

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF MOTHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
FAMILY LIFE AND WORK LIFE SATISFACTION

A THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

BY
MISHALEEN E. ALLEN, B.S.

DENTON, TEXAS

MAY 1993

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank the many people who assisted me in this endeavor. To Dr. Jennifer Martin, committee chair, I express a special note of appreciation for her dedication and encouragement offered throughout this process. The confidence she shared in my ability to complete this project empowered me through many a "dark moment." I also extend appreciation to Dr. Jo Ann Engelbrecht and Dr. Lillian Chenoweth for their support and encouraging comments throughout the research process. I am grateful to have the opportunity to participate in the Family Life and Work Interactions project here at Texas Woman's University and appreciate the quality of excellence encouraged at this institution.

A special thanks to Mary Jo Stein who graciously agreed to participate in the interrelator reliability study. The time and effort she put into assisting me in producing a quality product is greatly appreciated.

But most of all I thank my sons, Kelly and Chris, whose adult-like understanding and patience has allowed me to complete this project, and my mother, Jeanne Hunter. Without her consistent emotional, physical, and spiritual support and guidance this goal would not have been accomplished.

ABSTRACT

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF MOTHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY LIFE AND WORK LIFE SATISFACTION

Mishaleen E. Allen, B.S.

MAY 1993

The following qualitative study analyzed family life and work life satisfaction perceptions of employed mothers with young children. The purpose of the study was to examine family life satisfaction, work life satisfaction, and the relationship between the two from the employed mother's point of view. Qualitative data were drawn from 195 responses on voluntary, self-administered questionnaires distributed at various selected child care and after-school sites within the North Texas area. The following questions guided the qualitative research process: (a) How satisfied are employed mothers with their family life? (b) How satisfied are employed mothers with their work life? and (c) How do family life and work life interact?

Numerous emerging themes and patterns were found to influence family/work life perceptions of employed mothers. Family life satisfaction themes included the influence of relationships, burden of responsibilities, time concerns, and necessary income for lifestyle maintenance. Work life

satisfaction issues focused on the effect of work environment, desire for reduced work load, and impact of personal satisfaction. Family/work interaction themes centered around balancing work and family, spillover effect of family/work, effect on children, and other influences.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|------|
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS | iii |
| ABSTRACTS | iv |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | vi |
| CHAPTER | Page |
| I. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Problem of Study | 1 |
| Rationale of Study | 3 |
| Theoretical Framework | 4 |
| Research Questions | 4 |
| Delimitations | 5 |
| Summary | 5 |
| II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE | 7 |
| Theoretical Approaches | 8 |
| Symbolic Interactionism Theory | 8 |
| Ecological Systems Theory. | 10 |
| Women in the Workforce | 12 |
| Family Life Satisfaction | 14 |
| Work Life Satisfaction | 16 |
| Difficulty in Combining Work and Family | 19 |
| Summary | 22 |
| III. METHODOLOGY | 23 |
| Population and Sample | 23 |
| Instrument | 24 |
| Treatment of Data | 25 |
| Summary | 27 |
| IV. RESULTS | 29 |
| Sample | 29 |
| Analysis and Reporting of Data | 30 |
| Perceptions of Family Life Satisfaction | 32 |
| Influence of Relationships | 34 |
| Burden of Responsibilities | 39 |
| Time Concerns | 44 |
| Necessary Income for Lifestyle Maintenance | 48 |

| | |
|--|---------|
| Perceptions of Work Life Satisfaction | 49 |
| Effect of Work Environment | 51 |
| Desire for Reduced Work Load | 58 |
| Impact of Personal Satisfaction | 61 |
| Perceptions of Family/Work Interactions | 64 |
| Balancing Work and Family | 65 |
| Spillover Effects of Family/Work | 69 |
| Effect on Children | 74 |
| Other Influences | 77 |
| Other Emerging Themes | 79 |
| Discrimination | 80 |
| Cycle of Despair | 82 |
| Summary | 84 |
| V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS | 85 |
| Summary and Discussion of Findings | 85 |
| Perceptions of Family Life Satisfaction | 86 |
| Influence of Relationships | 87 |
| Burden of Responsibilities | 89 |
| Time Concerns | 93 |
| Necessary Income for Lifestyle Maintenance | 95 |
| Perceptions of Work Life Satisfaction | 95 |
| Effect of Work Environment | 96 |
| Desire for Reduced Work Load | 99 |
| Impact of Personal Satisfaction | 102 |
| Perceptions of Family/Work Interactions | 103 |
| Balancing Work and Family | 104 |
| Spillover Effects of Family/Work | 105 |
| Effect on Children | 107 |
| Other Influences | 109 |
| Other Emerging Themes | 111 |
| Discrimination | 111 |
| Cycle of Despair | 112 |
| Conclusions | 113 |
| Recommendations | 116 |
| Limitations | 124 |
| REFERENCES | 126 |
| APPENDICES | 132 |
| A. Questionnaire | 133 |
| B. Data Analysis Concepts and Frequency Counts | 139 |
| C. Emerging Themes | 142 |

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, women have joined the workforce in increasing numbers both in America and abroad. Although motivations for doing so may vary, the implications remain consistently similar. Studies show an overwhelming interaction between work and family; yet much remains to be examined concerning how the individual perceives the impact of the interaction. This qualitative study examined the family life satisfaction, work life satisfaction, and the relationship between the two from the employed mother's point of view.

Problem of Study

Traditionally, the mother has been the primary caregiver responsible for the physical, mental, and emotional well being of the family. With the onset of the industrial revolution, men began working outside the home; but the mother remained as the foundation for a "stable" and productive home life. More often than not, the mother fed, clothed, cared for, and chauffeured the children to their various activities. The father provided the financial

support, but it was the mother's wisdom and expertise that created a comfortable and encouraging environment in which the family could grow and prosper (Kanter, 1977; Voydanoff, 1987).

The past two decades, however, have seen a dramatic shift not only in the feminization of the workforce, but in the evolution of family lifestyles as well. The American economy has become increasingly dependent on the employed mother. Of the 17 million jobs created in the U.S. during the past decade, two thirds were filled by women; and research has shown that the fastest-growing segment of the country's workforce is now mothers with preschool children (Hewlett, 1990).

As the individual family and society as a whole adapt to changes caused by this phenomenon, empirical and popular research is beginning to stress the value of studying perceptions of the employed mother. Research indicates a significant relationship between employees' level of work satisfaction and perceived stress relating to work and family (Burge, Stewart, & Culver, 1991). In a survey of employed mothers conducted by the New York Times in 1989, respondents ranked "tensions between work and family" as the number one problem faced by women today. Likewise, 83% of the women felt torn between "conflicting demands of their jobs and desire to do a better job by their children"

(Hewlett, 1990, p. 13). Undoubtedly, the stress experienced by employed mothers influences the overall level of satisfaction attained in both arenas. How this stress is perceived influences the impact of work and family interactions and their consequent ramifications.

Rationale of Study

Few debate the fact that women have permanently entered the workforce, yet the effect of this occurrence on society and the business community is being examined by many. If the nation is to effectively adapt to the changes required by this transition, research must be focused on how accompanying changes affect not only the family unit, but the individual as well. Likewise, efforts should be made to analyze how the business community has met this challenge and how it can adjust in the future to further ease "tensions between work and family" for the employed mother with young children. Through the use of qualitative research methodology, this study explored issues from the employed mother's point of view. The study examined how individuals perceived the interaction between work and home and the effect these respective environments had on one another.

Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks guided the researcher in the study: symbolic interactionism and ecological systems. The symbolic interactionism perspective directed the investigation of how employed mothers of young children perceived the impact of work on family life satisfaction and family life on work satisfaction. The ecological systems theory was used to define how behavior of individuals within each unit contributed to the functioning of the larger system. Major facets of each theory are addressed in Chapter II.

Research Questions

Qualitative research allows a medium through which the perceptions and opinions of subjects can be examined. Settings and individuals are viewed holistically, not as variables or numbers to be "crunched" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). The research design of a qualitative study focuses around several research questions which guide the researcher through a systematic examination of issues and support the foundation for an analysis of emerging themes. For the purpose of this study, the following research questions guided the researcher through the data collection process:

Research Question 1: How satisfied are employed mothers with their family life?

Research Question 2: How satisfied are employed mothers with their work?

Research Question 3: How do family life and work life interact?

Delimitations

The following delimitations are recognized as influencing this study and its results.

1. Respondents were restricted to mothers of young children only.
2. The questionnaire was offered only at selected sites in the North Texas region.
3. Surveys were conducted at a limited number of sites within the designated geographical location.
4. Responses were limited to those of mothers only.

Summary

The past two decades have seen dramatic changes in the lifestyles of families across the country as women have entered the workforce in increasing numbers. As families struggle to balance demands between work and home, businesses, educators, and policy makers must work together to ease evident "tensions between home and work" for

employed parents. The purpose of this study was to analyze perceptions of employed mothers of young children concerning the impact of work on family life satisfaction and the impact of family life on work satisfaction. A qualitative research design was used to facilitate this process.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The family of the 90's often finds itself struggling between increasing demands of a competitive workforce and constant responsibilities of home life: child care, deadlines, transportation arrangements, unscheduled meetings, doctor's appointments, overtime, Little League, parent/school conferences, laundry, and so forth. Each facet adds its own measure of stress as parents strive to attain some level of success in both family and work life. Much research has been focused on coping skills, adaptive behaviors, and stress management techniques used by employed mothers (Burge, Stewart, & Culver, 1991; Crouter, 1984; Davis, 1989; Miller, 1990; Pearcey, 1990; Ventura, 1987); yet little research has analyzed the perceptions of the individuals. The following chapter is a review of current literature on the theoretical framework for this study as well as various issues concerning work and family interactions.

Theoretical Approaches

Two theoretical approaches guided the researcher in the study: symbolic interactionism and ecological systems. The symbolic interactionism perspective directed the investigation of how employed mothers of young children perceived the impact of work on family life satisfaction and family life on work satisfaction. The ecological systems theory was used to define how behavior of individuals within each unit contributed to the functioning of the larger system.

Symbolic Interactionism Theory

Symbolic interactionism sets forth the premise that "individuals' experiences are mediated by their own interpretations of experience" which are "created through interaction with others" and "used to achieve specific goals" (Jacob, 1987, p. 27). Within the perspective is the over-riding assumption that human experience is mediated by interpretation and that "objects, people, situations, and events do not possess their own meaning; rather meaning is conferred on them" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 33). Drawn out of the works of George Herbert Mead, John Dewey, Charles Horton Cooley, and others, symbolic interactionism places

emphasis on "perspectives and interaction as important variables in all human behavior" (Charon, 1979, p. 24). For this reason, symbolic interaction becomes the natural theoretical framework from which to study the perceptions of employed mothers and analyze how those perceptions influence their work/family interactions.

As social scientists study the behavior of individuals, both causes and effects, symbolic interactionism allows the researcher to focus on the "nature of interaction" (Charon, 1979, p. 23). According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984), Blumer's (1969) analysis of earlier works placing importance on the "social meanings" people attach to their surrounding environments establishes three basic premises upon which symbolic interaction can be grounded:

- (a) "people act towards things, including other people, on the basis of the meanings these things have for them;"
- (b) "meanings are social products that arise during interaction;" and
- (c) "social actors attach meanings to situations, others, things, and themselves through a process of interpretation" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p. 9). By recognizing the belief that employed mothers will view themselves as well as their environments (i.e., family/work) through interpretations of perceived experiences and adjust behavior accordingly (guided by personal values and goals),

symbolic interactionism allows the researcher to gain a stronger understanding of how perceptions of the individual influence family/work interactions.

Ecological Systems Theory

Traditional systems theory sets forth the premise that the family unit is a system which, in turn, interfaces with other systems (Becaver & Becaver, 1982; Hook & Paolucci, 1970). Only when studied in context as part of a larger system can full understanding of how the behavior of an individual affects the interaction between systems be attained (Bowen, 1985). Because the parts of a system are so closely interrelated, change in one area will have a direct effect on other areas (Bowen, 1985; Mannino, 1974). Mutual interdependence provides the key to understanding the relationship between systems (Becaver & Becaver, 1982). By designating the family and the workplace as two such systems, an ecological perspective becomes a logical supporting theoretical framework for this study.

An examination of a family's interaction within its environment (work, school, community, etc.) reveals how actions within one area inevitably affect the others. The ecological systems approach espoused by Urie Bronfenbrenner suggests that ". . . human development occurs as a result of an individual's interactions with the changing environments

within which s/he lives and affects and is affected also by the relationships within which they exist" (Way, 1990, p. 68). The approach focuses around four "layers" of interdependent systems (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem), with the family functioning as a microsystem and the workplace existing as a mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The microsystem includes immediate settings such as home and or school. The mesosystem encompasses social networks such as work and church where the individual comes in contact with social settings on a consistent basis. The exosystem constitutes additional social settings which may or may not directly include the person, but have some direct effect on their life (i.e., community, mass media, governmental agencies, and distribution of goods and services). The final "layer," the macrosystem, refers to the presiding institutional patterns which shape the culture, beliefs, and actions of the country as a whole such as legal/political systems, capitalism, humanitarianism/individual rights, and "acceptable" social actions established by social consciousness (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, pp. 514-515).

As individuals interact within their immediate system (i.e., family/microsystem) and begin to branch out into outer systems (i.e., work/mesosystem), adaptations in one or

both systems may or may not occur (depending on the individual's perceptions). For example, if an employed mother believes it is acceptable to leave a preschool age child in the care of another while she returns to the workforce, she may follow that pattern. However, if within the community in which she lives there is the overriding belief that mothers should remain at home with their children until they begin school (i.e., kindergarten), she may adjust her behavior accordingly. On the other hand, as more mothers with young children view quality child care as a benefit (as opposed to hindrance) to young children, the community may adjust its beliefs accordingly and embrace differing lifestyles. In short, behavior of the employed mother with a young child may be influenced by perceptions she has of community approval of her chosen lifestyle, and community beliefs may be influenced by behaviors of individual members. The acceptance of the ecological systems theory supports the underlying belief that work and family are interdependent systems, thus giving evidence to the fact that the entrance of women into the workforce will have a direct effect on the family as it is known today.

Women in the Workforce

Historically, women have been discouraged from working outside the home by various social and cultural barriers

(Levitan & Gallo, 1990). Only during a time of war was it deemed "appropriate" for a mother to allow others to care for her children as she went off to work (Siegel, 1990). However, with evident decreases in the labor population and the rising costs of living, both families and the national economy have become dependent on the working mother (Hewlett, 1990). Bureau of Labor statistics reveal that in 1990 there were 56,554,000 women actively participating in the U.S. labor force (Johnson, 1992, p. 54). Furthermore, the Department of Labor predicts that of the 26 million net increase in the civilian labor force between 1990 and 2005, women will account for 15 million (or 62%) of the net growth (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1992).

The current prediction substantiates a trend which has been developing in our country for numerous years. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 28.7% of mothers with children under age 6 were in the labor force in 1970; by 1990, this percentage had doubled, reaching 58.2% (Veum & Gleason, 1991). Likewise, 1992 BLS data revealed that 59% (19.2 million) of the 32.6 million children under the age of 18 in the U.S. lived with employed mothers (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1992).

For the majority of these women, working is an economic necessity, not a self-empowering luxury (Scarr, Phillips, &

McCartney, 1989). Due to the decline in real family income from 1973 to 1988 (Congressional Budget Office, 1988), the woman's income allows the dual-income family to maintain a level of living once achieved on a single income and attempts to help single mothers live above poverty (Scarr et al., 1989). According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, the median income for married-couple families in 1990 was \$39,900; whereas the median income for "female householder no husband present" was \$16,900 ("Median Income," 1992, p. 31). Regardless of the reason for entry (to raise the family's standard of living or provide sole support), it is evident that women, including mothers, are a permanent component of the national workforce with relatively few choices of non-participation.

Family Life Satisfaction of Employed Mothers

With the increase of mothers in the American workforce, much research has been done analyzing the effect of this phenomenon on the family (Frantz & Felstehausen, 1992; Hochschild, 1990; Menaghan & Parcel, 1991; Miller, 1990; Scarr et al., 1989; Skinner & McCubbin, 1991). Family responsibilities, financial concerns, child care, scheduling conflicts, spousal support, and marital relationships have been listed among the most critical issues of the working mother (Scarr et al., 1989; Stalnaker & Ericksen, 1990). In

the recent article entitled "Wife's Employment and Quality of Marriage," authors Vannoy and Philliber (1992) examined how wife's employment and gender-role attitudes of both spouses influence perceptions of marital quality of couples. Data were drawn from a 1982-83 random sampling of 452 married couples living in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area who agreed to participate in separate, but simultaneous in-depth interviews within their home and met study criteria (husband employed). Findings revealed that gender-role attitudes of the husband played a greater part in influencing perceptions of both spouses than those of the wife. Study results emphasized the importance of "the ability to give and receive support" as the factor most strongly influencing perceptions of marital quality (Vannoy & Philliber, 1992, p. 397).

As social scientists study the impact of numerous demands on the quality of life of families, emphasis is being placed on the level of family life satisfaction experienced by the involved individuals (Bowen, 1988). Often, it is not the actual time and/or activity required but the perceptions of an individual which influence the level of satisfaction experienced by that individual. This concept applies readily to the employed mother. According to Bharadwaj and Wilkening (1980, p. 166), the amount of

family life satisfaction achieved by the employed mother is directly proportionate to her perceptions of personal efficacy (a person's ability to "actively intervene in and exercise control over those aspects of the environment which directly affect him/her"). Thus, the more control a mother has over the above-mentioned events/situations, the greater level of family life satisfaction she is likely to experience.

