they're not fast enough, that they're not savvy enough, that they don't understand cars, or that the only reason they're into this is because their dad did this, or something like that.</b></p> <p>Ayla - I would flow these ideas through my boss, and then he would flow them to the leadership [...] So I never really got the one-on-one respect. So if I wanted to see something change in motorsport, I wanted to bring my own ideas, I would bring those ideas through my boss. So they would actually listen. [...] The greatest accomplishment is just sticking around, and not allowing them or shy you away as not as powerful.</p> <p>Sofia - it was most evident that they looked at me as a woman incapable of making decisions</p> <p>Sofia - It took a lot of years for people, for customers, for drivers to realize that they could talk to me, and that I knew what the hell I was talking about. And to be accepted on the mechanical engineering side of the engine business and the race business.</p>	<p>was not making any headway. But then, I mean, he also, there was a little bit of tough love, where he was like, "just suck it up," like, "what are you gonna do about it?," and I learned a lot from him in in those two years, door was always open.</p> <p><b>Allyship</b></p> <p>Rosie - I do remember having men that did elevate me, or include me in a conversation when there were, you know, six men in the room and me. And they're all talking and ignoring me, I'm invisible. And there would usually be one that would say, "well, Rosie, what do you think?" Or "Rosie, could you help us with that?."</p> <p>Lola - You got to remember that if you've got one racer or whatever, who's kind of being a jerk, or, like a thorn in your side, you also have 100 other racers that are not, and those are the ones that you're working for.</p> <p>Gianna - Why do I care what one person thinks because I've got 20 other people that I'm dealing with that don't think that way? [...] if I was the kind of person who focused on a negative comment, I could never do what I do.</p> <p>Joy – there are a lot of men that are absolutely willing to help.</p> <p><b>Well-rounded portfolio</b></p> <p>Joy - I have always known from a very young age, that</p>
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	<p>Lola - I don't feel like you get that same [credibility as men], but you have to prove yourself a little bit more. And I try especially hard if I'm making a decision on rules or something like that to make sure that I am right before I say anything. I double check my facts and make sure that so that I feel confident going into it that I know exactly what I'm talking about.</p> <p><b>Stereotype: Emotional</b>  <b>Lola - if I'm gonna cry over a situation, or whatever, I try to make sure I'm in my car or somewhere that I'm not letting my emotions get the best of me.</b></p> <p>Zaya - You try and compose yourself as much as you can, hold it together. And, if you have to go sit in your car and cry, go do it. Get yourself back together and just go right back in there. Don't let them defeat you.</p> <p><b>Stereotype: Difficult</b>  <b>Heidi - my boss said he was trying to get me to tone down my attitude a little bit. And he said, "You got to understand that you're a woman. So you come across as a bitch. If you are a man, you'd be considered assertive."</b></p> <p>Ayla – but as years went on, then just the lack of acknowledgement kind of wears on you and then I would push back and when I would push back they would push me even further away because I said something, or I was being</p>	<p>it's incredibly important to articulate in conversations from the other person's perspective. [...] even when I was younger, in my early career, if I went to meet with a business owner, because I wanted a raise, I didn't come in and say, "I've been here another year, I expect more money." I came in with data and information and proof that substantiated why it's in their best interest to give me more money, because of the value that I bring to the table. So I had always approached things from that standpoint, which I think is incredibly helpful as a woman in a male dominated industry.</p> <p>Rosie - I learned to be a really good listener. And if nothing else, I could say back sometimes some of the conversations. And that there became a level of respect because most of the time people don't listen. So if I said, "Oh, well, earlier, Bob mentioned that at their track, they did such and such, what about if we do this and that," and just by listening and sometimes zoning back in on discussion points, it helped me gain a little more respect. [...] throwing out some fresh ideas helped too.</p> <p>Paige - When there were opportunities, just starting to insert my opinion, do it with the right tone and style, but then also be able to back it up with data or hard facts</p>
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	<p>assertive which can be misconstrued as, you know, what's the word. that you hear a lot... difficult, being difficult. [...] I would push back a little bit, then I'd get frustrated. Then I would go back to the old way of doing things. It was kind of a cycle. Yara - I'm sure I've been called bitch multiple times. Nobody's ever called it to my face.</p> <p><b>Assumptions about the intentions of women</b></p> <p>Heidi- I got the opportunity to go out to a speedway and the owner of the racetrack was out there, and I was this kid writing for my school newspaper, and I thought I was the coolest kid ever. And I walked up because I was going to interview him. And he literally looks at me and he goes, "Oh, honey, Jeff Gordon's already married." And that's all he said. And I was like, "I'm here reporting from our school newspaper," and he just walked away.</p> <p>Ayla - I would come upon the bias or the stereotypes of, "Oh, just a cute blonde girl." Or "Can we date," that was I think one of the big things.</p> <p>Heidi - a lot of my friends were accused of sleeping around with a lot of people when they aren't that kind of person at all. But if they were an attractive woman around all these guys, "why wouldn't they be," is the assumption. But my husband was always around with me so I never got accused of anything like that</p>	<p>that I knew they were going to look for.</p> <p>Paige - With the right style, I did not want to be seen as somebody who was emotional, or somebody that was being really just difficult to be difficult. I made sure I did my homework, I had my facts. And I laid out my case, if I felt like I needed to state it.</p> <p><b>Competing in the sport</b></p> <p>Sofia - being a racecar driver is a powerful thing. It sets you aside.[...] That's when you walk into a room, people know that you're a racecar driver, you have a different reception, they know that you have capabilities that most other people did not have.</p> <p><b>Confidence building through professional maturity</b></p> <p>Ayla - There's a way to have a presence in a room that comes with confidence. You have to claim that you are there. There's a chair at a table, and you get to sit at it now. You gotta claim it, you gotta claim that chair. You've got to come prepared, just like everybody else in the room, and you go in and you get what you came there for, or get the follow up for whatever. Do not leave that room without what you set to accomplish there. Your intention. set the intention before you get into a meeting, [...] what your objectives are, ask the questions, have the roadmap,</p>