Work Life Satisfaction of Employed Mothers

Considerable information, both popular and empirical, has focused on the influence of work-family interactions (Belsky & Eggebeen, 1991; Crouter, 1984; Engelbrecht, Martin, & Chenoweth, 1992; MacEwen & Barling, 1991; Miller, 1990; Pearcey, 1990; Raabe & Gessner, 1988; Siegel, 1990). In the article entitled "Employees' Work Satisfaction and Stress", authors Burge et al. (1991) analyzed the relationship between an employee's level of work satisfaction and stress related to combining work and family. The study sample consisted of 400 randomly selected employees in a single organization recognized for its responsiveness toward working mothers. Study results revealed that, although the effect of work satisfaction on stress was significant (a standardized coefficient of -.258), the impact of stress on work satisfaction was greater

(a standardized coefficient of $-.509$). Study implications emphasize the importance of understanding prevalent work/family interactions and how occurrences within these two arenas affect one another.

Job traits, work schedule, leave policy, fringe benefits, management attitudes, and child care have been listed as issues concerning the working mother of young children due to their inevitable impact on the family (Auerbach, 1990; Burge et al., 1991; Collins & Magid, 1990; Martinez, 1990; Martinez, Overman, & Thornburg, 1990; Piechowski, 1992). In the recent article entitled "The Work/Family Interface: Implications for Home Economists", researchers analyzed family life satisfaction, work life satisfaction, and relationships between the two variables (Engelbrecht, Martin, & Chenoweth, 1992). The study sample consisted of 170 employed mothers whose youngest child was less than seven years of age. During analysis of work life satisfaction, study results showed that only one work aspect, the "opportunity to work independently", rated positively (Mean \geq "4") with a score of 4.21, and that "hours worked per week" (mean=3.01) was believed to most "negatively affect family" (Engelbrecht et al., 1992, p. 20). Study implications concerning work life satisfaction emphasize the importance of education

concerning gender equity in the workplace (to improve opportunities for advancement) and facilitation of employer responsiveness to meet needs of employed mothers with young children.

It has also been found that the level of control an individual has over situations and/or events which affect their environment (personal efficacy) is directly proportional to the amount of satisfaction they achieve (Bharadwaj & Wilkening, 1980). The concept of personal efficacy directly opposes the sense of "powerlessness" often experienced by working mothers and empowers the working mother to succeed in her endeavor. For this reason, it is critical that employed mothers feel that employment choices available to them are realistic and will meet the needs of their family if they are to successfully manage both work and family responsibilities. Likewise, willingness of employers to develop flexible, realistic options for their employees contributes greatly to the level of work life satisfaction experienced by the employed mother and will reduce attrition as well as loss of productivity (Barnett & Rivers, 1992; Braus, 1992; Goff, Mount, & Jamison, 1990). In essence, the greater work life satisfaction a working mother experiences, the more positive her perceptions are of her role as an employed mother, and the greater value she is

to the company (Schwartz, 1990). Her sense of accomplishment is increased while she is empowered to successfully balance the demands of work and family responsibilities.

Difficulty of Combining Work and Family

Considerable research has examined the influence of maternal employment and its consequent effect on the family (Anderson, 1991; Belsky & Eggebeen, 1991; MacEwen & Barling, 1991; Menaghan & Parcel, 1991; Miller, 1990). As mentioned in the previous discussion of symbolic interactionism and ecological systems, the family and the workplace function as two separate yet interdependent systems, both having impact on the other while perceptions directly influence an individual's behavior. The key to understanding the relationship between the two domains is provided through study of work/family interactions.

Regardless of occupation, employed mothers across the country share a common thread: the inevitable stress accompanying the combining of work and family (Burris, 1991). 1987 Census Bureau data revealed that 52.1 million children under the age of 15 live with employed mothers (O'Connell & Bachu, 1990). Family type (single or two-parent) and attitudes exhibit tremendous influence on the workplace as "spill-over" inevitably occurs between

the two domains (Crouter, 1984). The type and level of stress experienced by the employed mother may vary somewhat between individuals, but some facets remain consistently similar due to the fact that women have "changed" more quickly than society has adapted to that change (Hochschild, 1990, p. 230).

Current trends in research appear to support the fact that, although the family system exerts the greatest influence on the individuals within the microsystem, significant influence is placed on surrounding systems which, in turn, interface with the family unit (Becaver & Becaver, 1982). As the family unit attempts to maintain a quality home life environment, the employed mother experiences considerable stress while she struggles to balance the pressures of work with the needs of her family.

Research trends reveal that, although men are becoming more involved with parenting and family issues, the working mother still shoulders the majority of the household responsibilities (Baxter, 1992; Crouter, 1984; Frantz & Felstehausen, 1992; Hochschild, 1990; Pearcey, 1990; Piechowski, 1992; Scarr et al., 1989). In a cross-national study of work in the family and in the labor market authors Kalleberg and Rosenfeld (1990) analyzed workforce participation and household division of labor. Data

collected from four countries (United States, Canada, Norway, and Sweden) were drawn from existing data sets within each country, and analyzed using numerous variables. In comparisons concerning "hours employed per week" and "percentage of household tasks done," study results revealed that even though means of hours worked for men and women in the United States were 47.3 and 39.7 respectively, U.S. women completed 78.7% of the household duties as compared to the 22.5% completed by U.S. men (Kalleberg & Rosenfeld, 1990, p. 339).

Recent studies present numerous coping skills utilized by the employed mother to facilitate the balancing of work and family. For some women, the concept of "sequencing" has become an acceptable balance between work and family. Discussed in the article "Balancing Career and Family" (Pearcey, 1990), sequencing identifies the "idea that adult life proceeds in stages, each with a unique balance between personal life and career" (Pearcey, 1990, p. 225). For employed mothers the postponing or reduction of work outside the home during a child's infant and preschool years is one such stage.

Prioritization among roles, lowering of standards, and compromise are also found to be common ways employed mothers reduce stress and make their lifestyle more "manageable"

(Anderson & Leslie, 1991; Burris, 1991; Campbell & Moen, 1992; Pieochowski, 1992; Williams, Suls, Alliger, Learner, & Wan, 1991). Family members' perceptions of their situation appear to be more important coping behaviors in managing the stressors of the lifestyle" (Skinner & McCubbin, 1991, p. 120). As with family/work life satisfaction, the manner in which an individual perceives a situation directly correlates with the level of satisfaction in the inevitable juggling act of work and family responsibilities.

Summary

This chapter presented a review of current literature concerning the theoretical framework supporting this study, the entrance of women in the workforce, work/family life satisfaction of employed mothers, and interactions between work and family. Both the symbolic interaction perspective and ecological systems theory (supported by the traditional systems theory) were discussed. Relevant issues demonstrating the interrelatedness of family and work were also addressed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The study was a qualitative analysis of perceptions of employed mothers with young children concerning family and work life satisfaction. A qualitative research design, descriptive and exploratory in nature, was used to facilitate the research process. Data were collected from voluntary, self-administered questionnaires which were distributed at various selected child care and after-school sites within the North Texas area. Data were analyzed for emerging themes related to the research topic. This chapter presents the methodology, population and sample, data collection, and treatment techniques used within the study.

Population and Sample

This research project completed the third phase of an exploratory study undertaken at Texas Woman's University (Denton, Texas) focusing on family and work interactions. Phase one of the study surveyed employed female parents (whose youngest child was less than 7 years of age) at five child-care centers in the North Texas area (Engelbrecht et al., 1992). Phase two of the study surveyed employed

mothers at 15 after-school programs within the same geographical locale; respondents had at least one child between the ages of 7 and 13 years (Stein, 1991). The present study was restricted to employed mothers of children between the ages of 6 weeks and 12 years who responded to an open-ended question on the questionnaire used in the two previous studies.

A total of 195 subjects wrote additional comments on the questionnaires to express their feelings concerning work and family life. Of 202 respondents in the first study (employed mothers of preschool children), 109 employed mothers replied to the open-ended question. In the second study (employed mothers of school-age children), 86 of the 164 respondents replied.

Instrument

The instrument, "Family Life and Work Interactions" (see Appendix A), used in the previous studies, was an adaptation of the "Work, Home, and Family Questionnaire" developed by Felstehausen, Glosson, and Couch (1987). Utilizing a 5-point Likert-type scale from "very satisfied" (5) to "very dissatisfied" (1), the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate satisfaction with home and family

life aspects (28 factors) as well as work aspects (22 factors). They were also asked to rate the effect of each family aspect on work and each work aspect on family with a 5-point Likert-type scale from "very positive" (5) to "very negative" (1). One open-ended question at the conclusion of the survey gave respondents an opportunity to express perceptions concerning their satisfaction with family life and work life: "What else would you like to say about how satisfied you are with your family life and work life?" This qualitative study focused upon responses to the open-ended question.

Treatment of Data

Qualitative research is exploratory in nature, often providing rich, descriptive data by using people's own words and observable actions as the primary focus (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). Data for this study were drawn from existing data collected during two previous studies (Engelbrecht et al., 1992; Stein, 1991). Of the combined 364 respondents, 195 employed mothers answered the open-ended question at the end of the study questionnaire. These qualitative responses were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for emerging themes.

During the transcription process, respondents were labeled according to their respective survey number

(ex: 002, 093, 172, etc.) so that study affiliation could be maintained (preschool or after-school). Likewise, age, job title, marital status, and total family income were coded at the end of each response (ex: 29/Adm.Asst./S/10-20K).

A numerical color coding system was developed to categorize data and facilitate theme analysis using the three presiding research questions as guides (ex: "green" = family life satisfaction; "yellow" = work life satisfaction; "pink" = family/work life interaction). Numbers were used to distinguish various concepts identified within the three general groupings (e.g., "1" = money; "2" = personal time; "3" = time with children; "4" = spousal support; "5" = discipline, etc.).

Data were analyzed by the investigator and one other graduate student to encourage accurate interpretation of the data analysis (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). A random sample of 25% (N=48) was developed by selecting every fourth response to be read by the outside reader. Transcribed data were read, re-read, and highlighted according to the predetermined color-coding system. Data were read and re-read again while assigning numerical codes to concepts as they were mentioned. For example, if money was mentioned in the first response it was assigned the numerical code of "1". Everytime money was mentioned again throughout the

analysis process, the comment was marked with the number "1" to designate concept affiliation. Each time a new concept was mentioned (e.g., personal time, child care, single parent status) it was assigned the next number on the list.

Because both parties entered the research process without an assumption of "key words," agreement was based on overall concepts and not exact wording. For example, "money" and "pay" were considered synonymous in regard to comments concerning work life satisfaction and amount of pay. Upon comparison, a 98% agreement was found between concepts identified by the researcher and those recognized by the colleague. Identified concepts were then assembled into groups by the researcher based on characteristic similarities (e.g., relationships, money, personal time, etc.) and assigned theme titles. This process allowed for the identification of emerging themes within the study data.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to analyze the responses of 195 employed mothers of young children who replied to the open-ended question at the conclusion of the "Family Life and Work Interactions" questionnaire used during two previous studies (Engelbrecht et al., 1992; Stein, 1991). A qualitative design was used to facilitate the research

process. Data from selected questionnaires were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for emerging themes.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The following chapter presents analysis of data gathered during a qualitative study of employed mothers with young children. The purpose of the study was to examine family life satisfaction, work life satisfaction, and the relationship between the two from the employed mother's point of view. Reported findings are organized into categories based on the review of literature and research questions: perceptions of family life satisfaction, perceptions of work life satisfaction, and perceptions of family/work interactions. A description of the sample, analysis of data, and a summary of findings are provided.

Sample

The study sample consisted of 195 employed mothers with young children, ages six weeks to 12 years old. Of the 195 women, 153 were married and 42 were single. The mean age of the respondents was 35 years. Annual family income was reported in the following categories (the number of respondents in each shown in parentheses): under \$10,000 (N=7), \$10,001-20,000 (N=20), \$20,001-30,000 (N=25),

\$30,001-40,000 (N=29), \$40,001-50,000 (N=36), \$50,001-60,000 (N=29), \$60,001-70,000 (N=21), and over \$70,000 (N=23).

Five respondents chose not to report their annual family income.

Analysis and Reporting of Data

Findings presented in this section were established through an analysis of the open-ended question "What else would you like to say about how satisfied you are with your family life and work life?" on the "Family Life and Work Life Interactions" questionnaire. The following research questions guided the researcher through the analysis process to determine reoccurring themes based on the works of Taylor and Bogdan (1984): (a) How satisfied are employed mothers with their family life? (b) How satisfied are employed mothers with their work? and (c) How do family life and work life interact?

Respondents' comments were transcribed; coded according to age, marital status, job title, and total family income; then read and re-read several times to determine emerging themes. Family life satisfaction was identified with "+/- F" ("+" being positive and "-" being negative). Work life satisfaction was identified with "+/- W." A numerical color coding system was utilized to categorize data and facilitate

theme analysis using the three presiding research questions as guides (i.e. "green" - family life satisfaction, "yellow" work life satisfaction, and "pink" - family/work life interaction). Color-coded segments of transcripts were assembled into appropriate categories (family life satisfaction, work life satisfaction, and family/work interaction), and numerically coded by "key words" (i.e. 1 = "money", 18 = "spousal support", 40 = "difficult to blend", etc.) to distinguish subcategories. Forty-seven different concepts were identified, ranked according to frequency of comment within category, and assembled into "emerging themes" [i.e. "time" (61) - personal (18), family (12), children (28), and spouse (3)].

A random sample of 25% was compiled by selecting every fourth response and independently analyzed by an objective colleague to encourage accurate interpretation of data analysis (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). Because both parties began the research process without an assumption of "key words," agreement was based on overall concepts and not exact wording. For example, "money" and "pay" were considered synonymous in regard to comments concerning work life satisfaction and amount of pay. Identified concepts were then compared to those of the investigator to check for agreement. The researcher and colleague compared results of

data analysis and found an agreement of 98% (47 concepts identified by the researcher and 48 recognized by the colleague). Concepts were assembled into groups sharing similar characteristics (e.g., relationships, personal satisfaction, balancing work and family) and assigned theme titles. Emerging themes were then examined by the researcher in relation to the research questions.

The following data are presented through summarization and verbatim quotations. Quoted sources are identified with respective study code numbers and demographic codings (i.e. #191/29/M/Adm.Asst./30-40k). Study code numbers 001-202 designate respondents from the first study of employed mothers (those with preschool age children) while numbers 203-368 identify respondents from the second (those with school age children). Demographic codings represent respondent's age, marital status, job title, and total annual family income.

Perceptions of Family Life Satisfaction

During the initial reading of data the investigator coded individual transcripts with "+/-F" to designate positive or negative perceptions of family life satisfaction. The goal during this section of data analysis was to identify how satisfied employed mothers were with their family life. Although several respondents made

specific references to family life satisfaction (such as, "I am very satisfied with my job and my family"), the majority of designations were made based on the researcher's interpretation of respondent's comments. Of the 195 participants, 124 commented concerning family life satisfaction (63 positive and 61 negative). Further analysis of data was necessary to interpret issues influencing perceptions of participants regarding family life satisfaction.

Analysis of data revealed 16 different concepts (see Appendix B) concerning family life satisfaction mentioned by employed mothers. Among the 248 comments about family life satisfaction, the seven most often cited issues were as follows: (a) 44 recognized "spousal support" (positive or negative), (b) 38 referred to "money/lifestyle" (income necessary to maintain current standard of living), (c) 28 focused on "time with children," (d) 24 acknowledged "household responsibilities," (e) 20 identified themselves as a "single parent," and (f) 18 mentioned "age of children" and 18 considered "personal time." Identified concepts were then assembled into groups sharing similar characteristics to facilitate the emergence of predominant themes.

As participants shared perceptions about family life, the following themes and patterns emerged (see Appendix C):

influence of relationships, burden of responsibilities, time concerns, and necessary income for lifestyle maintenance. When discussing relationship issues, respondents focused on the influence of spousal support, children's support, and outside support. Responsibility concerns included the impact of household chores, single parent status, age of children, and child care experience. Time considerations involved sacrifice of personal time, limited time with family, and quality time with children. References to money dealt with lifestyle maintenance.

Influence of Relationships

The employed mothers most often mentioned relationships as influential factors in family life satisfaction. Respondents commented on the influence of spousal support, children's support, and outside support.

Influence of spousal support. Of the 16 aspects of family life satisfaction, "spousal support," one aspect of relationships, was cited most frequently. Employed mothers perceived emotional support from the spouse, often acted out through physical assistance, to be a major contributor to family life satisfaction. The following statements express the positive contributions of spousal support.

I love my husband who helps me alot at home - We are true partners.
(#106/M/Credit Manager/60-70k)

I have a fiance that lives with me and he keeps my spirits up a lot so I am fairly happy at home and work.

(#113/21/S/Accounting Data Entry Clerk/-10k)

My husband is more supportive than most. He always helps, but I prefer to do the housework myself. He doesn't understand that, but I guess it's my southern upbringing.

(#120/M/Asst. to Materials Specialist/30-40k)

My husband is very supportive and shares responsibilities at home.

(#151/31/M/High School Biology Teacher/40-50k)

Without the supportive attitude of my husband, I would be in a different frame of mind. I cannot stress enough how vital it is for the working husband and wife to be PARTNERS in the operations of a home when both partners work outside the home.

(#161/37/M/Exec.Adm.Asst./40-50k)

My husband is extremely helpful with the kids and at home. We feel the kids are OURS together. We both know there is a need for at least one of us to be home.

(#164/M/Systems Analyst/40-50k)

Both adults in the family need to feel the same about their jobs and family. A working mother has so much responsibility that it becomes overwhelming at times unless there is a partnership with the child and father. If you have that like I do, then your job will be much easier.

(#220/35/M/Financial Aid for college/20-30k)

I could not have advanced as far and effectively and as fast, had it not been from 100% support from my husband! His ability to be a sounding board, judge, critic, and cheerleader has helped me through my darkest hours. He knows of no divisions in household responsibilities. He is a prince and demands the children's respect of my needs when necessary!

(#248/35/M/Marketing Coordinator/70+k)

My support from my family and their share in responsibilities is a plus. I had a much more

difficult time as a single parent before I remarried.