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	<p>but a lot of my colleagues and my friends did. Also there is a lot of gossip and things like that going on.</p>	<p>make the plan, and lead into that. [...] Always be conscious of that because never you should leave a meeting feeling defeated or that you are like, "I didn't do that because I didn't have the confidence at the time." Work on your confidence. Get the mentors around you that will boost you up and help you build that confidence. Paige - I'm just working hard trying to get my job done. And I learned during that time, or after that announcement, what my brand was.</p>
<p><b>Sexism</b> - Detrimental attitudes and oppression women face that are based on gender, and which tend reflect the endorsement of gender stereotypes (Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Swim &amp; Cohen, 1997). Sexist attitudes towards women include misinterpretations and misconceptions about their intentions. Contrary to previous studies that classified sexism at the organizational level (e.g., Hindman &amp; Walker, 2002), sexist behavior and language were reported as an industry-wide social phenomenon that reflected stereotypes in motorsports.</p>	<p><b>"So I will tell you one thing that I don't like, I don't like to be called a lady. There is no F* lady in motorsport. You have to be tough." Sofia</b></p> <p><b>Sexual Harassment</b>  Heidi - I had an issue pretty early on where a reporter was talking to me and he was like, "Hey, I'm sitting in my computer naked while we're talking" [...] at the time, I didn't really take it as sexual harassment. I didn't even realize that it was a big deal.  Zaya - it's completely different now, but in my 20s, sexual harassment was all the time. I say sexual harassment, but it was just very inappropriate talk. Behavior was very much accepted, very tolerated and expected, like, "Okay, you want to be in this man's world? Well, you're just gonna have to hear this. You're gonna have to listen to</p>	<p><b>Societal wave of change</b>  Kia - I just think that there's overall sort of a larger societal wave of change that's coming. [...] We're finally at a point where we're starting to call people out men particularly have really bad behavior.  Joy - changes happen slowly over time, when they were getting raises, they were getting more bonuses, they were being rewarded, I was listening to them [...] listening to and empowering the staff was incredibly important to me.  Zaya - now companies will still stand up for you, but before, as a woman, you had to stand up for herself. And I think, if you're going to work in a male-dominated role, you need to learn how to do that.  <b>Allyship</b>  Ayla - What I love about [my boss] so much is that he</p>

	<p>this, you're gonna have to deal with this."</p> <p><b>Inappropriate behavior/language</b></p> <p>Gianna - sometimes people would say things like, "Well, yeah, we can talk about it, why don't you come back to my hotel room, and we can have a conversation?". or "why don't we go out to dinner, and then we'll talk about it." I did have that happen to me from time to time."</p> <p>Nina - one time I was at a partner function early on in my career. There were CEOs, or mid level managers in this room, and not a whole lot of women, I think there were four women in the room, including myself. And I remember this one president of the company looked at me and said, "You're so lucky to be surrounded by all these really smart and intelligent men." And he was dead serious. And I said, "Well, you're right. But imagine how lucky you are to be to be in a room with four really smart and beautiful women that will ultimately tell you how to run your business one day."</p> <p>Lola - And there's a fine line, I guess, between getting compliments and then it being rude as far as, you know...</p> <p>Rosie - You learn to laugh and shrug it off the comments from the man and you had to be really strong. Because you were ignored and overlooked. You were put down, you weren't respected.</p>	<p>made it clear everyone, "treat this woman like she's your sister." [...] He set the tone right away for me. [...] And I remember years later, a crew guy from one of the other teams came over to my boss' office at the racetrack, and he said, "Ayla is so nice. And I've been friendly with her for years. I wanted to come over to ask if it'd be okay if I asked her out on the date." And my boss looked at him, and said, "no."</p> <p>Ella - I've been super fortunate with the male leadership that I've had through the years that saw my potential, and supported me through, and ensured that I had a great experience and made sure that I was respected and I was sitting at the table. But again, I was very fortunate to have very highly respected men in these various leadership roles that I was able to, I say, grow up under, in the early years of my career, and even now.</p> <p><b>Role Models</b></p> <p>Zaya - especially other women that had manager roles or VP roles and so forth, and just really pay close attention to how they handled situation.</p>
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	<p>Rosie - I wasn't respected for my role. My looks, what I was wearing, those were things that people paid attention to and man made inappropriate comments, of course, regularly. And back then, you couldn't really call them out on it. You just had to take it. And walk away.</p> <p>Maria - I left a meeting and say to my father, "why didn't that guy talk to me? That guy was really not cool." And my dad said, "Oh, can you not tell he's a sexist?" And I'm like, "Oh, I didn't know."</p>	
<p><b>Unconscious bias</b> - Unintended attitudes and language rooted in gender expectations and stereotypes (Greenwald &amp; Banaji, 1995). Swim and Cohen (1997) evidenced the connection between these biases and sexism by using subtle sexism to define "openly unequal and harmful treatment of women that goes unnoticed because it is perceived to be customary or normal behavior" (p. 104).</p>	<p><b>"There were definitely times when people underestimated me and that manifested in people being condescending or mansplaining"</b> Diana Ayla - I think it was a lot of unconscious bias. [...] And I still get that to this day. There's still a lot of bias. There are people I'm friends with, who I work with, that will do things, say things that are biased and they don't even realize it.</p> <p>Diana - And then of course, the old white guy doesn't necessarily know that because and it's not even his fault, because he just sees himself. He doesn't see the other people, don't see themselves. [...] So it doesn't just occur to him that we would hesitate. It doesn't occur to him, that a black man would hesitate to want to walk through the door like, "am I welcome there?." Because a white man just walks right through it.</p>	<p><b>Clear communication without confrontational</b> Joy - I was debating in my head the best way to keep him comfortable and address the situation. And, my mentor, she was brilliant, her response was, "you just hand them a business card, say on the better point of contact," which makes all the sense in the world. In the moment, I was so busy processing the scenario that I didn't think it through. I was disappointed in myself in that, but, she's wonderful, because she understands, [...] just having conversations with the other women that are in motorsports and saying, "have you run into this? And how are you navigating this?." Ayla - "Can I share something," or "Can I point something out," and then I'll point it out, and they'll go, "Oh, my God, I didn't even realize." I think for me, that</p>