(#255/M/Training Coordinator/60-70k)

I have been raising 2 children as a single mother for nearly 6 years - until I remarried 7 months ago. I have been fortunate to have well paying jobs that I thoroughly enjoyed which helped ease some of the stress of doing it alone. But I find sharing the responsibility of home life now makes it all seem much easier, even though I

still do the majority of the housework, etc. Having the emotional support of my husband plus an excellent work situation makes it much easier.
(#268/M/Regulatory Affairs Supervisor/40-50k)

Just as the presence of a "supportive" spouse encouraged a positive image of family life satisfaction, a lack of support often contributed to negative views. The following statements demonstrate the negative influence of lack of spousal support on family life satisfaction from the employed mother's point of view.

It would be much better if my husband didn't drive a truck and stay gone more than he's at home.

(#152/26/M/Assembly/20-30k)

If my spouse would do alot more with the children and housework, bills, house repair, etc., it would make a tremendous difference in our family life and work.

(#219/36/M/Secretary II/40-50k)

I have been married for 17 1/2 years and am very unhappy about the lack of help I get from my husband in regards to parenting and household chores. I currently do most of the household chores (pay the bills, laundry, etc.) - my husband occasionally cooks, mows the lawn, and picks up our daughter from afterschool (when in town - he has been gone 4 months on work

assignments and personal vacation this year). Basically, I've had it and intend to obtain a divorce when he returns from his next trip. Life is actually easier when he's gone because its one less person to pick-up after.

(#235/40/M/Senior Research Geologist/70+k)

Influence of children's support. Children's support (the presence or lack thereof) also played a vital role in perceptions employed mothers developed concerning family life satisfaction. For many mothers this aspect was viewed as essential in maintaining a positive family life while being employed outside the home. Positive support lent itself to mother and child being mutually supportive of one another, whereas negative support often encouraged a negative view of family life satisfaction.

My daughter understands that I LIKE to work and that I MUST work to support us. She often visits me at work.

(#033/39/S/Adm.Assistant/10-20k)

I find it extremely hard to be a single parent with three children and having no husband for support and help - I don't foresee this changing. Children - will not help with duties unless I make them! I'm also going to school - 2 nights a week - and have been for 1 year - I know they don't understand the benefits of this long term goal - It would be nice to come in sometime and have supper ready for me - the dishes done - clothes folded - WITHOUT being asked to!! This is ONE VERY frustrated parent!! I don't enjoy being single - it's a very lonely life!

(#072/42/S/Clerk-retail/20-30k)

As a single parent, I certainly wish for more time with my child, a higher paying, more fulfilling job, and an overall better life. To achieve the goals I have for me and my child, we both emotionally support each other and we

work together for those goals. We take one day at a time and do the best with what we have. It's not the traditional family I grew up in, but, we're basically happy.

(#094/28/S/Customer Service Rep./10-20k)

My responses appear to be very conflicting. The kids aren't wild about my working at all. I get comments going out the door in the morning like, "I hate your job." I figure they would like being together 24 hours a day even less.

(#120/33/M/Asst. to Materials Specialist/30-40k)

I have a 6 year old daughter. She doesn't complain about my working. In fact, she's proud.

(#258/34/M/Liquidation Assistant/70+k)

Influence of outside support. Another component of relationships described by employed mothers was that of an outside support system. This system, be it one person or many, often helped ease the stress load of the employed mother and encouraged a positive perception of family life satisfaction.

I have my mother nearby who helps me out occasionally with the kids.

(#040/M/Co-owner of Travel Agency/40-50k)

I am VERY fortunate that I am part of a family business with extremely great relationships and love.

(#062/S/Owner-Vice President/20-30k)

The satisfaction with my job, the support of my family, and having a GOOD child, all work together to support me and these responsibilities.

(#132/29/S/Housing Manager/20-30k)

It has helped to have family, church, and friend support, as well as being able to depend on good safe child care for our child.

(#145/28/M/Dental Hygienist/30-40k)

I have supportive parents in Oregon and some very good divorced friends who are helping me through this difficult time.

(#235/40/M/Senior Research Geologist/70+k)

Our lives are a constant "juggling act". I have friends who provide support...otherwise I could not keep this up. I am going to be in San Antonio for 6 days for a work-related seminar. Without the concerted efforts of several good friends and my husband, I would be unable to be gone for such an extended length of time.

(#239/40/M/Assoc.Dir./70+k)

Burden of Responsibilities

The employed mothers viewed the burden of various responsibilities as another factor related to family life satisfaction. Of the 16 concepts of family life satisfaction, "household responsibilities" ranked fourth in frequency of mention, "single parent status" ranked fifth, and "age of children" tied for sixth as factors most often cited by respondents. Employed mothers revealed that individual perceptions of stresses and/or "manageability" of the impact of these responsibilities directly related to their level of family life satisfaction.

Impact of household responsibilities. Data analysis revealed that, from the respondents' perceptions, employed mothers still put in full days "at the office" and take on "second jobs" when they come home at night. Various factors (e.g., spousal support) may have influenced the amount of stress experienced by the individual; nonetheless, the employed mothers felt they carried the majority of the

burdens of household management. Several respondents mentioned the dissatisfaction they experienced concerning lower standards they were forced to accept due to lack of time.

There is never enough time for household and family responsibilities. I stuck this in on my lunch break. Thanks!!
(#026/37/S/Engineering Technician/20-30k)

Must manage 90% of household and parenting responsibilities and still be a "good worker," "good wife," and a "good mother."
(#063/29/M/Clerk Special-Banking/40-50k)

The time I do have is split between household chores, discipline, and just good talking (which is more often than not left out). I really don't have enough time do to a good mothering job, but I believe I do the best I can under my conditions.
(#108/27/M/Publications Specialist/30-40k)

The major conflict I feel is between work and housework. I get frustrated by the lack of time to keep my home the way my stay-at-home Mom did.
(#120/33/M/Asst. to Materials Specialist/30-40k)

Get up 1st, get breakfast ready, wake kids up, get them ready, shower myself, make-up, dress, lunches, get kids to school and other to daycare, get to work, WORK (sometimes miss lunch and taking NO breaks), pick up kids, get home, do homework - sometimes over (my 2nd grader requires supervision or he'll lose concentration), get dinner ready, feed, clean up, get kids bathed and ready for bed...EVERY NIGHT!! By the time Sat & Sun get here, I'm so far behind on housework I can't get control.
(#155/29/M/International Billing Specialist/50-60k)

I work an 8 to 4:30 position but still find it difficult to complete home life tasks (cleaning, cooking, etc.) in my evening time. I spend approximately on to 1 1/2 hours each night helping my one child with homework. I can't imagine having two who need help. Then on my

weekends, I have the privilege of actually "cleaning" my home unless my (3) step-children come (which defeats the purpose). Therefore, my home is never quite the way I would have it if I didn't work full-time.
 (#254/34/M/Executive Secretary/40-50k)

The demands of two children and a career doesn't leave any time for myself or my marriage. Although my husband is very good with the routine care of the children when I travel, he doesn't do the laundry, errands, or shopping. All the organization of the household is left to me. I would like to see this portion of our responsibilities split more evenly.
 (#295/38/M/Sr.Product Manager/70+k)

There would be an outstanding difference in our family life if my husband would take more than minor interest in running the household and recognizing the fact I must work due to financial reasons.
 (#317/46/M/Assistant Paralegal/50-60k)

I have the strain of my husband working 50 miles away for very low pay and that leaves me with a lot of the household responsibilities.
 (#337/M/Multi-age Group Daycare Teacher/20-30k)

I need a maid/housekeeper and a cook. Our breakfasts are non-existent and I only cook on weekends. We eat at the cafeteria a lot so our nutritional requirements are met a little better. I miss the days of a clean house and a nutritional dinner! If I had a million dollars the only change I would make in my life is to HIRE A MAID!!
 (#355/35/M/Owner-Elem.Private School/NA)

Impact of single parent status. Nearly 50% (20 out of 42) of the respondents who were single parents mentioned the additional level of stress and/or sense of responsibility experienced by single parents due to their family situation. More often than not, the reality of being the sole support for their child (or children) intensified the sense of

responsibility as the single mother strove to provide stability and comfort for her dependents.

It's very difficult being a single parent, with no child support and always having to be the decision maker.
(#029/25/S/Service Rep./10-20k)

I love my job and it has great flexibility - I do feel stress as a single parent in being able to juggle both responsibilities.
(#132/29/S/Housing Manager/20-30k)

Being a single parent is very stressful, but having a job you like, and one that pays well helps alot.
(#217/31/S/Sales Rep./20-30k)

The stress that I have within my work certainly carries over to trying to deal with my two daughters every night. It weighs heavy on your shoulders at times. Being a single parent is not an easy road.
(#282/34/S/Customer Service Rep./10-20k)

All things considered, I'm happy with my family life and working conditions and feel like I've done a very good job raising my child as a single parent for the last 8 years.
(#301/31/S/Executive Sales Secretary/10-20k)

I get tired of having all the responsibility myself. Taking care of house, child, and dog. I need a family again. It's tiring and lonesome. (Even with support from family nothing takes place of a husband and full time Dad.)
(#314/29/S/Secretarial-Inside Sales/20-30k)

Impact of age of children. Eighteen participants commented on the influence of children's ages on family life satisfaction. As the children became older, physical responsibilities lessened, easing some of the burden; but, as one mother mentioned, the children were also more aware

of the differences and problems associated with employed mothers.

Right now it is OK, however it will all change when she starts regular school.
(#051/37/M/Secretary Teller/NA)

I can't help contemplating how different my answers would have been 2 years ago. I am happier now in both my personal and professional lives than I have ever been. I am finally through the "babyhood" years and the stress involved with leaving an infant - all the guilt. My child is more independent now, we are sleeping through the night, etc....
(#073/32/M/Manager, Quality Assurance/70+k)

New baby in the home - much strain on family right now. Infant had problems, so MANY bills!
(#121/34/M/Asst.Dir.Univ.Lab Center/20-30k)

I was fortunate enough to have been able to stay at home for 10 1/2 months with my child, then work part time until she was 3, at which time I was fortunate enough to go back to my previous ("pre-baby") employer who had an on-site child development center. Imagine my peace of mind knowing my child was in the same building!!
(#161/37/M/Exec.Adm.Asst./40-50k)

The older my child gets, the more pressure of my "balancing act" seems to be spilled over onto him. He recognizes the additional stress I am under as opposed to his friends' stay-at-home Moms, and he wants us both to be able to relax more.
(#298/40/M/Office Manager/50-60k)

It hasn't always been so wonderful! As my son gets older - it's easier for me to "give" a bit more at work and have a career - and plan for advancements in the future.
(#350/33/M/Senior Analyst/70+k)

Impact of child care experience. Numerous employed mothers linked a positive child care experience to their

level of family life satisfaction. For study respondents, knowing their children were well taken care of significantly reduced mental burdens experienced by the employed mother, thus having a positive impact on the perceived family life satisfaction level.

I would not change a GREAT deal - my position is typically male and very stressful but I love it. Without good day care I would have to give it up.
(#106/39/M/Credit Manager/60-70k)

Also, the better the mother feels about the daycare makes an impact in the lives of the family.
(#124/31/M/RN-Nurse-Physician Asst./40-50k)

It has helped to have family, church, and friend support, as well as being able to depend on good safe child care for our child.
(#145/28/M/Dental Hygienist/30-40k)

I leave my child at (name of local day care). When I drop her off I know that she is getting the best care - I don't ever worry about how she is doing during the day or if she is being well taken care of. That is a big relief during the day at work for me.
(#162/29/M/Superintendent's Secretary/20-30k)

Time Concerns

According to study respondents, "time" was another influential factor when analyzing family life satisfaction. Out of the 16 subcategories, "time with children" ranked fourth in frequency of mention, and "personal time" tied for sixth in concepts most often cited. Employed mothers perceived "time" (or the lack thereof) to be a critical issue when considering family life satisfaction due to the

effect it had on the physical, mental, and emotional stability of all parties. Aspects of time discussed by the respondents included sacrifice of personal time, limited time with family, and time spent with children.

Sacrifice of personal time. Analysis of data revealed that employed mothers suffer from acute loss of personal time. Furthermore, when time is short, the employed mother is the first one to sacrifice personal time for the benefit of the family.

I have no big complaints about my work or home life. Time to manage everything is the biggest problem and stressor. There is not enough time in the day to do anything 100%. There is absolutely NO time for taking care of own needs -- maybe when I retire.
(#127/31/S/Secretary/10-20k)

But honestly, after several months of very long, non - stop days of shifting roles 2-3x's a day; and usually only averaging about 4-6 hours of sleep a night - sometimes I just want to escape, if only for 1 day. And sometimes I feel very alone; and that I'm the only one in our household that doesn't have the opportunity to relax.
(#146/34/M/Fitness Director/20-30k)

But it's very, very, hard holding a job and trying to be Mother and Father and still find a little time to make for myself.
(#243/M-Seperated/Dental Asst./M(30-40k) . . .10-20k)

I do not have any of my own personal time. After my children go to bed I have to do work in order

to stay somewhat under control at work.
 (#261/36/M/Claims Specialist/30-40k)

It is very difficult to work at a highly demanding job, come home, have time to play with my daughter, make dinner, housework, and have a good relationship with my husband. No time allowed for myself.
 (#344/38/M/Administrative Asst./50-60k)

It is often hard to set priorities. I want to do all my jobs well--teacher--mother--wife --artist. It is not possible--so something is always getting the short end of the stick. Usually it is myself. Personal time is usually sacrificed first.
 (#364/33/M/Teacher 30-40k)

The demands of two children and a career doesn't leave any time for myself or my marriage.
 (#295/38/M/Sr.Product Manager/70+k)

Limited time with family. Numerous mothers mentioned the importance of designating "family time" to be spent as a unit yet felt that time restraints significantly limited the amount of time available for this purpose. Perceptions evolved around the belief that time spent interacting as a family unit would improve family life satisfaction.

Overall, I'm thankful for the job I have, but I do desire more time with my family. Maybe a little less commitment to the job and more to family. But this is a goal for the near future for me and my husband. Basically, I don't have too bad a situation.
 (#137/29/M/Legal Asst./50-60k)

I think most people and companies could operate on 10 hour, 4 day work weeks--giving the FAMILY more time together as a whole.
 (#158/34/M/Production Operator/40-50k)

Lack of time for family and sufficient financial resources are actually our only real challenges.

Our relationship as a family is close, non-friction, and quality. We would be happier if we had alot more family time.

(#196/35/M/Sales Director/40-50k)

Time spent with children. The employed mothers focused considerable attention on dedicating quality time to children within their busy schedules. Several mentioned that the children were their first priority and greatest concern when it came to maintaining positive views of family life satisfaction.

I have periods of guilt about the amount of time I can spend with my daughter because I have no choice about whether or not to work; I am a single mother who receives NO child support.

(#033/39/S/Adm.Asst./10-20k)

But I worry most about our child. I try very hard to organize my time, so that everything gets done on a timely basis, but mostly to provide a slot of quality time for my child everyday. It is important for me to impress upon him that however busy life gets, he is very precious and of utmost importance to us.

(#146/34/M/Fitness Director/20-30k)

I'd prefer not to work because of the strain and stress it puts on me in reference to meeting my family needs. I would be more satisfied to work less and spend more time raising children.

(#173/29/M/Appointment Secretary/50-60k)

I don't have as much time to spend with each child one on one - and I DO feel I'm missing out on alot of their growth.

(#184/39/M/Assoc.Prof./60-70k)

I am very satisfied with work and family, but I would like to spend more time with my daughter.

(#189/28/M/Hair Designer-Manager&Owner/40-50k)

After staying home for two years after the birth of my 3rd child, I definitely prefer being home to working. I think the hardest thing about working is the lack of available time I have to spend with each child individually. There just isn't the hours to sit and enjoy them and give them the attention I wish I could.

(#285/32/M-Separated/Executive Secretary/10-20k)

I think my having only one child has been an advantage in getting a good balance between home and work, because I can give him specialized attention when he needs more from me - and I can do the same with work. I think that with more than one child, MY work would have to consistently take 2nd place.

(#350/33/M/Senior Analyst/70+k)

Necessary Income for Lifestyle Maintenance

Data analysis revealed that the respondents were employed primarily to provide necessary income for families to maintain their current level of living. Their comments focused on lifestyle maintenance.

Of the 16 subcategories of family life satisfaction, "money/lifestyle" was cited second most often by respondents. Employed mothers perceived that they were working out of necessity, not luxury. Several respondents mentioned the cost of child care in regard to family finances.

I work to provide extra money and insurance coverage for my family.

(#031/33/M/Library Aide/30-40k)

It is very difficult to manage a family and a job. I feel most of us are out there NOT because of the career. It's because of the cost of living - just to make ends meet.

(#036/40/M/Customer Service Rep./30-40k)

I wish I could stay home - but because of financial problems - I am unable to.
(#085/40/M/Legal Secretary/50-60k)

On the other hand, I'd love to have the choice of working part-time, but our current life-style doesn't allow the financial loss by working less than full time at the level of responsibility as I am.
(#112/33/M/Physical Therapy Manager/70+k)

Growing up I considered myself a "Women's Libber" while still maintaining that subconscious desire to marry rich, have babies, and work only for enjoyment. You quickly learn that you HAVE to work - babies or not - enjoy it or not!!
(#140/33/M/Registered Nurse/50-60k)

I enjoy working - which is good - because it is a necessity financially.
(#151/31/M/High School Biology Teacher/40-50k)

We depend on my income for essentials, its not just for luxuries.
(#189/28/M/Hair Designer-Manager&Owner/40-50k)

I would like to stay at home with kids or work part-time, but it's not possible. And we do struggle along financially. I might feel a little better if I had money to spend on things for the house and family.
(#320/31/M/Sr.Production Controller/NA)

Also, childcare is FAR too expensive.
(#158/34/M/Production Operator/40-50k)

Day Care offered by (local ISD) for after school has been a blessing. Very affordable and convenient and of good quality.
(#207/33/M/Student/30-40k)

Perceptions of Work Life Satisfaction

During the initial reading of data the investigator coded individual transcripts with "+/-W" to designate positive or negative perceptions of work life satisfaction.