	<p><b>Tendency to assume men are in charge</b></p> <p>Lola - when I go to trade shows, even now still a lot of times people are like, “Where’s your husband?” Or “where’s the man that’s in charge?”</p> <p>Joy - it's sometimes very difficult to have people respect my position. And every once in a while it pisses me off... I'll walk into an event and people will be like, “Oh, who's your husband?.” I have a husband. It shouldn't tick me off that people are saying, who's my husband? But I know that so often, it's fueled by the fact that the assumption is that I don't have anything to do with motorsports.</p> <p>Lola - I still have problems with some of the older generation of racers, who don't respect women being in charge. And it's not just a generation of racers, it's a whole generation of men. [...] I’ve been told that I was at a disadvantage for this business because I was a woman, because I didn't have any experience, and because I wasn't a racer.</p>	<p>is an effective way to approach it. Because you want good outcomes. you don't want to beat on somebody for doing something. It's just going to persist. We need to have conversations about this.</p> <p>Zaya - there's nothing wrong in saying, right that in there, “I'm not comfortable with this conversation, let's change this,” or you just need to speak to someone there who's running the event or someone in authority like this, the situation made me uncomfortable.</p>
<p><b>Hegemonic Masculinity -</b> Implicit systems and mechanisms that maintain men’s status in certain fields, or power relations built through culture and institutions that sustain the higher status of men in certain fields (Connell &amp; Messerschmidt, 2005). Men succeed in careers in these fields more easily than women,</p>	<p><b>“On the starting grid of the Indy 500, we had a quiet moment, the two of us, and she said, “I can't believe I'm seeing this in my lifetime. I used to feel so alone.”” Diana</b></p> <p>Ella - Motorsport has been traditionally known as a male dominated sport, period. And it’s still the case. All you got</p>	<p><b>Learn to speak the language</b></p> <p>Ayla - I’ve learned to speak their language. One of my mentors said that to me. I said, “I’m having a real hard time breaking through ideas to this team,” she goes “just go in there and speak their language, you know speak: their language.” I’m like, “what do you mean?.” I tried</p>

<p>given the preferred promotions and career opportunities they receive.</p>	<p>to do is walk around the paddock and you see that Joy - Women don't feel as comfortable in the environment, because there's fewer women there. So it's kind of an unsettling environment to walk into.</p> <p>Zaya - you've got to be comfortable with working with men, I mean, it's always going to be a male dominated sport. It just is. And you are going to have to navigate, it still happens that you are going to sometimes be doubted, your abilities.</p> <p>Ayla - When I first started, and I would go out to the racetrack and I would see one other woman there. So back in 2000, there were no women around. It was set up that way. They wanted to keep us apart. If there was another woman there, they wanted to keep the women separate. Almost like they didn't want us to collaborate, they didn't want us to have too much power.</p> <p>Ayla - They wanted to keep us apart. If there was another woman there, they wanted to keep the women separate. Almost like they didn't want us to collaborate, they didn't want us to have too much power. But women have come together and built coalition.</p>	<p>a few things that worked. But I am just trying to speak their language, and still trying to figure that out. [...]</p> <p>But you gotta know how to lead a room, that's masculine energy. As a woman in a room full of men, you've got to learn the room.</p> <p><b>Allyship</b></p> <p>Sofia - when I first started, I really focused on the fact that I was a woman and that I was being distributed, discriminated against, and that that those challenges were there. And I just remember talking to a pal of mine, on my race team. And he, he looked at me and said, "Forget that, do your job, do what you're supposed to do." And so I did. And while I recognize that women need, that some women need, ways to step into the sport, they need encouragement, they need mentoring, they need coaching, that that those things are will be a value to them. Some of them don't.</p>
<p><b>Lack-of-fit</b> - The lack-of-fit model (Heilman, 2001; 2012) defined the perceived misfit between women and certain roles and fields. In sum, women face enhanced challenges to enter and thrive in</p>	<p><b>"I'm not thinking racing, because to me, that was also such a different level. And I didn't see women doing it."</b></p> <p><b>Diana</b></p> <p>Yara- if you watch it from a spectator perspective, you</p>	<p><b>Be part of the change you want to see</b></p> <p>Lola - highlighting some of the women that are doing stuff like this, by me being a strong female leader at my track, I am encouraging all</p>

<p>male-dominated fields because of a perceived incompatibility between the demands in these fields and feminine traits (e.g., social skills, nurturing, caring) (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). Likewise, certain roles, such as high-level management, are assumed to be male-typed since those are assumed to be more congruent with masculine traits (i.e., task- and achievement-orientation, and emotional toughness, Eagly et al., 2020).</p>	<p>don't see all of the behind-the-scenes jobs and you still don't see everything, you see what's involved with drivers and teams because those are visible to the camera. Rosie - probably didn't even cross the mind of the majority of women over the past few decades to go into motor-sports. And it was only if you had a background of some kind of association. Paige - [women's] stories aren't being told. [...] We're out there doing stuff, and we're not going "hey, look, what I did," you know. And there are women in motor-sports, we're just not celebrating them, I guess. Or we're not noticing them because they're busy getting stuff done. Ayla - I always loved motor-sports and fast cars, but I never once thought that that was something I could have a job at, or, you know I never once thought that I had an opportunity to be in motorsport at any level. It just never occurred to me that I can do anything in motor sports, and I didn't know anybody in professional motorsports. But I loved watching it. Kia - I just don't know if motorsports is sort of widespread enough for people to really even understand that this is a possibility. You have lots of women who are interested in finance and lots of women who are interested in engineering and all of these things. And they're very good</p>	<p>little girls that are there to become whatever the hell it is that they want to be. Rosie - As we say - if you see it, you can be it. And that helped me. I saw my mom, right? Kia - the idea is that we can show these young women that whatever you're interested in, whether that is driving or communications or marketing or finance or development or engineering, there could be a place for you in motorsports. Joy - I can take that success and I can use that as an opportunity to raise awareness. Diana - It is definitely easier now than it was because we're making ourselves more visible [...] we can't scare that next generation off, we need to make things even easier and more accessible for women to understand how they can approach these types of roles, especially within motorsport on the business-side, we've done an excellent job in PR marketing. Lola - I actually tend to hire a lot more women. Our track has, in addition to me, is at least 50% staffed by women. And it's not just in the ancillary roles. Nina - I can be somebody that person may need or can trust, to help guide them along the path that I have</p>