The goal during this section of data analysis was to identify how satisfied employed mothers were with their work life. Although several respondents made specific references to work life satisfaction (i.e., "I am very satisfied overall with my job and my family. . . ."), the majority of designations were made based on the researcher's interpretation of respondent's comments. Of the 195 participants, 116 commented concerning work life satisfaction (63 positive and 53 negative). Further analysis of data was necessary to interpret issues influencing perceptions of respondents regarding work life satisfaction.

Analysis of data revealed 15 different concepts concerning work life satisfaction (see Appendix B) mentioned by employed mothers. The seven work life issues mentioned most often were as follows: (a) 25 referred to the enjoyment/satisfaction experienced with the job, (b) 23 mentioned money (or pay) in correlation to work satisfaction, (c) 20 identified a preference to work "part-time," (d) 17 preferred not to work, (e) 14 cited concerns with work requirements, and (f) 13 acknowledged the impact of supervisory support and 13 focused on the importance of job flexibility. Identified concepts were then assembled into groups sharing similar characteristics to facilitate the emergence of predominant themes.

As respondents discussed work life, the following themes and patterns emerged (see Appendix C): effect of work environment, desire for reduced work load, and impact of personal satisfaction. Work environment concerns focused on the effect of supervisory support, job requirements, flexibility, employee benefits, and length of commute on work life satisfaction. Desire for reduced work load issues centered around preferences to be employed either part-time or not at all, and employment sacrifices made by the mother to reduce work load. Personal satisfaction considerations included the effect of money (in reference to pay) and enjoyment/satisfaction (positive or negative).

Effect of Work Environment

Respondents mentioned issues concerning the effect of work environments as critical factors to work life satisfaction. Within the 15 concepts of work life satisfaction identified by the respondents, "requirements" ranked fifth in frequency of mention, while "support of supervisor" and "flexibility" tied for sixth as factors most often cited. Analysis of data revealed the effect of supervisory support, job requirements, flexibility, employee benefits, and length of commute to be major themes influencing the work life satisfaction of the employed mothers in regard to work life satisfaction.

Effect of supervisory support. For many employed mothers, supervisory support (or lack thereof) significantly contributed to the level of work satisfaction experienced. Numerous respondents cited an "understanding supervisor" (one who recognized the vital impact of family concerns on the worker's performance and assisted in relieving stress when conflicting situations arose) as the key to positive views concerning work's influence on family life. The following quotes demonstrate the impact of positive supervisory support.

My first priority is my family and the secret to being happy at work is my boss knows that and supports that. I realize my situation is not typical and I can credit a very understanding boss who respects my skills.
(#102/35/M/Child Life Specialist/40-50k)

I feel fortunate that right now in my life when it is so important that I be as available as possible to my child, that I am able to work for individuals who are sensitive to those needs and value system of being available to support your child's needs.
(#161/37/M/Exec.Adm.Asst./40-50k)

My husband is self-employed and my supervisor is very understanding about my family life. She has a family of her own.
(#361/29/M/Secretary/40-50k)

Just as a supportive supervisor facilitated a positive view of work life satisfaction, analysis of data revealed the reverse also to be true: lack of understanding on the part of the supervisor led to negative work life satisfaction. Several respondents recognized the lack of

understanding on the part of their supervisor as playing a decisive role in negative opinions of work life satisfaction.

I love my job, but since I have a new supervisor it's not so fun anymore. They promoted my old supervisor and he always complimented me and boosted my ego. He seemed like a very good friend, but since this new "super" came she acts like she doesn't have time to listen, explain, or recognize me, but other employees.
(#113/21/S/Accounting Data Entry Clerk/-10k)

My job as a teacher is satisfying in that I see progress in student's learning taking place. I am basically dissatisfied because of red tape, directives, test pressure, etc. from "the State" by people who seem to be very unaware of the reality of life in a classroom and developmental stages of young-intermediate children.
(#143/37/M/elementary Teacher/40-50k)

Many employers are more willing to work out part-time hours for college students than they are for mothers.
(#230/29/M/Consumer Accts. Coord./50-60k)

My job is okay but I can't stand my boss.
(#281/39/M/Office Manager/50-60k)

Effect of job requirements. Whether the amount of hours or the mental/physical/emotional challenges required, mandatory characteristics of the job often played a significant role in the level of work life satisfaction and its consequent influence on the family. For many mothers, the amount of control exercised over job requirements directly related to the level of work life satisfaction experienced.

My job is simply a job, not a consuming career. I like my present position because it is relatively free from stress unlike past job situations.
(#031/33/M/Library Aide/30-40k)

My job is very physical so it's sometimes tough if I don't feel well. If I don't work I don't get paid, so I always try my best to get all of my work done.
(#148/33/M/Self-employed Housekeeper/30-40k)

My job is VERY STRESSFUL and time consuming. I work more hours than I ever thought I would.
(#261/36/M/Claims Specialist/30-40k)

I have a professional career that requires substantial time and emotional effort. To maintain my well-respected position, I spend more time on work matters than my husband feels appropriate.
(#265/35/M/Computer Systems Project Manager/70+k)

I really enjoy my job except for the amount of physical energy required at times (in summer, it is really draining) and the hectic pace at times (Christmas, elections, etc.).
(#316/38/M/Letter Carrier/60-70+k)

I work at a Day Care Center with 2 year olds all day long. A general day with crying, biting, hitting, lifting, and changing diapers leaves me sometimes on the exhausted side.

(#346/30/M/Teacher Assistant/30-40k)

Effect of flexibility. For several employed mothers, "flexibility" within the job (usually concerning work hours) played a critical role in positive work life satisfaction. By having work situations which allowed flexible scheduling when necessary, employed mothers were better able to "juggle" the many demands placed on them by conflicting situations between work and family life.

I am part owner of the business of which I am employed. This gives me ALOT of flexibility, and attributes to a happier family life, since I am a single mother of two.

(#062/38/S/Owner-Vice President/20-30k)

His hours are completely flexible to compensate mine.

(#067/36/M/Home Ec. Teacher/70+k)

I do not have to work which takes alot of pressure off me. I also have VERY flexible hours and am paid to work at home for part of the time.

(#102/35/M/Child Life Specialist/40-50k)

Almost all of my work is done at home on the computer with occasional trips to the university (generally when my classes are scheduled). Sometimes my work load is heavier and sometimes lighter (as a graduate student/research assistant); the flexibility is ideal for me and for my 4-year-old.

(#111/41/M/Graduate Research Asst./60-70k)

I love my job and it has great flexibility - I do feel stress as a single parent in being able to juggle both responsibilities.

(#132/29/S/Housing Manager/20-30k)

My schedule is flexible enough so that I can be home after school - I think this is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL!!

(#184/39/M/Assoc.Prof./60-70k)

I'm in graduate school too - so time seems to be my issue. My schedule is very tight. But the flexibility of my job helps alot.

(#205/29/S/Housing Manager/20-30k)

The workplace needs to be more flexible so a parent can feel comfortable and supported if a child needs parents time - especially if ill or a special project.

(#283/37/M/Customer Service Representative/40-50k)

Effect of employee benefits. Multiple comments

recognizing the contribution of employee benefits to work

life satisfaction of employed mothers were made by participants. Likewise, several respondents emphasized the need for improving benefits offered to employees with families. More often than not, the employed mother felt that the addition of these benefits would not only improve worker morale, but would also ease some of the tension created by negative family/work interactions.

That's also something good about my job, it will pay for further education.
(#113/21/S/Accounting Data Entry Clerk/-10k)

Because I am a teacher, I have many holidays and summers off with my children.
(#151/31/M/High School Biology Teacher/40-50k)

Corporate America MUST recognize the benefits (to them) and begin to acknowledge the need (and importance of) company - sponsored child care!!
(#161/37/M/Exec.Adm.Asst./40-50k)

Full/partial payment of child care by employer would be helpful!!
(#163/30/M/Superintendent's Secretary/20-30k)

It would be great if more work places had their own daycare for their employees.
(#176/36/M/Lab Supervisor/60-70k)

Having a good job that gives more elective time off would be great (i.e. 4 days a week rather than 5 and long breaks in the summer).
(#234/45/M/Director of Anesthesia/70+k)

Would like to see more advances in flex time, job sharing, etc. for working mothers and fathers (single and married). Companies need to provide better support to keep American family responsibilities the highest priority. Our children are our future - both in the country as a whole and in business.
(#266/46/M/Manager, Legal Dept./40-50k)

More businesses need child care (on premises). For mothers or fathers with small children this is ideal. It enables the parents to visit their children during the day, check in on them, and relieve some of the parental guilt and anxiety felt by the little ones. I find it helps the children to visit their parents work so they can see where Mommy and Daddy go. This to me would be a major stress reliever.

(#309/34/M/Legal Secretary/50-60k)

Effect of length of commute. A few respondents mentioned the impact of the length of their commute to/from work as a critical factor in determining work life satisfaction. For the majority of employed mothers commenting on this aspect of work life satisfaction, the length of commute directly related to positive/negative work life satisfaction level.

Unfortunately, I have had to return to a long commute which adds to my time away (from children) and guilt/conflict about child cares issues - my husband is great but the sense of loss is very great too and I worry about what it will be like when my kids go to real school.

(#119/40/M/Occupational Therapist/50-60k)

The largest frustrations are my commute which make my days longer than I like. My husband also commutes and works irregular hours and days. Our lives are a constant "juggling act".

(#239/40/M/Assoc.Dir./70+k)

The pay for my job is very low for the amount of energy I put out - however - the free child care is good and living 1 1/2 miles away is beneficial. I have the strain of my husband working 50 miles away for very low pay and that leaves me with a lot of the household responsibilities.

(#337/32/Multi-age Group Daycare Teacher/20-30k)

Desire for Reduced Work Load

Respondents expressed the desire for a reduced work load as a critical factor in work life satisfaction. Within the 15 aspects of work life satisfaction identified by respondents, "part-time preference" ranked third and "prefer not to work" ranked fourth as factors most often cited. Analysis of data revealed preference for part-time employment, preference for no employment, and employment sacrifices made by mother (in order to successfully balance work and family) to be major themes influencing the desire for reduced work load of employed mothers.

Preference for part-time employment. The employed mothers viewed the ability to be employed part-time as an ideal solution for balancing demands of work and family. More often than not, the employed mother positively correlated reduced number of hours in the workforce with increased time allowed to meet children's needs. Unfortunately, due to financial dependence on the employed mother's income to meet family needs, respondents were unable to view this alternative as a realistic option for their respective families at this time.

I wish my work hours were fewer so that I would not have to leave my children in someone else's care.

(#103/28/M/Examiner/50-60k)

If I could find a part-time job that paid well enough, I would take it so I could spend more

time with my kids.

(#108/27/M/Publications Specialist/30-40k)

I would be more satisfied to work less and spend more time raising children.

(#173/29/M/Appointment Secretary/50-60k)

I think women today would better maintain work/family life if more employers would consider "job-share" and/or more part-time positions for moms who have to work. Many employers are more willing to work out part-time hours for college students than they are for mothers.

(#230/29/M/Consumer Accts. Coord./50-60k)

Would like to work part-time instead of full-time - be home to help children with school work; still be able to help husband pay bills and have something left over for enjoyment; mostly all pay goes for bills and groceries.

(#231/39/M/Secretary/10-20k)

If our economic situation were such, I would choose to work part-time so I would have time with my family.

(#303/37/M/Office Manager/50-60k)

Preference for no employment. Just as numerous respondents expressed a preference to be employed part-time, several mothers stated that, given the choice, they would prefer not to be employed outside the home (at the time of this study). For many of the mothers, the preference directly related to the age of their child and the desire to be home until the child began elementary school. For others, the preference was influenced by the perception that the mother could better meet the needs of her family and home if she did not have the commitment of being employed outside the home.

I would prefer not to work while my child is young. I feel like I am missing a very important part of her life. Guilt feeling for leaving her often and because I'm so tired, physically and emotionally, when I get off work.

(#007/25/M/Owner-Retail Florist/50-60k)

I believe a mom should stay at home with children under 4 - if financially and emotionally able - therefore, even though I like my job - I wish I could stay home - but because of financial problems - I am unable to.

(#085/40/M/Legal Secretary/50-60k)

I am not very successful in dividing the 2 areas, but I do believe I am the best possible mother I CAN be! (for now) I try to keep growing, and while I do like my job as a teacher, if I had a choice, I would not choose to work for paychecks outside the home until my child turned 6 or 7 years old.

(#110/31/S/Music Teacher/10-20k)

I would prefer to stay at home and be a full-time mother but since I have to work I couldn't ask for a better work situation.

(#241/36/M/Flight Attendant/60-70k)

I took off 1 year after my daughter was born and I wasn't really ready to go back to work after 1 year, but because of other circumstances I had to go back at this point. I would have liked to have stayed home until my daughter was in elementary school.

(#280/27/M/First Grade Teacher/40-50k)

Our son has seizures and requires a lot of attention; my working takes away from that. I feel I am missing out on a lot of things with him. I wish I did not have to work and could be a FULL time wife and mother.

(#281/39/M/Office Manager/50-60k)

Employment sacrifices made by mother. Several respondents mentioned "sacrifices" made (by choice - not forced) in order to ease tensions between work and family.

Often times, the employed mother viewed these sacrifices as a worthwhile, acceptable compromise necessary to successfully balance demands of a career with needs of a family.

I worked in present position for almost 10 years before birth of child and was very established at work. I have given up things at work - seniority, job advancement, benefits - but because my main reason for working is because I need to keep my contacts for when I do need to go back full time I am satisfied with these compromises.
(#102/35/M/Child Life Specialist/40-50k)

I have voluntarily gone from a management position to a staff position so I can leave work at the door.
(#119/40/M/Occupational Therapist/50-60k)

Though I now have a regular 8 to 5 position and make 10-15 thousand dollars LESS than I should command in my "chosen" field. . .I am truly much happier. (I was trained as a dentist - and have been a University Professor).

Difficult to step off career ladder to have a family and watch other single or childless women continue to advance.
(#352/36/M/MIS Special Projects Lead/70+k)

I am working as a "grunt" (staff nurse) in various hospitals while I pursue my PhD. The work is demanding, stressful, and unrewarding, but the money and flexibility work for me now. I choose to do this rather than remain in a 9-5 teaching position because I didn't want my child in day care 50 hours/week.
(#368/39/M/Registered Nurse/40-50k)

Impact of Personal Satisfaction

Respondents expressed the importance of personal satisfaction as a crucial factor in determining work life

satisfaction. Within the 15 aspects of work life satisfaction identified by respondents, "enjoyment" ranked first and "money" ranked second as factors most often cited. Analysis of data concerning work life revealed the effect of money (in regard to pay) and enjoyment (whether the individual does or does not enjoy the work performed) to be major themes influencing perceptions of personal satisfaction of employed mothers.

Effect of money. Employed mothers perceived amount of pay received for services rendered to play a critical role in personal satisfaction level and overall work life satisfaction. The number of respondents believing they were underpaid outnumbered those who believed the pay was comparable to qualifications/requirements of the position in which they were employed.

I am sad about how hard teachers work and with SO little pay.
(#091/34/S/Teacher-ED Classroom/10-20k)

My job does not pay well for amount of time and degrees earned.
(#121/34/M/Asst.Dir.Univ.Lab Center/20-30k)

I'm not paid what my work is worth and this carries over into family life.
(#214/33/S/MR Intake Specialist/10-20k)

I am very lucky in that I have a job I love, which pays very well.
(#235/40/M/Senior Research Geologist/40-50k)

As a professional I feel I should be paid as well as a professional lawyer, Dr., etc.. This higher

pay scale would give me a more positive outlook
in my job and at home!
(#259/38/M/Reading Teacher/60-70k)

Effect of enjoyment. Respondents identified enjoyment
(whether or not they enjoyed work performed) to be a
critical factor when determining work life satisfaction.
For employed mothers, perceptions of enjoyment positively
influenced levels of work life satisfaction.

I am fortunate to have an excellent, challenging
job that I enjoy and that is fulfilling--I still
think it is very difficult to blend a family and
work, when you value both.
(#013/34/M/Director of Education/NA)

However, I would be totally bored staying at home.
I do that in the summer, and although I feel I
need the time to "recharge" my batteries, I truly
enjoy what I do! As a result, I feel I am a
better mother!!
(#022/42/M/Teacher/70+k)

At the same time, I am thankful for my job and my
truly wonderful children. In addition, though my
job is stressful - working with emotionally
disturbed children - it is so rewarding,
challenging, and fun.
(#091/34/S/Teacher - ED Classroom/10-20k)

I find work infinitely more interesting,
challenging, and manageable than my home life
and particularly my offspring.
(#116/37/S/Research Asst.-Teacher/30-40k)

I love my job and it has great flexibility - I
do feel stress as a single parent in being able
to juggle both responsibilities. . . .My job is very
satisfying and low pressure now - which I need
while I finish my graduate degree. . . .The
satisfaction with my job, the support of my family,
and a GOOD child all work together to support me
and these responsibilities.
(#132/29/S/Housing Manager/20-30k)

My job is very satisfying and job satisfaction is extremely vital to my feeling of self worth, fulfillment, etc..

(#183/35/M/Product Manager/70+k)

On the other hand, my job is very demanding and challenging. However, I enjoy it.

(#258/34/M/Liquidation Asst./70+k)

Perceptions of Family/Work Life Interaction

Analysis of 202 comments about family/work interactions revealed 15 different concepts mentioned by employed mothers. The six issues cited most often were as follows: (a) 31 referred to difficulty experienced while attempting to blend work and family successfully, (b) 27 mentioned time (primarily the lack thereof) as correlating with the ability to "juggle" multiple demands, (c) 26 identified work as having a definite impact on family, (d) 25 related a feeling of stress in trying to balance the two areas, (e) 20 expressed feelings of guilt in leaving children in care of others, and (f) 20 acknowledged the impact of family on work. Identified concepts were then assembled into groups sharing similar concepts to facilitate the emergence of predominant themes.

As respondents discussed issues regarding family/work interactions, the following themes and patterns emerged (see Appendix B): balancing work and family, spillover effect of family/work, effect on children, and other influences.

Balancing concerns focused on difficulty in combining work

and family, limited time to meet demands, and resulting stress from lack of time. Spillover effects of work/family aspects centered around effects of work on family, family on work, and compromises made by the mother in an effort to balance work/family demands. Concerns surrounding the effect on children included the influence of sick children on work, feelings of guilt experienced due to leaving children in the care of others, and the perceived impact of the mother's employment on children. Other influences on work/family interactions discussed by respondents included impact of employer receptiveness to family needs, and effect of employed mother's attitude on perceptions.

Balancing Work and Family

Respondents acknowledged the ability to balance the two areas (work and family) successfully as a critical factor of family/work interactions. Within the 15 aspects of family/work interactions identified by respondents, "difficult to combine" ranked first, "time" ranked second, and "stress" ranked fourth as factors most often cited. Analysis of data concerning family/work interactions and balancing revealed difficulty in combining work and family,

limited time to meet demands, and resulting stress from lack of time to be major themes in the perceptions of employed mothers.

Difficulty in combining work and family. Respondents viewed themselves as experiencing great amounts of difficulty when it came to combining work and family. The multiple demands placed on the employed mother often left the perception that they were participating in a never ending "juggling act".

The hardest thing is to juggle all of the "expecteds" - like Dr. appointments for kids and work; and being able to give your kids things like dancing lessons, etc. because of not being able to get them there.

(#089/35/M/Program Coordinator/10-20k)

At times it is difficult to combine the two - or prioritize the two. I used to take work home - now that is not possible. My needs have changed and I may need to make some work changes to meet these needs.

(#129/29/M/Nursery School Teacher/10-20k)

At home, however, that does not negate the fact that it is very, very difficult "to have it all". I still want "it all". It is a constant struggle and balancing act.

(#182/35/M/Product Manager/70+k)

Being a full-time graduate student, a graduate assistant, wife, mother is life being a juggler trying to keep all the balls in the air at the same time!!

(#185/42/M/Student-Graduate Asst./40-50k)

Combining work life and family life is not difficult when all things go according to schedule. Its the unexpected and unplanned for that causes problems. I am wondering, in

future years how we will manage extracurricular activities, such as soccer or music lessons.
(#190/33/M/Resource Mgt. Officer/70+k)

Juggling school and family is very difficult. I feel a LOT OF PRESSURE to be a good student, wife, AND mother!!
(#207/33/M/Student/30-40k)

I now work 24 hours a week. My answers would be quite different for the past 4 years of my child's life when I worked 40 hours a week. There was not NEAR enough family time and all the responsibilities were very difficult.
(#279/35/M/Uehasonagrapher/60-70k)

Inflexibility on job results in undue stress on accomplishing tasks required at home. Very hard to manage 2 "jobs".
(#303/36/M/Business Inquiry Rep./40-50k)

What I have is two jobs; 40 hrs. outside the home and most of the responsibility for the house. I stay tired all the time.
(#326/44/E.M. Tech III/30-40k)

I have more stability than most and I cannot give enough attention to any one aspect of my life - If I concentrate on my spouse, the job falls apart, if I work on family - the car needs repair and the A/C goes out - Always juggling. I wish it wasn't so hard to make a living and life was simpler.
(#356/42/M/Paralegal Coordinator/70+)

Limited time to meet demands. Respondents cited time as being a critical component to balancing work and family commitments. More often than not, the employed mother viewed time to be a premium, one of which they rarely had enough to meet all the demands placed on them.

Although, overall I am satisfied, I still find myself wanting more time - the days seem so short and I always have so much to do - work and home.
(#114/38/M/VP Relocation Services/70+k)

Personally, though, I am still seeking a sense of commitment in something since I just work to work and don't have enough time at home -- a conflict I fight with, often.

(#119/40/M/Occupational Therapist/50-60k)

The major conflict I feel is between work and housework. I get frustrated by the lack of time to keep my home the way my stay-at-home Mom did.

(#120/33/M/Asst. to Materials Specialist/30-40k)

I have no big complaints about my work or home life. Time to manage everything is the biggest problem and stressor. There is not enough time in the day to do everything 100%.

(#127/31/S/Secretary/10-20k)

Overall, I enjoy the too much I have to do -- that is, I enjoy the elements -- of work and of family life -- I just need more time to enjoy them.

(#245/38/M/Instructor, UNT/50-60k)

My dissatisfaction is with the time -- there is never enough time to give to either aspect.

(#252/39/M/Teacher/50-60k)

I work a 8 to 4:30 position but still find it difficult to complete home life tasks (cleaning, cooking, etc.) in my evening time. I spend approximately one to 1 1/2 hours each night helping my one child with homework. I can't imagine having two who needed help. Then on my weekends, I have the privilege of actually "cleaning" my home unless my (3) step-children come (which defeats the purpose). Therefore, my home is never quite the way I would have it if I didn't work full-time.

(#254/34/M/Executive Secretary/40-50k)

Resulting stress from lack of time. Employed mothers viewed balancing work and family as very stressful. Lack of time and multiple demands from both sides (work and family) intensified feelings of stress experienced by the respondents.

Some days I feel very stressed as I try to mesh my professional life with all the responsibilities that an active family requires.

(#022/42/M/Teacher/70+k)

Sometimes it is very stressful to feel so strongly, and loyal to both work and family. You always feel you are letting the other down when doing one.

(#027/36/M/Clinical Dietician/40-50k)

Presently, our lives, particularly my own, is extremely stressful. It is so difficult to divide myself into so many roles, consequently none of which gets 100% quality from me. I realize, when I graduate (soon), our lives will be better in many ways. I won't be split in so many directions; and we will have more time for family and recreation, which is tremendously lacking. I also realize we all, within the family feel the stresses from all our schedules. But honestly, after several months of very long, non-stop days of shifting roles 2-3x's a day; and usually only averaging about 4-6 hours of sleep a night - sometimes I just want to escape, if only for 1 day. And sometimes I feel very alone; and that I'm the only one in our household that doesn't have the opportunity to relax.

(#146/34/M/Fitness Director/20-30k)

The biggest effect is the overall stress of balancing everything. This adds to feeling too tired at night to even enjoy sex - this is the area with the most effect.

(#231/38/M/Program Manager/40-50k)

Spillover Effects of Family/Work

Respondents recognized the interdependence of family and work as a critical factor in family/work interactions. Within the 15 aspects of family/work interactions identified by respondents, "effects of work on family" ranked third and "effects of family on work" ranked sixth as factors most often cited. Analysis of data concerning family/work

interactions and spillover revealed effects of work on family, effects of family on work, and compromises made (to balance demands between work and family) to be major themes in the perceptions of employed mothers.

Effects of work on family. Respondents mentioned numerous effects of work on family. Time, primarily the lack thereof, appeared to be one of the critical factors in the effect of work in family/work interactions. For the most part, work was perceived as negatively affecting family as the employed mothers attempted to maintain a semblance of balance between the two.

Being a working mother, it is very hard to express the stress and pressure involved. Children, in my opinion, suffer in many ways with their mothers working, but insecurity is the one aspect that concerns me the most. Lack of time causes lack of togetherness, daily schedules and communication, all very important in a family's life, but due to lack of time these areas all suffer tremendously, more often than not, causing broken families.

(#042/28/M/Exec.Secretary/30-40k)

I feel that if you are happy with your work, then you are more able to cope with the problems that arise in ones family life. The happier you are with your job, the happier you are with your family life.

(#097/42/M/Office Manager/50-60k)

If a situation is bad at work, I try very hard to block this from my family or vent it with friends, traffic, etc., because quite frankly, my children are still young enough to not be concerned about my work responsibilities.

(#108/27/M/Publications Specialist/30-40k)

On the other hand, when I go home, work thoughts go with me and it definitely affects my attitude at home.

(#133/44/S/Assoc.Library-IRC Analyst/60-70k)

Both are equally important and if you are not satisfied with one area of your life your life becomes unbalanced thus creating frustration and unhappiness.

(#167/20/S/Compliance Technician/10-20k)

These two are or can be exclusive! I love my job and I love my family - I despise what my job does to my family - I am unwilling at this time to give up 26 years of schooling to be at home full-time.

(#183/39/M/Assoc.Prof./60-70k)

There is a great deal of stress involved with my job and this carries over into the home. There aren't enough hours in the day to do what is requested by clients. I'm not paid what my work is worth and this carries over into family life.

(#214/33/S/MR Intake Specialist/10-20k)

My job is a positive influence on my family life.

(#229/32/M/Consultant-Therapist/20-30k)

Effects of family on work. Just as employed mothers perceived work to play a vital role in family life, the reverse also appeared to be true: family had a definite effect on work. Several respondents mentioned the interrelatedness of family and work by identifying how the two areas positively correlate one with the other (problems in one area will inevitably carry over and cause problems in the other).

When situations are going well with family, they also tend to do so at work....I really don't have enough time to do a good mothering job, but I believe I do the best I can under my conditions.

(#108/27/M/Publications Specialist/30-40k)

I think the family difficulties have far more impact on my job than any aspect of my job could have on my family.

(#116/37/S/Research Asst.-Teacher/30-40k)

Although I recognize home and work generally affect each other, home, family, problems don't have a big impact on my work because I don't let them. I turn off the outside world when I walk through the door at work. Consequently, home life will be at the subconscious level, for the most part.

(#133/44/S/Assoc.Library-IRC Analyst/60-70k)

Both are equally important and if you are not satisfied with one area of your life your life becomes unbalanced thus creating frustration and unhappiness.

(#167/20/S/Compliance Technician/10-20k)

On the other hand, my family life may, on occasion, have a negative influence on my job performance.

(#229/32/M/Consultant-Therapist/20-30k)

Compromises made by mother. Several respondents expressed feelings of compromising one area for the other as they strived to balance demands of family and work. Expressions of guilt often coincided with the perception that the employed mother was constantly "falling short" in meeting the expectations of one area (e.g., work) as she diligently worked to meet the expectations of the other (e.g., family). More often than not, the employed mothers felt that they were not able to give 100% to either area because they were "spread too thin."

Sometimes it is very stressful to feel so strongly, and loyal to both work and family. You always feel you are letting the other down.

(#027/36/M/Clinical Dietician/40-50k)

With my child as young as he is, I am not used to leaving work at a set time. This has been hard to get use to since I use to work 50-80 hours a week. (This makes me feel guilty for not being home with my child or not being at work putting in my old hours.)

(#035/M/Senior Software Engineer/40-50k)

It is very difficult in all respects/aspects mentioned above to be full-time employed, housewife and mother. Some aspects of each role have to be compromised/diluted. It is impossible for me personally to be good at all 3 simultaneously.

(#059/36/M/Faculty-College of Nursing/60-70k)

As a working mother I often feel I am a mediocre teacher and a mediocre "MOM". So many of us are overachievers and never satisfied with our production. ----But after a full day's work with a classroom of young children, it's difficult to give 100% at home. This is where I feel guilty. I also long for "a little" time for me!!

(#078/38/M/Classroom Teacher/60-70k)

I don't think anyone can handle a job and motherhood and give them both the attention they deserve.

(#136/27/M/Legal Secretary/60-70k)

My only frustration comes during those times when I feel I am compromising family for work or work for family.

(#161/37/M/Exec.Adm.Asst./40-50k)

I often feel my job takes more time/energy than I should give since I'm a mommy.

(#203/34/Customer Service Rep./50-60k)

My children respect my responsibilities, but yearn for my attention and approval when I have little time for either. I give 101% at work and then feel 101% guilt when I get home. Working has been the most devastating emotional turmoil I have ever experienced.

(#248/35/M/Marketing Coordinator/70+k)

My dissatisfaction is with time -- there is never enough time to give to either aspect. My job

necessitates hours of essay grading, etc.. This takes up 20-30 hours of my "home" time per week. If I avoid these tasks and give time to my family, I'm not doing an adequate job for my students. If I do an adequate job on my classwork, my family is resentful of the time spent, household tasks suffer, etc..
 (#253/39/M/Teacher/50-60k)

I dedicate alot to my work and my work demands alot from me. Our family life had to adjust. And right now the family is set in a routine and works well. It is probably not the best quality family life but workable.
 (#342/35/Systems Engineer Supervisor/60-70k)

It is often hard to set priorities. I want to do all my jobs well - teacher, mother, wife, artist. It is not possible - so something is always getting the short end of the stick.
 (#364/33/M/Teacher/30-40k)

Effect on Children

Respondents recognized the effect of employment outside the home on children as another critical aspect of family/work interactions. Within the 15 aspects of family/work interactions identified by respondents, "guilt" ranked fifth among factors most often cited. Analysis of data concerning family/work interactions and children revealed the influence of sick children on work, feelings of guilt experienced due to leaving the child in care of others, and the overall impact of mother's employment on children to be major themes in perceptions of employed mothers.

Influence of sick children on work. Employed mothers felt that sick children played a significant role in

family/work interactions. Respondents perceived the workplace to be unresponsive to needs of the employed mother and her family as she struggled to prioritize expectations of both the child and the employer during this difficult time.

The workplace needs to be more flexible so a parent can feel comfortable and supported if a child needs parent's time especially if ill or a special project. The working parent is too often made to feel guilty when must be off or needs to be off work for children needs.

(#283/37/M/Customer Serv. Rep./40-50k)

I wish bosses would be more understanding about time off to care for sick children! I have a very good job, but this is one of the bones of contention I have with my superiors.

(#298/40/M/Office Manager/50-60k)

And it seems like your child always gets sick and then you feel guilty for taking off from work - and I don't have sick pay.

(#310/40/M/Pharmacy Tech/30-40k)

The reason my family life is not affected is due to the quality of day care I have. However, when the children are ill and I must stay home to take care of them, I feel guilty for being off work.

(#347/36/M/Systems Engineering Manager/70+k)

Feelings of guilt about children. Respondents experienced considerable amounts of guilt from leaving children in the care of others while employed outside the home. Several mothers emphasized a need to fill the role of primary caregiver for the child until he/she reached school age while expressing the feeling that they (the employed

mothers) were "missing out" on a vital part of the child's life.

I would prefer not to work while my child is young. I feel like I am missing a very important part of her life. Guilt feeling for leaving her often and because I'm so tired, physically and emotionally, when I get off work.
(#006/25/M/Owner-Retail Florist/50-60k)

I can leave work at the door - unfortunately, I have had to return to a long commute which adds to my time away and guilt/conflict about child-care issues - my husband is great but the sense of loss is very great too and I worry about what it will be like when my kids go to real school. I think a 10 hour day is too long but I cannot reduce the time - my kids don't know the difference, but I do.
(#119/40/M/Occupational Therapist/50-60k)

I think sending my child to the day care center every day is horrible. I also hate leaving her at night to go to school. I am doing this so one day I can send her to college and she can be financially independent. No hard working person should have to struggle so much just to have a roof over their heads.
(#213/32/S/Receiving Clerk/10-20k)

Impact of mother's employment on children. Employed mothers were concerned with the impact of their employment on the children. For the most part, respondents focused on the self-image of the child and how lack of time intensified opportunities for the children to feel insecure. Most of the mothers expressing concerns in this area took extra precautions to prevent negative impacts of employment on the mental and emotional well being of their children.

Children, in my opinion, suffer in many ways with their mothers working, but insecurity is the one

that concerns me the most.
 (#042/28/M/Exec.Secretary/30-40k)

I also realize we all, within the family, feel the stresses from all of our schedules. But I worry most about our child. I try very hard to organize my time, so that everything gets done on a timely basis, but mostly to provide a slot of quality time for my child everyday. It is important for me to impress upon him that however busy life gets, he is very precious and of utmost importance to us.
 (#146/34/M/Fitness Director/20-30k)

My child is my first priority. Over the years and through 3 different employment situations, I have noticed that her well-being is a very big factor in MY general satisfaction with everything. Currently I know she is happy. Her emotional and physical needs are being met at home, school, and daycare. There seems to be a nice balance in our lives.
 (#208/36/M/Language and Speech Pathologist/20-30k)

My children respect my responsibilities, but yearn for my attention and approval when I have little time for either.
 (#248/35/M/Marketing Coordinator/70+k)

Other Influences

Respondents acknowledged the effect of several miscellaneous influences as important factors in family/work interactions. Analysis of data concerning family/work interactions and miscellaneous influences revealed impact of employer receptiveness to family needs and effect of employed mother's attitude to be major themes influencing perceptions of employed mothers.

Impact of employer receptiveness to family needs.

Respondents perceived employer receptiveness to the needs of the employed mother to play a critical role in family/work

interactions. Employed mothers identified numerous services which would aid in the reduction of tensions between family and work. Several respondents emphasized the need for businesses to view employee dedication to family needs not as a threat to production but as a vital component for positive social development.

Employers still feel they should be the number one priority...therefore, you play by their rules and your family suffers or you don't and your career goes nowhere!!
(#039/37/M/Senior Analyst/60-70k)

Would like to see more advances in flextime, job sharing, etc. for working mothers and fathers (single and married). Companies need to provide better support to keep American family responsibilities the highest priority. Our children are our future, both country as a whole - and businesses.
(#266/46/M/Manager/40-50k)

I would like to see greater support from the corporate sector for working mothers. No discrimination for sick leave due to children's illness (experienced this when I missed 10 days out of 6 months because my kids were both in hospital and if I had been a man with a heart attack and out 6 weeks - nothing would have been said.)
(#324/33/M/Adm.Asst./40-50k)

Effect of employed mother's attitude. Numerous respondents felt that the attitude of the employed mother (positive or negative) significantly influenced perceptions of family/work interaction. Employed mothers viewed a positive attitude as directly correlating to positive work and family life satisfaction levels.