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	<p>at these careers. But I just don't know, if there's been enough awareness.</p> <p>Maria - I never had a clue that racing could even be a career. I think you don't think about it. It's like doctor, lawyer, whatever, checkboxes, but you don't think of this as something you're not taught that there is even an opportunity.</p> <p>Nina - We are already here, you just can't see us! We're doing all the tasks that you can't see but are fundamental to the organization and the success of these series.</p>	<p>made, avoid the same pitfalls, or same challenges that I went through.</p> <p>Yara - I meet guys and they talk about their little girls and I'm like, 'if you got questions, just call. I'm more than happy to share my experience and to share the opportunity, to show them around'.</p> <p>Joy - My biggest role is to manage the culture of our company and make sure that people are happy, empowered and fulfilled. And again, it's all very much in supporting our staff as much as I possibly can.</p> <p>Kia - I have a "no asshole policy," that's my zone, I don't work with anybody that I don't like. If I can help it, right, obviously. There are going to be times I have to engage... But I really have gotten to a place in my life where, whether it's personal or professional, I just have a "no asshole policy," I cannot do it.</p>
<b>Organizational</b>		
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Coping Mechanisms</b>
<p><b>Token Status</b> – Minority group members tend to have a harder path than majority group members in the workplace. In order to avoid being perceived based on social expectations (i.e., stereotypes), tokens need to outperform non-tokens to prove their individual value (Kanter, 1977; Lyness &amp; Thompson, 2000).</p>	<p><b>“at the beginning of my career, I hoped that you didn't notice that I was a woman, [...] because there weren't any of us, I was the only one in the room” Diana</b></p> <p><b>Need to prove oneself to build reputation</b></p> <p>Ella - it's the reality that we've got to work a little bit harder to get acceptance, you know, especially in my role in a</p>	<p><b>Well-rounded portfolio</b></p> <p>Diana - you have to know and be an expert on a group of tasks, because racing is so intense, and so many things can happen. [...] You kind of have to know a little bit about this and a little bit about that, because if all of a sudden this person next to you is dealing with a challenge and they kind of need you to help them and so you</p>

	<p>sales and revenue generating role.</p> <p>Zaya – when you are at race events, men tend to be doubtful of your knowledge. And it is a male dominated sport. I don't care what type of racing it is – car, boat, motorcycle. And I've always kind of had nontraditional roles, being a stockbroker, typically, which is a male-dominated position as well.</p> <p>Ella - everybody kind of like tiptoes around or kind of walks on eggshells for a while, but I do think it takes a little bit longer [than for men] to prove yourself, for sure.</p> <p>Sofia - boards in general have a lot of difficulty managing themselves and staying in their lane. Boards in general can be a contentious and political bunch, as I said, everybody thinks they can do the job better than the other than the person that's doing the job. And in my case, magnify that by being a woman, and having those challenges in an all-male room.</p> <p>Zaya - I think sometimes I used to try to do too much. And try hard because you're afraid you wouldn't get credit. [...] I think that was the other big part too for women in history especially, a lot of men would take credit for what you're doing.</p> <p><b>Need to prove your intention</b></p> <p>Nina - They have this perception of how I am, that I'm actually bad, like I'm not in it for my own personal gain.</p>	<p>really have to learn how to be flexible. And because there's this common goal of getting the car on the grid, you're up against the clock.</p> <p>Heidi – I had now worked for a track, a sanctioning body and a team and now I was a sponsor, so I had a really well-rounded portfolio that early.</p> <p>Gianna - My first job in the industry was a volunteer position, with a truck team. [...] I learned early on, [...] to volunteer my time. I still do that at times. I'm gaining that advantage. Because I'm able to see things and start to pull in information about what might a sanctioning organization or a particular sport, but then also, it allows me then to take the information I've had from other sports and help solve the problem in the new sport that I might be in, because I've already seen it being addressed somewhere else [...] certainly just to get experience to hear the language. Language is critical. You have to have the terminology down. If you don't have the terminology down, you can't communicate, and that that requires immersion.</p> <p>Maria - Because of the experiences I've had in a variety of sides of the motorsports not just one thing, we started running a series, we ran teams, I drove, I had the family side of it - I was a sister, I was a driver. All the different perspectives that</p>
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	<p>[...] it's challenging because it's the politics behind it. Joy - a fair amount of me trying to prove myself before there was full buy in from the staff for sure [...] it was definitely a challenge to show them that I was absolutely their biggest advocate. Sofia - takes time to build a resume that puts you there. And so as these people, not just women, but these people that haven't had the opportunity to step into those positions, build their resumes, then I am certain that we'll see more and more of them in the in the upper echelons. Of course, there are of course prejudices against women. Right across the board. I'm not trying to whitewash that. Nina – no one would ever see that I'm genuine, I care for the organization, for my coworkers, they all see it as personal gain. Maria – they just automatically didn't respect me because I was young, I was female, and I was there working with my father.</p> <p><b>Male-dominated roles in a male-dominated field</b></p> <p>Ella - being a woman in the sales revenue generating side of our business there's not a ton of us out there, if you will, it just seems it's a lot more desirable for males. [...] there are not other female executives in this role.</p>	<p>you could have in motorsports, I think I've gotten a lot of them.</p> <p>Rosie - the more variety and experience you have, the greater your chances are of working in it, and staying in it and growing in it. Because if you just have one skill, like anything in life, that path is very narrow. So the more broad your background and experience, the better it is. And I think that's an important business advice, period.</p> <p><b>Confidence building with professional maturity</b></p> <p>Joy - Be very clear about what value you bring and keep track of the value that you bring so that you can articulate that value [...] be super aware of what your role is and bring your best [...] tenacity always outweigh skill.</p> <p>Ella - I think that goes to how you carry yourself, how you position yourself. [...] Bring that professional maturity to the table and speak with authority and confidence. Especially within sales.</p>
<b>Interpersonal</b>		
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Coping Mechanisms</b>

<p><b>Old Boys' Club</b> – The old boys' club refers to the ingroup and higher status that men have in male dominated or culturally masculine fields. This ingroup/outgroup dynamic compromises women's human and social capital in the workplace as they are granted limited career opportunities to advance professionally or to build resources (Hekman et al., 2017). This system and the advantages given to ingroup members have been shown to help maintain men's status in most positions of power in sports, such as management roles, and obstruct women's career path in the field (Walker &amp; Bopp, 2011).</p>	<p><b>"I definitely think there's just sometimes a little bit of an easier path for the good old boys' club" Ella</b>  Ella - I left [the industry], quite frankly, because I kept getting passed up for jobs that guys in the good old boys' club were getting. [...] I was really frustrated, that's the bottom line, I was very frustrated. [...] I was kind of tapped out [...] I had lost the spirit, I lost the fun of it. [...] I loved my boss, I loved the team that I was part of, but my role was not providing any fulfillment for me, which is difficult, right?  Yara - all of the volunteers are all white guys with white hair. [...] I was definitely an outlier multiple ways: young and female.  Ella - I found myself falling into that in my earlier years, trying to keep up play with the old boys' club. [...] But I don't think that gets you any more credit. Quite frankly, female to female, I hate seeing that.</p> <p><b>Ingroup advantages</b>  Kia - a lot of times people will hire who they know. [...] It has been a pretty small group of people that have been making decisions [...] and if you only have that: "my grandfather raced, and then my father raced, and so now I race and I'm a billionaire. So my dad can buy a team." I mean, what is that? You're not ever going to make space for people with real talent,</p>	<p><b>Look for organizations that value DEI</b>  Kia - Seek out the sort of organizations that have proven that they are looking for diversity, and they're looking to change the mold and support those organizations.</p> <p><b>Learn to speak the language</b>  Nina - I had to make sure I was heard amongst all these men, I thought for that I had to speak loud, use my hands.  Rosie - I did have to learn, or I thought I had to learn how to drink properly. Instead of having girly drinks, I'd go, "Alright, give me a scotch and water." When I was young, whether I liked it or not, I'd sip it for three hours.</p>
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	<p>and you're never going to make space for real change.</p> <p>Lola - if I was a dude and ran the racetrack, when I went to a business conference, or something, the guys would already have some level of credibility because I would already relate to them.</p> <p>Yara – It is definitely there. There have been guys that I've worked with that treated me differently than they treat other guys.</p> <p><b>Resistance to changes to the status quo</b></p> <p>Ella - [men felt] challenged with the fact that there was some fresh perspective coming in. And I think it probably didn't help that I was also a female and he didn't like that.</p> <p>Sofia - it was all very much entrenched in tradition and the way that they did things. [...] managing change in such an old and conservative organization, there are a lot of factions that don't want to see that and don't see the reason for it.</p>	
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<p><b>Queen bee</b> - Detrimental attitudes women have towards other women because they feel that their positions, both professional and personal, could be threatened if more women joined the same space. Women may obstruct the access or advancement of other women in a male-dominated field/organization based on the belief that “there is only room for so many of us here” (Evans &amp; Pfister, 2021).</p>	<p><b>“I did not always have females in my corner that I feel like saw me as a coworker or a peer, but more so a threat” Nina</b></p> <p>Nina - There's so few of us it's so easy to get pitted against each other. [...] Some women have got their elbows out, just trying to make room for themselves. And they want to make sure that there's room at the table for themselves first before they kind of push to make sure that you're in for everybody.</p> <p>Zaya - Women tend to be extremely competitive with each other, which is unfortunate [...] when you're not sure of yourself, you tend to be a little bit more competitive.</p> <p>Nina – You hit some obstacles as a woman in motorsports not so much with male counterparts, but females. Because we're so underrepresented here, the ones that have made it want to make sure they can, they're still at the top. You will hear there are people that say “no, I'm here to open the door for other women,” but actions speak louder than words.</p> <p>Gianna - I think the biggest resistance to be honest with you, the biggest resistance that I had in motorsports as a woman wasn't from men, it was from women. Women felt that I was going to take their boyfriends or their husbands and they didn't want me doing business with their boyfriends and husbands because they</p>	<p><b>Community of women in motorsports</b></p> <p>Diana - I hugged her and I said, “you're not alone anymore. We're doing this together. We are better together”</p> <p>Kia – The women at the track on a weekend are really aware of each other, and they're all really supportive. I've had lots of women that work for a variety of teams come up to me or email me and just say, this is so needed, I'm here, happy to have a call with you for lunch, let me know what I can do [...] they are complimentary of one another and supportive [...] we are all working together [...], we're all just trying to make connections so that we can, you know, do what we do [...]and we've also learned that if we band together, then we can make more change. And we're more efficient that way[...] these days of women against women, and there's not enough room at the top. There's only room for White. I think we're kind of done with that.</p>
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	thought that their boyfriends and husbands would want to have an affair. That is the biggest that I faced. It wasn't man, it was women.	