I feel I am a very positive thinker. My husband helps out tremendously around the house and works 40+ hours a week. I am very much in love with him as I am with my life.
(#084/28/M/Nurse/50-60k)

I feel that if you are happy with your work, then you are more able to cope with the problems that arise in ones family life. The happier you are with your job, the happier you are with your family life.
(#097/42/M/Office Manager/50-60k)

As long as you keep a positive attitude, keep things in their perspective you'll always succeed. No matter how difficult it gets. Sometimes its a hard thing to do but we have to try.
(#099/32/S/Supervisor/20-30k)

Definitely, a HAPPY mother helps make a HAPPY home.
(#124/31/M/RN/40-50k)

People are as "satisfied" as they choose to be.
(#236/39/M/Office Manager/40-50k)

Other Emerging Themes

Througout the study, several respondents made reference to various issues which the researcher has categorized as two distinct emerging themes: discrimination and "cycle of despair". Perceptions of discrimination issues were not restricted by the respondent's age or marital status (single or married), but the "cycle of despair" appeared to affect only a few of the employed single mothers. However, the comments made by those who addressed these two issues were so full of emotion that the researcher deemed it appropriate to include the themes within the data analysis process.

Discrimination

Five respondents perceived considerable discrimination not only in the workforce, but in society as well. Issues concerning race, gender, socioeconomic status, and employment concerns were mentioned. As the employed mother, often single and without support, strived to create a home for herself and her children, she felt blocked by discrimination. This discrimination affected not only how the single employed mother perceived family/work interactions but the options she believed available to her and her family as well.

The workplace is not designed for single mothers. For my children and myself, life is very difficult. Being a divorced mother of small children has meant being poor despite my good educational background. This is due in part to the lower pay status of women in our society. . .In some ways, being the single mother of small children has meant that I could not work the extra hours at my job site that corporate ladder climbers could. I would always have to leave work on time to pick up my children. . . .If I am successful in being a good parent and successful in my profession, it will be in spite of society, not because of it. Support system and social structures are not designed for single working mothers. And yet, if someone were to ask me to define myself as a person, I would answer that I am the mother of my children. They are beloved to me above all else in the world.
(#154/38/S/Research Dietician/10-20k)

I work for a well known oil company. I feel that I will NEVER be promoted because of my skin color (black). Sometimes I am not given credit for knowing some things or my opinions/ideas are not

respected. I have to constantly prove myself.
 (#164/36/M/Systems Analyst/40-50k)

My biggest problem is the system. It seems as if things get harder for those that are trying to do better. I went to school and now am working as a temporary employee at _____ Corporation and have been for the last 3 years. And now I'm expected to be laid off at the end of the month. I'm not able to go interview like I would like, because I don't have any sick days or vacation days -- I just work day to day. . .I feel that there should be something to help the one's that are trying to better themselves and their family. The way I feel now is that there is no use in trying because your going to get deeper in the hole when you work then when you lay up on welfare. For the fact that it is so hard for a black person to get a job with good pay and benefits even if they have the skills.
 (#052/24/S/Computer Operator-Administrator/-10k)

I am a single parent of two young children. To say this is difficult is an understatement! It is also difficult to balance the work at home and work and not let my superiors know exactly how exhausting it all is. I'm afraid that to do so would limit my chances for more responsibility and hence, more salary.
 (#307/32/S/Marketing Manager/30-40k)

I would like to see greater support from the corporate sector for working mothers. No discrimination for sick leave due to children's illness (experienced this when I missed 10 days out of 6 months because my kids were both in hospital and if I had been a man with a heart attack and out 6 weeks -- nothing would have been said).
 (#324/33/M/Adm.Asst./40-50k)

Difficult to step off career ladder to have a family and watch other single or childless women continue to advance. This is my first experience with public school and there seems to be little support for working mothers -- lots of pressure to volunteer time and meetings are scheduled during 8 to 5 working hours.
 (#352/36/M/MIS Special Projects Lead/70+k)

Cycle of despair

Three of the employed mothers expressed feelings which appeared to be underlying many perceptions of the single parent mother. For the purpose of this study, the term "cycle of despair" has been used to depict the cycle of situations which often faced the single employed mother as she strived to provide for herself and her children. Low-paying jobs (often below the national poverty level) produced limited funds which, in turn, increased stress as the mother tried to meet financial needs. The increased stress intensified problems faced during family/work interactions which were already strong due to the lack of support systems (spouse, family, etc.). All of this compiled to create greater tensions in the work area, and the cycle repeated itself. For the employed mother who found herself in this dilemma, a sense of despair often accompanied the perception of constant striving for little or no gain.

I have a lot of family problems, financial, and I really don't know what to do. It seems like I'm working my butt off for nothing. I'm getting no where.

(#018/24/S/food Service Vending Attendant/-10k)

My biggest problem is the system. It seems as if things get harder for those that are trying to do better. I went to school and now am working as a temporary employee at XEROX Corporation and have been for the last 3 years. And now I'm expected to be laid off at the end of the month. . .I do

still receive food stamps, a small amount. It's not enough to cover the food bill for the month only for a two week time frame. The other two weeks I have to spend money out of my pocket in order to eat the rest of the month until I receive the next set of stamps. . .I feel that there should be something to help the one's that are trying to better themselves and their family. The way I feel now is that there is no use in trying because your going to get deeper in the hole when you work then when you lay up on welfare. . . .For the fact that it is so hard for a black person to get a job with good pay and benefits even if they have the skills. There is so much judgement in the world. . . .While receiving assistance from human resources you don't have to worry about anything. Because you know that your check is in the mail and that you will get food money to last for the rest of the month and some to sell if you like to for extra money. When that's all out the churches will help. . . .But us working people, we live in pure hell with something happening every day in our life to make it difficult. Our kids don't get the proper teaching because we can't afford to send them to day care that cares about your child learning and has money to teach your child about the goals in life, how to have confidence in themselves, being exposed to different things that day care that have funding can do with their children. . . .I can't do these things myself because I can only live from pay check to pay check. It hurts me so bad that my kids want to go the fair when it finally comes to town and I can't take them to ride a ride because if I do my lights will be turned off and we won't have a place to live. And I work every day...I would like to go to school to learn more trades and I can't go because I can't pay a sitter or buy my book. These are things that you work for to better yourself instead of going backwards and falling in a hole.

(#052/24/S/Computer Operator-Administrator/-10k)

It's hard to work full-time for minimal pay, raise a child and go to school part-time at night. I'd much rather be comfortable enough financially to stay home while my child grows up. I think sending my child to the day care

center every day is horrible. I also hate leaving her at night to go to school. I am doing this so one day I can send her to college and she can be financially independent. No hard working person should have to struggle so much just to have a roof over their heads.
(#213/S/Receiving Clerk/10-20k)

Summary

This chapter presented analyzed data gathered during a qualitative study of employed mothers with young children. Data were read and re-read by the researcher and an objective colleague to determine emerging themes/patterns and check for agreement of predominant themes. Reported findings were organized into themes based on the study's review of literature and research questions: perceptions of family life satisfaction, perceptions of work life satisfaction, perceptions of family/work interactions, and other emerging themes. A description of the sample, analysis of data, and reporting of findings were provided.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The following chapter summarizes data collected during a qualitative study of employed mothers with young children. The purpose of the study was to examine family life satisfaction, work life satisfaction, and the relationship between the two from the employed mother's point of view. A summary of the study, discussion of findings, conclusions, recommendations, and limitations are provided.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

The qualitative study analyzed family and work life satisfaction perceptions of employed mothers with young children. Data were collected from 366 voluntary, self-administered questionnaires distributed at various selected child care and after-school sites within the North Texas area. One hundred ninety-five respondents answered the open ended question "What else would you like to say about how satisfied you are with your family life and work life?" at the conclusion of the "Family Life and Work Interaction" questionnaire. Data drawn from these qualitative responses were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for emerging themes.

A study to establish interrelator reliability (using a 25% random sample) was conducted by an objective colleague.

The following research questions guided the researcher through the analysis process to determine reoccurring themes based on the work of Taylor and Bogdan (1984): (a) How satisfied are employed mothers with their family life? (b) How satisfied are employed mothers with their work life? and (c) How do family life and work life interact?

Perceptions of Family Life Satisfaction

Responding employed mothers viewed their family life somewhat more positively than negative. Of the 124 comments regarding family life satisfaction, 63 were positive and 61 were negative. Likewise, respondents perceived various factors as influencing views in regard to family life satisfaction. Of the 16 concepts concerning family life satisfaction mentioned by the employed mothers, the seven issues cited most often were as follows: (a) spousal support (positive/negative), (b) money/lifestyle (income necessary to maintain current standard of living), (c) time with children, (d) household responsibilities, (e) single parent status, and (f) age of children and/or personal time. Through extensive analysis of data, the following emerging themes were identified as factors perceived to influence family life satisfaction by the employed mothers: influence

of relationships, burden of responsibilities, time concerns, and necessary income for lifestyle maintenance.

Influence of Relationships

The employed mothers most often mentioned relationships as influential in regard to family life satisfaction. Regardless of the source, the employed mother viewed support given from another individual or system to be critical in maintaining positive views of family life. Types of support most often mentioned by the employed mothers included that from a spouse, child, or "outside" system (extended family, friends, church, etc.).

Influence of spousal support. Employed mothers perceived the influence of spousal support to be a critical factor when analyzing family life satisfaction. Of comments regarding family life, 44 respondents referred to the impact of spousal support (both positive and/or negative) on family life satisfaction. For many of the mothers the sense of support, often demonstrated through physical assistance or emotional encouragement, eased burdens experienced through various family situations and the inevitable stress accompanying employment. Likewise, the lack of this support (given by spouse or significant other) positively related to negative perceptions of family life satisfaction as the employed mothers felt they had no one helping them meet the

conflicting demands of work and family. This finding supported Vannoy and Philliber's (1992) research emphasizing the importance of the ability to "give and receive support" in regard to perceptions of marital quality. Regardless of whether she was single or married, the employed mother perceived spousal support to greatly influence family life satisfaction.

Influence of children's support. For many respondents children's support was an essential element for maintaining a positive family life while being employed outside the home. If the mother perceived positive support from her child (or children), she often felt that her employment played a positive role in family life as the mother and child learned to mutually support one another; whereas negative support (on the part of the child) often encouraged a negative view of family life satisfaction. Similar to spousal support, the employed mother perceived that support from her children (given through physical assistance or emotional encouragement) helped to ease tensions experienced between work and family. In the same manner, the employed mother who perceived negative support from her children often experienced a sense of despair as she saw herself struggling for little or no gain for her family.

Influence of outside support. Regardless of marital status, the employed mothers viewed availability of an outside support system (i.e., outside the nuclear family unit) as essential to successful blending of family and work. Often times, it was this support system, be it one person or many, who "picked up the slack" when the employed mother was unable to meet all the demands placed upon her. Scheduling conflicts appeared to be one of the most common needs of the employed mother as time stretched to meet demands of both work and family. For the single employed mother, the need for an outside support system increased dramatically as her single parent status intensified conflicts between work and family while she provided sole support (physical, mental, and emotional) for her family.

Burden of Responsibilities

For these employed mothers, the burden of responsibility is large, heavy, and extremely varied. Unique to individual circumstances, the load of responsibility carried by the employed mother depends greatly on the manner of support she receives from others. Unfortunately, regardless of marital status, the employed mother continues to carry the majority of the responsibility when it comes to family life management. Types of responsibilities mentioned by respondents included household

chores, single parent status, age of children, and child care experience. For each mother the impact of these burdens carried considerable weight in determining family life satisfaction. Likewise, individual perceptions of resulting stresses positively correlated with the level of family life satisfaction perceived by the employed mother.

Impact of household responsibilities. The employed mothers perceived themselves to be carrying the majority of the household management burden. Of the comments concerning family life, 24 respondents acknowledged the impact of "household responsibilities" as playing a vital role in family life satisfaction. For many, the extent to which the employed mother contributed to this area equaled that of a "second job" (in reference to time/expectations). This finding supported the considerable amount of empirical research relating the fact that, although men are helping more, it is still the woman who provides the majority of labor which "keeps the home fires burning" (Baxter, 1992; Hochschild, 1990; Kalleberg & Rosenfeld, 1992; Pieochowski, 1992)

The amount of support received from spouse, children, and/or outside sources significantly contributed to the level of stress experienced by the employed mother in regard to household responsibilities. Lack of time, caused by the

strain of employment outside the home, was cited by most respondents as the predominant cause of resulting stress experienced in balancing work and family. Furthermore, many mothers struggled with dissatisfaction as they felt forced to accept lower standards due to the lack of available time to meet the many demands they faced on a daily basis.

Impact of single parent status. Of the 42 single employed mothers responding to the open-ended question, 20 mentioned their single parent status in regard to family life satisfaction. For the majority of the single mothers, the role of single parent intensified the sense of responsibility and resulting stress experienced due to positive and/or negative family situations. More often than not, the single employed mother viewed the lack of physical, mental, and emotional support of a spouse as significantly affecting the level of stress experienced as she strived to provide a warm, stable, positive environment for her child.

Impact of age of children. The employed mothers perceived the age of their child (or children) to play a vital role in determining family life satisfaction. Of the 124 comments concerning family life, 18 respondents made reference to the age of their child. For many, the age directly related to the amount of responsibility placed on the employed mother and the sense of guilt experienced

due to leaving the child in the care of others. That is not to say that older children (i.e., six and above) do not require support; however, the inerrant demands which accompany children under six (feeding, clothing, etc.) increase the responsibilities of the mother due to the inability of the children to physically, mentally, and emotionally care for themselves.

Several respondents mentioned the fact that, although the physical demands reduced as the child grew, the cognitive growth of the child intensified the child's awareness of tensions between work and family. In essence, the responsibilities did not necessarily reduce; they adjusted to meet the demands of the older child. This finding supported Campbell & Moen's (1992) research which identified the child's age as significantly influencing perceptions of role strain in a study examining job-family role strain among employed single mothers of preschoolers.

Impact of child care experiences. Respondents viewed the child care experience as significantly impacting perceptions of family life satisfaction. For all those who mentioned this issue, a positive child care experience encouraged positive views of family life satisfaction. To the employed mother, quality child care may often have been a major determining factor in settling employment issues.

Without the peace of mind in knowing that their child is being well-taken care of, the employed mother would face an even larger burden as she observed the impact child care plays on the overall family life. For many of the respondents, a negative view of child care directly correlated not only with family life satisfaction but work life as well.

Time Concerns

The employed mothers frequently mentioned "time" as a critical factor influencing family life satisfaction. For the 61 of the respondents, time was considered a premium commodity for there never was enough of it to meet all the demands. Issues regarding time restraints frequently cited by the study participants centered around the sacrifice of personal time (on the part of the mother), limited time with family, and quality time with children.

Sacrifice of personal time. As previously stated, employed mothers perceived time to be inadequate when compared to actual time needed to meet demands of family and work. Scheduling conflicts, household responsibilities, and similar activities quickly filled the calendar of the employed mother as she strived to maintain adequate coverage of both worlds. More often than not, when something needed to be cut (for there was never enough time to complete

everything needing to be done), it was the mother's personal time which was the first to go. Of the comments regarding family life, 18 respondents mentioned lack of personal time. For the married employed mother, spousal support might offset some of the loss, but it did not relieve enough stress to make a significant difference. For the single employed mother, the lack of support intensified the already existing stress between work and home, thus greatly influencing perceptions of family life satisfaction.

Limited time with family. Employed mothers perceived time restraints as significantly limiting the amount of time the family unit had to spend together. Perceptions were supported by the underlying assumption that time spent interacting with one another as a family unit would improve family life satisfaction. For many respondents, lack of time caused by employment outside the home influenced the stress level experienced by the employed mother as she struggled to create a warm, stable environment from which individual family members could grow.

Time spent with children. Employed mothers felt that spending time with their children was a crucial factor in determining family life satisfaction. Unfortunately, time restraints placed on work and family caused the employed

mother to feel that she was being "spread too thin" as she juggled both worlds to balance out one for the other. The impact of limited time forced many of the employed mothers to focus on "quality" rather than "quantity" time spent with the children.

Necessary Income for Lifestyle Maintenance

Data analysis revealed that study respondents were employed outside the home to maintain insurance and provide income necessary for maintaining the current standard of living. Of the comments concerning family life, 38 employed mothers made reference to the fact that they were employed to meet family needs (financial). Respondents believed that they were working out of necessity, not luxury. This finding supported the research of Scarr, Phillips, and McCartney (1989) which emphasized the fact that women today are working out of necessity. For the single employed mother, this might mean living just above the national poverty level. For the married employed mother, on the other hand, the woman's income might allow the dual-income family to maintain a level of living once achieved on the single income.

Perceptions of Work Life Satisfaction

Responding employed mothers viewed their work life more positively than negative. Of the 116 comments concerning

work life satisfaction, 63 were positive and 53 were negative. Likewise, respondents perceived various factors as influencing positive and negative views of work life satisfaction. Of the 15 concepts concerning work life satisfaction mentioned by the employed mothers, the seven issues most often cited were as follows:

(a) enjoyment/satisfaction (in reference to job), (b) money (or pay), (c) "part-time" preference, (d) no employment preference, (e) job requirements, and (f) supervisory support and/or job flexibility. Through extensive analysis of data the following emerging themes were identified as factors perceived to influence work life satisfaction of employed mothers: effect of work environment, desire for reduced work load, and impact of personal satisfaction.

Effect of Work Environment

Respondents perceived numerous issues concerning work environment to be critical factors when analyzing work life satisfaction levels of employed mothers. Data analysis revealed work environment issues to include the effect of supervisor support, job requirements, flexibility, employee benefits, and length of commute to be major themes influencing the work life satisfaction of employed mothers.

Effect of supervisory support. The support of the supervisor (or lack thereof) contributed significantly to

the overall work life satisfaction of the employed mothers. Of the comments concerning work life, 13 respondents acknowledged the value of having an "understanding boss" when it came to balancing work and family. For several mothers, the presence of a supportive boss eased tensions between work/family and, ultimately, improved individual employee production. In the same manner, lack of positive supervisory support directly related to negative perceptions of work life satisfaction.