<b>Individual</b>		
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Coping Mechanisms</b>
<b>Work-life balance</b> – Time management between work and life demands, or the time allocated for responsibilities and loads for each of those domains.	<p><b>“That is my biggest challenge. I only work, I have no balance.” Bia</b></p> <p><b>Difficulty to say no</b> Zaya - I think for women, saying no is the hardest [both at home and at work]. especially in your career like you when you're trying to make a name for yourself. And especially in a more male dominated role. [...] So you just to say yes a lot when you probably shouldn't. I think what happens is you just you're working more and more and definitely takes away from your personal time. for women, I think it takes away from your time, right? Still doing stuff with your family, but you as a person that just</p>	<p><b>Separating personal and professional lives</b> Ella - I try now in these years not to let my career define me. [...] I try to keep things separate so I can decompress and come into, you know, each day reenergized, but it's a lot easier said than done.</p> <p>Gianna - It [motorsports] has nothing to do with my personal life. [...] Motorsports has nothing to do with being a mother [...] those are different levels of concentration, where you're shutting all the rest of that out, and what becomes your focus and your key, things that you care about, and that you're that you're driven to</p>

	<p>goes away. You have work, and children, and family, and there's no other personal time. That's what I think is lost a lot for women.</p> <p>Paige - I am not afraid of long hours, I'm not afraid of putting in the hard work, I'm going to be the first to raise my hand if something's intriguing to me, even if my plate is full. Because I feel like that's a learning opportunity.</p> <p>Nina - By choosing to adjust my lifestyle and become a mom could potentially plateau my career.</p> <p><b>Relocations and traveling</b></p> <p>Heidi - it was a lot of moving. [...] I was a die-hard Texan and was terrified of moving to Las Vegas by myself when I didn't know anybody. And I decided I just had to take a leap of faith and do it. So I went to Vegas. I was only at Vegas about a year and a half when I got a call from Indianapolis Motor Speedway, for IndyCar, and they were recruiting me to come be their manager of media relations for IndyCar and oversee crisis communication. I knew them because IndyCar had raced at Texas and in Vegas. I was from Texas and snow was not in my vocabulary. So I flew up, I did the interview, I got the job offer and I declined it. And the day after I declined it, I got a call from a mentor of mine. [...] He basically told me I was an arrogant punk kid because I was 23 years old and the Holy</p>	<p>do are totally different. It's making sure everything's clean, and people are well fed, and everybody's happy and content, and you're entertaining people. When in motorsports, it's getting things organized and finished and making contacts and fueling big dreams.</p> <p>Rosie - Well, I was never one to date in racing. As when I was young, my parents said, "you better not date anybody. Because you develop a reputation." And for sure, in the early years, you start dating, then you break up with this guy, and then you're with that guy, and then everybody knows everybody, and you get a reputation, especially when there weren't many women in racing, you didn't want to be somebody that had a lot of boyfriends in the paddock. So from an early age, I tried to keep my personal life outside of motorsport. but I really loved my work. And a lot of men were intimidated as I got older, because, you know, I was constantly around men. And you have to be a pretty secure guy, to be with a woman that everybody comes up and kisses her and hugs her all the time [...] I also took care of drivers, especially once I started my own business and worked with a lot of teams and had to work with a lot of drivers. Drivers need a lot of care. And managing and, you know, I would become</p>
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	<p>Grail of motorsports Indianapolis Motor Speedway was offering me an opportunity to come work for them. And that would include the Indy 500, it would include, at that time, the Formula 1 race was coming back. So it would have been Formula 1 and IndyCar and he's like, "you're going to be the youngest manager in the history of the IndyCar Series. You're going to travel internationally, you don't say no to this, pack your bags and come up here." And he's the best advice I've ever received. Because he was right. I needed to do that.</p> <p>Yara - I basically became the race chair by someone asking me to volunteer for it, which is we call that voluntold [...] I volunteered as the race chair for I think like 10 years [...] I was basically number two to the director of operations.</p> <p><b>It is not work, it is a lifestyle</b></p> <p>Joy - It's really hard to be exceptional at anything and have a good work life balance. For me, I get up between 3 and 3:30am, 7 days a week. [...] I can get a block of like 4 or 5 hours done before my kids want to get out of bed. On weekends, in the middle of the day, I grab an hour or two and have a nice chunk of work under control. It's not as visible to my kids, and I am 100% willing to do that 7 days a week so that I do get some time with them. It just matters to me. It's not really</p>	<p>the work wife for a lot of drivers. "Okay, you got your helmet, you got your fire suit, you know, got a photoshoot at 9am" I spent so much time looking after men in my job, I thought, "Hmm, do I really want a man at home that I have to take care of?"</p> <p>Kia - when I'm home, I am really present. And I pick up my kids from school, and I make dinner and I sit down with them. And when I go to work, I go to work.</p> <p><b>It can be a "fit" rather than a balance</b></p> <p>Nina - There are times when it's a 80% work and 20% life and that just that means you have time to shower and pay your bills. And that's it. And then there's times where it gets to be more 50/50. But that's part of that lifestyle, it's understanding that work life balance will not be consistent.</p> <p>Yara - I think everybody's balance looks different. [...] I'm trying to really focus on being productive for the first few hours of the day, and then taking the afternoon to just kind of take the dog for a walk or go see a movie or, something besides just solid working.</p> <p>Paige - it's not a balance, it's a fit. It has to fit together. [...] Because I'm single, I do not have a family out here with me. I'm me, myself and I so the only person I'm cheating on time with is myself.</p>
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	<p>achieving balance. But again, racing is a lifestyle [...] you make your choices, it fills me up. I love what I do.</p> <p>Yara - there's this expectation that you're available all the time [...] I don't want people to feel like they can contact me 24/7 [...] your poor planning is not my emergency.</p> <p>Zaya - Women are very good about nurturing and caring for things. That's who we are. And somethings can become your baby, right? You're very protective of it, and you're not afraid to put the work into it. So I think, we tend to do that. And sometimes it is hard for us to separate [work and life] because [work] is this other child that you want to make sure you've taken care of.</p> <p>Paige - my work defines me and I'm totally okay with that.</p> <p>Paige - I am guilty of raising my hand probably way too much.</p> <p>Ella - I don't know why I take these things so personally, because this has happened a million times before, right? I get told no, if you're in this role [sales] you hear the word no more than anything else and it shouldn't bother you as much. But I take it personally because I love it.</p>	<p><b>Intrinsic motivation</b></p> <p>Diana - I want to do more. I want to almost give back to everything that racing did for me. It's been this joy. It's been this constant. It's been this comfort. It's now been my extended family. And so I feel like I'm almost paying it back.</p> <p>Paige - I want to make sure that I am contributing to our sport and leaving it better than it was yesterday.</p> <p>Nina - I am on our women in NASCAR board and it's part of my reasoning for being there so that I can make it different for somebody else.</p> <p>Joy - I believe that most of the women that I have contact with get to a certain point in life, in their careers, and many men as well, but women typically find themselves reinvigorated by causes and doing things that are bigger than themselves.</p> <p>Sofia – You need a passion for the sport. I don't think that you can fake it. I think you have to be genuine. You have to have a heart for it.</p> <p>Nina - How nice you feel after you've done something nice for somebody else. Ensuring that I'm a sponsor advocate for somebody else has been so helpful in my growth and development.</p>
<p><b>Motherhood</b> – The added responsibilities on women's personal life motherhood brings, which can add more stress to keeping work-life balance.</p>	<p><b>“Mom guilt is real” Kia</b></p> <p><b>Mom guilt</b></p> <p>Bia - I was always gone. [...] I missed a lot of my son's</p>	<p><b>Support systems</b></p> <p>Ayla - I have a great support system around me [...], I just have people around me that support what I'm doing</p>

	<p>firsts: first boy scouts, or his first baseball games. I remember I was traveling so much I bought a little teddy bear. And it had my little boy's recording. And my son would go "I love you, mommy. I love you, mommy" when I was on the road. That's what kept me going. But that's my biggest regret: work-life balance. I sacrificed a lot for my family. [...] I justified it with my income to give him a better life. That's how I justified it.</p> <p>Lola - I have a lot of mom guilt. I work a lot and I work a lot in the summertime.</p> <p>Bia - It's my biggest regret [not being a present mother]. [...] I just loved what I was doing and I was making good money. [...] It's a matter of choice: what's most important to you. And I chose my work to be the most important.</p> <p><b>Lack of support system: relocation away from family</b></p> <p>Heidi - I don't know how we did it [work-life balance]. You know, and even today, we struggle.[...] should have, and I wished I had, if I could do it again, I really should have. But I didn't do a good job of having two personas [mom and work]. So I was still the work mom when I was here with her. I was still serious. The focus, the businesswoman can't turn it off, I was physically with her, I was taking her places and doing things. But wasn't that fun loving laugh let's cuddle up</p>	<p>with my career. I have a good network of people around me, and I think that is crucial for a female in motorsport, because we need that. We need that more than a more than our male counterparts. [...] And I try to schedule my trips so I won't be gone for too long, no more than you know 2 or 3 days. But when I do trips, my daughter thinks it's exciting.</p> <p>Zaya - you have to have support.</p> <p>Lola - When they talk about it takes a village, we have our huge village, it's just a racing village.</p> <p><b>Be a role model to their children</b></p> <p>Ayla - if that's the choice that you make for your career, and that's your passion. I believe it's good for children to see that, and see what it takes, the sacrifices you do for what you're passionate about.</p>
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	<p>you know. [...] She's probably the most mature kid in her entire class. [...] I went and I physically watched her activities, but I didn't go volunteer my time for them, and have the time to volunteer for them. [...] It's a huge struggle, because you just add a layer of complexity to your life of having childcare [...] we moved away from family [...] and we were relying on nannies and childcare.</p> <p><b>Lack of partner support</b> Bia - That's kind of why I'm separated. [...] he didn't [support my career]. One of the things I do a lot of is give my time away. I do a lot of charity work and he would get really frustrated with me that I would put my charity work, let's say, or my work, over family.</p>	