Effect of job requirements. Employed mothers perceived job requirements to be one of the areas over which they had the most control and which significantly contributed to work life satisfaction. The respondents perceived their ability to consciously choose employment positions which encouraged successful balancing of family and work as critical to this area. Of the comments regarding work life, 14 respondents mentioned various issues concerning job requirements (such as hours/schedule worked, overtime commitment, travel, etc.). Physical characteristics as well as mental and emotional requirements played key roles in determining perceptions of satisfaction.

For many of the mothers, the choice to maintain a position which was physically and emotionally draining became one of utmost importance as they adjusted work and

family needs to better accommodate one another. The amount of control the employed mother perceived she had over this area related positively to the level of work life satisfaction experienced (i.e., a lot of control = positive work life satisfaction). This finding supported Bharadwaj and Wilkening's (1980) research on "personal efficacy" which emphasized the fact that the level of control an individual has over situations and/or events which affect their environment is directly proportional to the amount of satisfaction they achieve.

Effect of flexibility. Several employed mothers perceived job flexibility to be crucial in their success of balancing work and family. Of the comments concerning work life, 13 respondents stressed the value of flexibility as an important characteristic for the job of an employed mother. More often than not, it was the flexibility in a job which allowed the mother the freedom to adjust schedules as needed to meet the demands of both work and family. The greater flexibility an employed mother had over job characteristics (be they time or personnel), the greater the odds of the employed mother's expressing positive perceptions in regard to work life satisfaction. This finding supported Stein's (1991) research emphasizing the significant relationship between job flexibility and work life satisfaction.

Effect of employee benefits. Several respondents emphasized the importance of employee benefits when analyzing work life satisfaction. Employed mothers felt that improvement in benefits offered to the employees would enhance not only production but morale as well. Multiple comments concerning available child care, sick leave, and education reimbursement further emphasized the importance of asking about employee benefits prior to the acceptance of an employment position.

Effect of length of commute. A few respondents mentioned "length of commute" in regard to work life satisfaction. For the most part, the shorter the distance, the greater the positive perception of work life satisfaction and vice-versa (the longer the distance, the more negative the perception). As employed mothers attempt to balance demands of work and family, the length of commute directly affects time available to spend on meeting the needs of the family.

Desire for Reduced Work Load

Employed mothers acknowledged the desire for a reduced work load as critical issues concerning work life satisfaction. Respondents viewed several options to accomplish this task, yet the results remained the same: reduced number of hours in the work force. Data analysis

revealed preference for part-time employment, preference for no employment, and employment sacrifices made by mother as the most frequently cited means by which an employed mother can reduce her work load.

Preference for part-time employment. Numerous employed mothers expressed intense desires for "part-time" employment options. Of the 160 comments about work life, 20 respondents identified a preference for part-time employment. However, due to the increasing dependency of family finances on the woman's income, few respondents saw this as a realistic option for their family at this time. Moreover, the desire for part-time employment often came into play when there was a young child (under school age) in the house. This finding supported the concept of "sequencing" discussed by Pearcey (1990) which allowed the employed mother to maintain contacts within the workforce yet contribute significantly more time with her children during the infant and preschool years.

Preference for no employment. Several respondents mentioned a strong desire to not seek employment outside the home. Of the 160 comments concerning work life, 17 respondents expressed a preference for no employment. Usually, this desire was accompanied with the underlying beliefs that the mother should remain at home with the child

until the child begins elementary school, or that the mother could better meet the needs of her family and home if she did not have the commitment of being employed outside the home. For the majority of respondents, however, this was not a realistic option for their families at this time due to the dependency of the family finances on the woman's income. This finding supported the empirical research previously stated (Scarr, Phillips, & McCartney, 1989) emphasizing the fact that women today are working out of necessity, not as a self-empowering luxury.

Employment sacrifices made by mother. Several respondents referred to "sacrifices" made in order to successfully balance work and family. Often times, the employed mother would accept (by choice -- not force) a lower-level position in order to adjust job requirements to better meet the needs of the individual family. Along with fewer expectations often came reduced pay and/or status. For some, this adjustment was viewed as a worthwhile endeavor which allowed the employed mother to meet the majority of the demands facing them. For others, the difficulty came in watching childless colleagues "pass them" on the move "up". This finding demonstrates the interaction between the "microsystem" and "mesosystem" espoused by Urie Brofenbrenner (1977) as each system adjusts to meet the

demands of the other. In this context, the employed mother modifies demands placed on her in the workplace (i.e., mesosystem) to accommodate needs of her immediate family (i.e., microsystem).

Impact of Personal Satisfaction

Respondents expressed the importance of personal satisfaction as an essential element in determining work life satisfaction. For the majority of the employed mothers, personal satisfaction related positively to work life satisfaction perceptions. Data analysis revealed the effect of money (in regard to pay) and enjoyment (whether the individual does or does not enjoy the work performed) to be major themes influencing perceptions of personal satisfaction of employed mothers.

Effect of Money. For many of the employed mothers, the amount of pay received for services played a vital role in work life satisfaction. Of the 160 comments concerning work life, 23 respondents referred to "money" (in regard to pay). Few respondents perceived themselves as receiving adequate compensation for qualifications/requirements. For the most part, the amount of pay influenced levels of work life satisfaction (i.e., the higher the pay, the greater the satisfaction level).

Effect of Enjoyment. Respondents identified "enjoyment" (whether or not they enjoyed work performed) as another critical issue when determining work life satisfaction. Of the comments focusing on work life, 25 employed mothers mentioned "enjoying" their work. More often than not, perceptions of enjoyment related positively with levels of work life satisfaction (i.e., the greater the perceived enjoyment of work performed, the higher the level of work life satisfaction).

Perceptions of Family/Work Interactions

Respondents perceived various factors as influencing perceptions of family/work interactions. Of the 15 different concepts concerning family/work interactions mentioned by the employed mothers, the six issues cited most often are as follows: (a) difficulty in combining work and family, (b) time (primarily the lack thereof), (c) effect of work on family, (d) resulting stress from lack of time, (e) feelings of guilt about children, and (f) impact of family on work. Through extensive analysis of data the following emerging themes were identified as factors perceived to influence family/work interactions: balancing work and family, spillover effect of family/work, effect on children, and other influences.

Balancing Work and Family

Employed mothers perceived ability to balance demands of work and family to be an essential element in family/work interactions. Data analysis concerning family/work interactions and balancing revealed difficulty in combining work and family, limited time to meet demands, and resulting stress from lack of time to be major themes in the perceptions of employed mothers.

Difficulty in combining work and family. Respondents viewed themselves as experiencing considerable amounts of stress while attempting to maintain a balance between work and family. Of the 202 comments concerning family/work interactions, 31 employed mothers expressed difficulty in combining work and family. As she struggles to meet the demands from all sides, the employed mother often times feels like a "juggler" with one too many balls in the air. Time restraints intensify already strong convictions of limited resources and inadequacy. The accompanying stress further intensifies emotions to such a degree that several of the employed mothers expressed feelings of being overwhelmed from the never ending cycle of responsibilities. This finding supported research emphasizing the negative effect of multiple roles on the mental health of women when "linked to family-role demands such as disproportionate

responsibility for housework and child-rearing tasks and a troubled marital relationship" (Pieochowski, 1992, p. 137).

Limited time to meet demands. As previously stated, employed mothers view time to be a premium as they strive to strike a balance between family and work. Of the 202 comments concerning family/work interactions, 27 respondents mentioned time (primarily the lack thereof) as a critical factor in balancing the two worlds. No respondents cited having enough time to meet expected demands, yet many expressed the inability to accomplish all they needed to do due to a lack of available time.

Resulting stress from lack of time. The employed mothers viewed balancing work and family to be extremely stressful. Of the comments concerning family/work interactions, 25 respondents expressed some form of stress in attempting to balance the demands of work and family. Lack of time multiplied by the increased number of demands from both worlds (work and family) produced high levels of frustration and resulting stress experienced by the employed mother.

Spillover Effects of Family/Work

Employed mothers acknowledged the interdependence of family and work as an important factor when analyzing family/work interactions. Data analysis concerning family/work interactions and spillover revealed effects of

work on family, family on work, and compromises made by the mother to be major themes in the perceptions of employed mothers.

Effect of work on family. Respondents strongly emphasized the effect work had on the family of the employed mother. Of the 202 comments concerning family/work interactions, 26 mothers mentioned numerous effects of work on family. Time, controlled by the number of hours spent in the workforce, played a critical role in the perceptions of employed mothers concerning family/work interactions. No respondent mentioned positive effects of work on family although many cited negative effects. This finding supported the research of Engelbrecht, Martin, and Chenoweth (1992) concerning work life satisfaction in regard to the number of "hours worked per week" (the higher the number of hours worked, the more negative the effect on family life).

Effect of family on work. In the same manner that work affects family, respondents perceived family to significantly affect work. Of the comments concerning family work/interactions, 20 employed mothers acknowledged the impact of family on work as they attempted to maintain a balance between the two. Respondents viewed family to affect work, but not as strongly as work affects family. Multiple comments were made by respondents depicting the

interrelatedness of the two areas (work and family) by illustrating how problems in one area inevitably carry over into the other area.

Compromises made by mother. Several respondents remarked on "compromises" made by the mother in order to successfully balance work and family. As the employed mother struggled to meet the demands of both worlds simultaneously, she was unable to give 100% to either area. For the most part, the employed mothers experienced dissatisfaction with either self or the system, as they "fell short" of meeting expectations in one area (i.e., work) to satisfy expectations in the other (i.e., family). This finding supported research of Williams, Suls, Alliger, Learner, and Wan (1991) which analyzed effects of multiple role juggling in regard to role satisfaction and the psychological well-being of employed mothers.

Effect on Children

Employed mothers perceived the effect of their employment on children to play a vital role in the analysis of family/work interactions. Analysis of data concerning family/work interactions and children revealed the influence of sick children on work, feelings of guilt experienced due to leaving the child in care of others, and the overall

impact of mother's employment on children to be major themes in perceptions of employed mothers.

Influence of sick child on work. For an employed mother, the illness of a child can wreak havoc within family/work interactions. Adjusted schedules to accommodate doctor's visits, sick leave (or the lack of), and child care issues are a few concerns mentioned by the respondents. Furthermore, the receptiveness of the workplace to accommodate the needs of the employed mother who has a sick child plays a critical role in the overall perceptions of success or failure when it comes to analyzing family/work interactions. For the most part, respondents perceived employers to be unresponsive to the needs of the employed mother as she struggles to balance demands from both sectors at this difficult time.

Feelings of guilt about children. Employed mothers experienced considerable amounts of guilt from leaving children in the care of others while employed outside the home. Several mothers mentioned that their children were their first and foremost priority, leaving room for consideration of other issues yet emphasizing the importance of the child's well-being. For many of the respondents, the age of the child directly related to the amount of time the mother felt appropriate for "time away" (i.e., the younger the child, the less time away; and the older the child, the

longer the time away). Likewise, as the child grew to school-age the mother was more content with allowing others to provide primary care. For the most part, the employed mother felt that she was "missing out" on a vital part of their child's life and was continuously evaluating the decision of appropriate child care situations.

Impact of mother's employment on children. As previously stated, the employed mother perceived her child to be the number one priority (overriding all else) in family/work interactions. For this reason, respondents were concerned with the impact of their employment on the children (specifically in the area of self-esteem). The employed mother perceived lack of time as limiting available options considerably, and, as a result, often spent considerable effort finding ways to prevent negative impact of employment on the mental and emotional well being of the child.

Other Influences

Employed mothers recognized the effect of several miscellaneous influences as important factors concerning family/work interactions. Analysis of data concerning family/work interactions revealed employer receptiveness and effect of employed mother's attitude to be major themes influencing perceptions of employed mothers.

Influence of employer receptiveness to family needs.

Respondents perceived employer receptiveness to family needs as an essential element to the successful blending of family/work interactions. Flex-time, job share, sick leave to care for ill children, extended days with three-day weekends were suggestions which demonstrated the intense feelings employed mothers experienced concerning employer receptiveness and family/work interactions. For the most part, respondents viewed the need for considerable changes in the workforce to encourage "family friendly" policies which would assist in the reduction of tensions between the home and the workplace.

Effect of employed mother's attitude. Several respondents commented on the effect of the employed mother's attitude on family/work interactions. The prevailing theme that a "positive attitude" in one area would carry over to the other was cited frequently by the employed mothers. However, some mothers felt the reverse to also be true; a negative attitude in one area would carry over to the other area. In essence, respondents viewed a positive attitude as directly relating to positive work and family satisfaction levels. This finding supported Campbell & Moen's (1992) study of job-family role strain among employed single

mothers of preschoolers which identified attitude toward employment as significantly influencing work satisfaction.

Other Emerging Themes

Through various parts of the study select comments made by respondents were categorized into two emerging themes by the researcher: discrimination and "cycle of despair". It is important to note that these themes were represented by a select few and did not pertain to the sample population as a whole. Issues regarding discrimination were not restricted to age limits or marital status (single or married), yet comments contributing to the "cycle of despair" appeared to be restricted to single employed mothers.

Discrimination

Five respondents perceived considerable discrimination not only in the workforce, but in society as well. For these employed mothers, the struggle to create a stable home for their children was over-shadowed by discrimination issues dealing with race, gender, socioeconomic concerns, and employment situations. These perceptions of discrimination affected not only how the employed mother viewed family/work interactions, but distorted the options the mother felt were available to her and her family as well.

Cycle of despair

In the same manner, three respondents shared perceptions describing a theme which, although not directly mentioned, appeared to be underlying the perceptions of many single parent mothers supporting their families on an income equivalent to or below the national poverty level. For the purpose of this study the term "cycle of despair" was coined to describe this process.

In essence, the single employed mother with limited education worked at a low-paying job producing limited funds which, in turn, increased the stress level as the mother attempted to meet the financial needs of her family. The increased stress intensified conflicts encountered in the family/work interaction process which were already strong due to the lack of support system. All these factors combined to create greater tensions at work which, in turn, set the cycle up to repeat itself. As the single employed mother faced these dilemmas alone, a sense of despair often accompanied the perception of constant striving for little or no gain. In short, she felt she was on a dead-end street heading nowhere. No matter how hard she tried to better herself, there was always something else to bring her down.

Conclusions

Conclusions drawn from this study provide insight concerning factors significantly influencing perceptions of employed mothers with young children. Analysis of data revealed that study respondents felt very strongly about issues which influenced family/work and the relationship between the two. It is important to note the preponderance of data which has come from respondents who were experiencing such heavy work loads, both at home and at work. The following conclusions relate to factors revealed by respondents which significantly influenced perceptions of family life satisfaction, work life satisfaction, family/work interaction, and other emerging themes.

Responding employed mothers perceived several issues as significantly influencing family life satisfaction. A positive spousal support (often shown through physical assistance) was perceived as greatly enhancing the employed mother's ability to balance multiple demands of both family and work. However, even though many of the employed mothers viewed themselves as receiving this support, most of the respondents still felt they carry the majority of the family responsibilities. Due to the burden of these responsibilities, time was viewed as a precious commodity as the employed mother struggled to juggle the conflicting demands of work and family (scheduling being the most

critical). The majority of employed mothers perceived their employment to be an economic necessity, not a self-empowering luxury.

Responding employed mothers viewed several issues as significantly contributing to perceptions of work life satisfaction. For the most part, a supportive work environment (one which acknowledges the challenges an employed mother faces and works to ease the tensions between work and family) played a critical role in perceptions of work life satisfaction. For many employed mothers, especially those with young children, a desire for a reduced work load was one of the predominant ways they felt they could achieve a balance between work and family. As work schedules are adjusted to meet various family needs, the employed mother perceives herself as becoming better able to strike a balance between conflicting demands of work and family. Even though respondents viewed their employment as a necessity and not a luxury, perceptions of personal satisfaction (the amount of enjoyment received from the employment experience) directly related to levels of work life satisfaction.

Responding employed mothers viewed several issues as significantly influencing perceptions of family/work

interactions. Employed mothers overwhelmingly agreed that they experience difficulty in balancing work and family. Time restraints and conflicting demands proved to be the largest obstacles most employed mothers face. Likewise, employed mothers perceived significant "spillover" from work to family and vice-versa (including compromises made by the mother to alter those effects). One of the greatest concerns of the employed mother was the effect her employment outside the home has on her children. The type of effect (negative or positive) experienced by the children appeared to directly influence the employed mother's perceptions of family/work interaction. Likewise, the level of employer responsiveness to the needs of the employed mother (specifically those concerning her children) directly related to these perceptions.

Throughout the study, two separate themes emerged which did not fit into either of the above mentioned sections: discrimination and "cycle of despair." These themes were not representative of the population as a whole, yet were strong enough to bear mentioning. First, the level of discrimination several employed mothers perceived themselves to experience in the workforce directly related to their perceptions of work life satisfaction. Likewise, these perceptions carried over into family life issues as "spillover" occurred between the two arenas. Second, several

single employed mothers found themselves locked within a "cycle of despair" from which there appears to be no escape. Caught up in the struggle of trying to singlehandedly provide for their children on a minimal income (usually below poverty level), these employed mothers face overwhelming odds when compared to their married counterparts. For the possibility of success to exist, somehow this cycle must be broken (be it through education or intervention) before the single employed mother can truly find a satisfactory balance between work and family.

Recommendations

The following study recommendations address the areas of business, education, employed mothers, and research.

Business

1. Employed mothers perceived work to have a definite influence on family life and family to influence work issues. It is recommended that business, educators, and families work together to develop pro-family policies which meet specific needs within their communities. Policies addressing issues such as child care, job flexibility (i.e., flex-time, job share, 4/10 hour per day work week, etc.), and family sick leave should be considered to assist in reducing family/work conflicts of employed mothers.