<p><b>Impostor phenomenon</b> - Feelings of self-doubt, assumptions of intellectual and professional fraudulence, and undervaluation of one's own capabilities, intelligence, and skills. In addition to being one's biggest critic, fearing failure, and internalizing mistakes.</p>	<p><b>"I think we are our biggest obstacles to success" Zaya</b></p> <p><b>Difficulty to let go of mistakes</b> Joy.- I think that the ability to let go, and just let it go, is easier for men [...] so mildly feminine trait to take full responsibility for it even above the people that are actually responsible Maria - I think I'm my biggest critic. [...] When I did make mistakes, I beat myself up way, way too much. I mean, I couldn't get over that. [...] I've noticed that with the boy drivers, they get out the car, they make a mistake and they go, "whatever," and they get</p>	<p><b>Confidence through professional maturity</b> Nina - you do have to get comfortable with, and kind of talk yourself out of the bullshit and be your own cheerleader. Because it's kind of like wearing lipstick, right? You got to be confident to wear the lipstick. And once you do, once you have the competence to put on the lipstick, you'll rock it. But if you're not confident that you can wear lipstick, you just start freaking out the entire time, like the it is on your teeth, so that's kind of how I compare being in the workforce was like, "Okay, I gotta be pumped</p>

	<p>back and then they don't think about it. And they have to be like that, otherwise they wouldn't succeed.</p> <p>Nina - If I send an email with a spelling mistake yesterday, I put an apostrophe or didn't delete something, well, I'm still thinking about it.</p> <p><b>Considered oneself lucky rather than proud</b></p> <p>Zaya - And I would say I was lucky enough to have, in my 20s several people to just take notice of my hard work, being there and working 110% all the time, asking for more responsibility.</p> <p>Nina - I was fortunate to come in where there were people in the industry that saw me and saw my pitch.</p> <p><b>Doubting own abilities and capabilities</b></p> <p>Paige - They made me prove myself every single day [...] I had proved probably more to myself than anybody else that I could do something that was different, but that I could still do it my way.</p> <p>Paige - I'm like, "Well, I'm not sure I'm ready for that"</p> <p>Nina - I didn't feel I was that strong in comparison to others. [...] I never thought I would make it this far</p> <p><b>Feeling like a fraud</b></p> <p>Diana - I think one of the biggest things that keeps us out of places or holds us back is ourselves. Because we might think that we're not welcome. And but that's a societal thing that's happened for years and years. So it's not completely</p>	<p>that I do know what I'm talking about. I wouldn't be here today, if they didn't think I was."</p> <p>Ella - it's just all about your professionalism, the professional maturity that you bring to the table. So me going in a room with a bunch of men sitting around the table, it doesn't faze me, I'm going to prove to them very quickly that I am sitting there at that table because I've earned the right to sit at that table.</p> <p>Maria - the older you get, the more you realize 'I am going to make mistakes.' The more experience you get the less mistakes you make in that area. I think as you build confidence in anything it feeds your ability to forgive yourself and learn from it.</p> <p><b>Take risks</b></p> <p>Zaya - I like a challenge. I think that I don't necessarily always take the easiest path.</p> <p>Joy - it never dawned on me to be fearful of failure.</p> <p>Yara - Whether it was gender or age is, people would say, "oh, we can't do that." And I'm like, "Well, why?." "Well, it's never been done before." That's not an excuse that I will accept, and I was the first to say, "you can totally blame this on me."</p> <p>Sofia - And if you're given an opportunity, say yes, and then figure out how to do it. People will help you, people want you to succeed.</p> <p>Kia- We have to be committed to being uncomfortable</p>
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	<p>our fault, per se, because that's the way it is.</p> <p>Nina - you get to a certain point in your career, and you are like, "Okay, I should know that already." If I ask this question, are they gonna think I'm stupid? And the fraud feeling is something I deal with on a daily basis, like "did I fool all these people into thinking that I deserve to be here? Do I actually know what I'm talking about? Am I just regurgitating stuff? Am I confident in my decision? Or am I gonna get second guessed for it?." I think that it's all in my head.</p>	<p>[...] change really comes when you're uncomfortable. So let's get uncomfortable.</p> <p>Joy - My belief system on failure is that you really can't fail if you're always looking for the positive and learning and moving forward. So it didn't scare me to go in and ask for a really big raise from a boss, it also didn't ever occur to me to be fearful of starting my own business. Businesses don't fail as long as you learn and grow from your experiences. [...] I take more risks fundamentally than most. Because I don't have fear. Any type of failure scenario that might come out of it, including debt, or to take over an enormous race team, I don't fear failure.</p> <p>Joy - I feel like the limitation of the challenges is only because I have a unique outlook on what a challenge is, and I don't see it as something that's negative. [...] it fuels you, or it defeats you, right. And so you have to choose to be fueled</p> <p><b>Support Systems</b></p> <p>Nina - having her to bounce ideas off, or having her to give me the confidence, and also say, "Hey, you're wrong in this situation," because you also need someone that can be honest, but also not have their personal gain. I think that's hugely important is having somebody in your corner, that can tell you that you needed to take that</p>
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