2. Employer responsiveness to needs of the employed mother related positively to the employed mother's perceptions of family and work life satisfaction levels. It is recommended that the "Family Life and Work Interactions" questionnaire be utilized by companies as an effective research tool which analyzes not only work satisfaction, but perceptions of how work and family interact as well. Information gleaned from this company analysis could be used to educate management on perceptions of company employees concerning such issues and assist in the development of effective "family-friendly" policies as well as identification of educational needs within the individual company.

3. Many employed mothers experience difficulty in balancing family and work. Likewise, employed mothers struggle with feelings of inadequacy as they find themselves "compromising" one area for the other. For this reason, it is recommended that company awareness programs be conducted to educate workers and management on the extent to which this difficulty influences the employed mother's perceptions of family/work life satisfaction and the relationship between family and work.

4. The perception of supervisory support recognized by an employed mother greatly influenced her level of work life

satisfaction. It is recommended that management training programs emphasizing the importance of positive supervisory support to employee work satisfaction be developed and implemented at all levels within the business sector.

5. Employed mothers experienced considerable amounts of stress while juggling demands of work and family. Time restrictions and conflicting scheduling demands between the two areas presented numerous obstacles to effective balancing of family and work. For this reason, it is recommended that businesses offer programs educating employees on using effective stress management techniques, selecting quality child care facilities, and developing positive conflict resolution and interpersonal relationship skills to encourage successful balancing of work and family demands.

Educators

1. Many employed mothers found themselves overwhelmed by challenges they face while trying to balance family and work. In a society that stresses total separation of the two areas, the employed mother struggles to adjust needs and demands of both family and work without sacrificing one for the other. Likewise, numerous employed mothers believed that positive employer receptiveness to their needs would only enhance positive interactions between family and work. For this reason, it is recommended that family life

educators serve as facilitators between the business world and the community in educating businesses on the needs of community families and developing pro-family policies which will assist and not hinder the employed parent. The following program topics would provide employed mothers with valuable resources useful in the successful balancing of work and family: conflict resolution and interpersonal relationship skills, stress management techniques and coping skills for employed mothers, developing effective parenting techniques, and selecting quality child care facilities.

2. Many employed mothers, especially those who are single, need a variety of support systems if they are to successfully balance family and work. It is recommended that community programs be developed which not only educate but also offer support networks to the employed mother as she strives to strike a balance between family and work. Programs should focus on providing interaction among individuals sharing similar family characteristics (i.e., single parents, parents with young children, divorced mothers, blended families, etc.). It is critical that these programs be developed on the community level and accessible to ALL employed mothers to facilitate program effectiveness. Efforts should be made to provide transportation and quality child care to those who have such needs.

3. Study results support the belief that family/work interactions strongly influence individual perceptions of family and work life satisfaction levels. It is recommended that educators in all fields (business, social science, family studies, education, etc.) incorporate family/work interaction curriculum into core courses offered to students at the university level to prepare individuals not only for personal challenges they themselves are likely to face but also to educate other people in skills necessary to successfully balance family and work.

4. Many individuals will find themselves in the dual role of employee/family member at some point in their life, and study results show that there is a definite need for skill development in the areas of conflict resolution, stress management, and time management. For this reason, it is recommended that the State Board of Education require schools to incorporate one semester of Vocational Home Economics into graduation requirements for high school students because Vocational Home Economics includes each of these areas in its essential elements.

Employed Mothers

1. Supporting relationships played a critical role in the perceptions of employed mothers concerning family and

work. For this reason, it is recommended that employed mothers take advantage of educational programs focusing on the development of positive interpersonal skills and strengthening relationships.

2. Employed mothers experienced considerable amounts of stress while balancing the responsibilities of family and work. It is recommended that employed mothers, single and married alike, take part in local programs which allow them opportunity to practice stress management and decision making skills not only in finance, but conflict resolution, interpersonal relationships, parenting, and employer/employee relations as well.

3. The child care experience significantly contributed to the family/work life perceptions of employed mothers. For this reason, it is recommended that employed mothers develop an understanding of what to look for in quality child care. Local accredited child care centers or National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) organizations will provide this information upon request.

4. Many employed mothers perceived quality child care as directly relating to positive family life and work life satisfaction levels. For this reason, it is recommended that employed mothers impress upon their employers the importance of quality child care and encourage the

development of systems within the company which refer employees to local accredited centers, provide on-site child care, or provide supplementary child care benefits to employees.

5. Employed mothers who perceived themselves as receiving support from surrounding individuals or systems expressed positive family life satisfaction. Likewise, the inverse relationship also proved true: a perception of lack of support encouraged negative family life satisfaction. For this reason, it is recommended that employed mothers actively participate in at least one "support network" on a consistent basis. By interacting with people who share similar characteristics/situations (e.g., single parents, parents with young children, blended families, etc.), the employed mother surrounds herself with resources from which she can draw assistance and experience. Regardless of the type of system (one good friend who is called as needed or a group of 10 individuals meeting weekly), it is important that employed mothers establish relationships which will empower them to succeed when the demands of work and family seem overwhelming. Local church and community organizations could offer this type of social contact while providing positive opportunities for stress relief.

Research

1. This study focused on perceptions of employed mothers using a sample which was predominantly married (78% of 195 subjects), yet no information was gathered from the spouses. It is recommended that the "Family Life and Work Interactions" questionnaire be utilized to analyze perceptions of employed fathers. Further studies could compare perceptions of employed couples by analyzing similarities and/or differences by gender.

2. Considerable research has been done regarding family/work interactions; however, the single parent has been left out of much of this research. Of the 195 respondents in this study, only 42 indentified themselves as a single parent. It is recommended that the "Family Life and Work Interactions" questionnaire be used to assess views of single parents (both male and female).

3. This study utilized data collected from employed mothers of predominantly middle-income and upper-middle income families. It is recommended that studies analyzing perceptions of low-income families be conducted to enlarge the pool of qualitative research available to students and educators studying implications of work and family interaction.

4. Although there have been significant amounts of research conducted studying work, family, and the interaction between the two, there is little qualitative research available analyzing the perceptions of the individuals. It is recommended that additional qualitative studies be done to encourage the use of qualitative research as a valuable option when analyzing work and family interactions.

Limitations

The following limitations were recognized as influencing the generalizability of this study and its results.

1. Respondents were limited to mothers of preschoolers and young children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Parents with children of other ages may have different views.

2. The questionnaire was offered at selected sites in the North Texas region; thus, results may not be reflective of other geographic locations.

3. The survey was conducted at a limited number of child care and after-school facilities in the area. Responses may not be indicative of all employed mothers in the area because alternate care arrangements and other facilities were not surveyed.

4. Responses were drawn from a select pool of employed mothers and do not allow for the analysis of the father's point of view (if applicable).

5. Due to the nature of qualitative research, study results will demonstrate limited generalizability of said issues. Results focus on beliefs and perceptions of the subject, and may not be applied to society as a whole.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, E., & Leslie, L. (1991). Coping with employment and family stress: Employment arrangement and gender differences. Sex Roles, 24(3/4), 223-237.
- Anderson, R. (1991). Day care: Does it weaken the bond of mother and child? Children's House Children's World, 21(4), 9-13.
- Auerbach, J. (1990). Employer-supported child care as a women-responsive policy. Journal of Family Issues, 11(4), 384-400.
- Barnett, R., & Rivers, C. (1992, February). The myth of the miserable working woman. Working Women, pp.62-65, 83, 88.
- Baxter, J. (1992). Power attitudes and time: The domestic division of labour. Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 23(2), 178-9.
- Becaver, R., & Becaver, D. (1982). Systems theory and family therapy. New York: University Press of America.
- Belsky, J., & Eggebeen, D. (1991). Early and extensive maternal employment and young children's socioemotional development: Children of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. Journal of Marriage & Family, 53(4), 1083-1098.
- Bharadwaj, L., & Wilkening, E. (1980). Life domain predictors of satisfaction with personal efficacy. Human Relations, 73(3), 165-182.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1982). Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Bowen, G. (1988). Family life satisfaction: A value-based approach. Family Relations, 37(4), 458-461.
- Bowen, M. (1985). Family therapy in clinical practice. Northvale: Jason Aronson.

- Braus, P. (1992). What workers want. American Demographics, 14(8), 30-37.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. American Psychologist, 32(7), 513-531.
- Burge, P., Stewart, D., & Culver, S. (1991). Employees' work satisfaction and stress. Journal of Vocational Home Economics Education, 9(1), 32-44.
- Burris, B. (1991). Employed mothers: The impact of class and marital status on the prioritizing of family and work. Social Science Quarterly, 72(1), 50-66.
- Campbell, M., & Moen, P. (1992). Job-family role strain among employed single mothers of preschoolers. Family Relations, 41(2), 205-211.
- Charon, J. (1979). Symbolic interactionism: an introduction, an interpretation, an integration. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Collins, R., & Magid, R. (1990). Work and family: How managers can make a difference. Personnel, 67(7), 14-19.
- Congressional Budget Office. (1988, March). New report on family income. Washington, DC: Author.
- Crouter, A. (1984). Spill-over from family to work: The neglected side of the work-family interface. Human Relations, 37(2), 425-441.
- Davis, B. (1989). Work/family coping, satisfaction, and employer-supported child care. Unpublished master's thesis, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX.
- Engelbrecht, J., Martin, J., & Chenoweth, L. (1992) The work/family interface: Implications for home economists. Texas Home Economist, 58(3), 19-21.
- Felstehausen, G., Glosson, L., & Couch, A. (1987). A study to determine the relationship between the workplace and the home (Document No. 66420060). Lubbock: Texas Tech University.

- Frantz, L., & Felstehausen, G. (1992). Management of family responsibilities in working families: Examination of ethnic and gender differences. Texas Home Economist, 57(4), 3-5.
- Goff, S., Mount, M., & Jamison, R. (1990). Employer supported child care, work/family conflict, and absenteeism: A field study. Personnel Psychology, 43(4), 793-810.
- Hewlett, S. (1990). The feminization of the work force. New Perspectives, 7(1), 13-15.
- Hochschild, A. (1990, March/April). The second shift: Employed women are putting in another day of work at home. Utne Reader, pp. 60-73.
- Hook, N., & Paolucci, B. (1970). The family as an ecosystem. Journal of Home Economics, 62(5), 315-318.
- Jacob, E. (1987). Qualitative research traditions: A review. Review of Educational Research, 57(1), 1-50.
- Johnson, O. (Ed.). Information please ALMANAC atlas & yearbook 1992 (45th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Kalleberg, A., & Rosenfeld, R. (1990). Work in the family and in the labor market: A cross-national, reciprocal analysis. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 52(2), 331-346.
- Kanter, R. (1977). Work and family in the United States: A critical review and agenda for research and policy. New York: Russell Sage.
- Levitan, S., & Gallo, F. (1990). Work and family: The impact of legislation. Monthly Labor Review, 113(3), 34-40.
- MacEwen, K., & Barling, J. (1991). Effects of maternal employment experiences on children's behavior via mood, cognitive difficulties, and parenting behavior. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53(3), 635-644.
- Mannino, F. (1974). An ecological approach to understanding family and community relationships. Journal of Home Economics, 66(3), 9-13.

- Martinez, M. (1990). Making room for work/family positions. HRMagazine, 35(8), 45-49.
- Martinez, M., Overman, S., & Thornburg, L. (1990). Vying for time. HRMagazine, 35(8), 36-44.
- Median income: Families, 1990. (1992). Monthly Labor Review, 5(1), 31.
- Median income: Households, 1990. (1992). Monthly Labor Review, 5(1), 31.
- Menaghan, E., & Parcel, T. (1991). Determining children's home environments: The impact of maternal characteristics and current occupational and family conditions. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53(2), 417-431.
- Miller, D. (1990). The impact of mothers' employment on the family meal. Journal of Home Economics, 82(1), 25-26.
- O'Connell, M., & Bachu, A. (1990). Who's minding the kids? Child care arrangements: Winter 1986-1987. Current Population Reports, Household Economic Studies, Series P-70, No. 20, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Family Economics Review, 4(1), 23-27.
- Pearcey, N. (1990, July). The American mother: Balancing work and family. The World and I, 243-249.
- Pieochowski, L. (1992). Mental health and women's multiple roles. Families in Society, 73(3), 131-1471.
- Raabe, P., & Gessner, J. (1988). Employer family-supportive policies: Diverse variations on the theme. Family Relations, 37(2), 196-202.
- Ruffolo, M. (1988). Study of women's perception of their social support networks while they maintain fulltime work roles and fulltime parenting roles. Dissertation Abstracts International, 50(02A).
- Scarr, S., Phillips, D., & McCartney, K. (1989). Working mothers and their families. American Psychologist, 44(11), 1402-1409.
- Schwartz, F. (1990). Career interruptus. New Perspectives Quarterly, 7(1), 16-19.

- Siegel, C. (1990). The brave new world of child care. New Perspectives Quarterly, 7(1), 34-45.
- Skinner, D., & McCubbin, H. (1991). Coping in dual-employed families: Gender differences. Family Perspective, 25(2), 119-134.
- Stalnaker, S., & Ericksen, M. (1990). Marital happiness: Implications for dual career couples. Journal of Consumer Studies and Home Economics, 14(4), 357-362.
- Stein, M. (1991). The impact of work flexibility on home and work satisfaction of employed mothers. Unpublished master's thesis, Texas Woman's University, Denton.
- Taylor, S., & Bogdan, R. (1984). Introduction to qualitative research methods: The search for meanings. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (1992, October). Employment and earnings characteristics of families: Third quarter 1992. Washington, DC: Author.
- U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau. (1992, January). Women Workers: Outlook to 2005. Washington, DC: Author.
- Vannoy, D., & Philliber, W. (1992). Wife's employment and quality of marriage. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 54(2), 387-398.
- Ventura, J. (1987, January). The stresses of parenthood reexamined. Family Relations, 26-29.
- Veum, J., & Gleason, P. (1991). Child care: Arrangements and costs. Monthly Labor Review, 114(10), 10-16.
- Voydanoff, P. (1987). Work and family life: Changing roles of men and women. Beverly Hill, CA: Sage Publications.
- Walter, K., & Goldsmith, E. (1990). Child care: Corporate responses to employees' needs. Journal of Home Economics, 82(1), 21-24, 61.

- Way, W. (1990). Quality of life and ecological systems: Frameworks for examining work-family relationships. Journal of Vocational Home Economics Education, 8(1), 64-74.
- Williams, K., Suls, J., Alliger, G., Learner, S., & Wan, C. (1991). Multiple role juggling and daily mood states in working mothers: An experience sampling study. Journal of Applied Psychology, 76(5), 664-674.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Family Life and Work Interactions Questionnaire

FAMILY LIFE AND WORK INTERACTIONS

This questionnaire is designed to identify the ways in which family life affects work and work affects family life. Please answer the following background questions about yourself.

MOTHER'S GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. My job title is _____
2. How many hours do you work for pay in a typical week? _____
3. My age is _____ years.
4. My current marital status is:
 _____ married.
 _____ single.
5. My years of education are _____ years.
 (for example, high school = 12; college = 16, etc.)
6. List below the age of each of your children and circle whether they receive paid child care services during work hours. Begin with the youngest child.

| <u>Age of Child</u> | <u>Child Care?</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| _____ | Yes No |
| _____ | Yes No |
| _____ | Yes No |
| _____ | Yes No |
| _____ | Yes No |

7. What was your total family income last year before taxes?

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ under \$10,000 | _____ \$40,001 to \$50,000 |
| _____ \$10,001 to \$20,000 | _____ \$50,001 to \$60,000 |
| _____ \$20,001 to \$30,000 | _____ \$60,001 to \$70,000 |
| _____ \$30,001 to \$40,000 | _____ over \$70,000 |
8. Do any members of your household require paid adult care services?
 _____ yes _____ no If yes, number _____
9. How adequate is your family income in meeting your financial needs?

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ Very adequate | _____ Inadequate |
| _____ Adequate | _____ Very inadequate |
10. How flexible is your job?

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ Very flexible | _____ Inflexible |
| _____ Flexible | _____ Very inflexible |

FAMILY LIFE AND WORK INTERACTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please fill in the circles that best describe your feelings.

(Question 1) Identify how satisfied you are with these aspects of your family life.

5 = Very satisfied 1 = Very dissatisfied

(Question 2) Identify what effect these aspects have on your work life.

5 = Very positive

1 = Very negative

0 = No effect

Check DOES NOT APPLY (✓) if the aspect does not apply to you.

QUESTION 1

QUESTION 2

| HOME AND FAMILY LIFE ASPECTS | Does Not Apply (✓) | How satisfied with family life? | | | | | What effect on work? | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|----------------------|-------------------------|-----|-----------|------------------|-----|
| | | Very Satisfied | | | | Very Dissatisfied | Very Positive | | No Effect | Very Negative | |
| Housing | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Household equipment | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Health of family members | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Personal health | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Emotional support from spouse | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Emotional support from children | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Emotional support from relatives | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Emotional support from friends | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Emotional support from church | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Services from community resources | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Child care arrange- ments | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Children's behavior | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Children's school performance | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Family schedule | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Time together as a family | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Amount of recreation/ free time | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Amount of time for self | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Total family income | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |

Please fill in the circles that best describe your feelings.

| HOME AND FAMILY LIFE ASPECTS | Does Not Apply (✓) | QUESTION 1 (cont'd) | | | | | QUESTION 2 (cont'd) | | | | |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----|-----|---------------|
| | | Very Satisfied | How satisfied with family life? | | | Very Dissatisfied | Very Positive | What effect on work? | | | Very Negative |
| Division of household duties (home maintenance/housekeeping) | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Division of parenting responsibilities | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Communication among family members | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Family's ability to resolve conflict | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Family "togetherness" | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Amount family members express affection | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Sense of control over life events | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Family members' personal habits (smoking, drinking, drug use etc.) | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Quality of family's daily diet | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Method of handling money | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |

Overall, how satisfied are you with your family life?

Very satisfied : Very dissatisfied
5 4 3 2 1

Overall, what effect do you think your family life has on your work performance?

Very positive : Very negative
5 4 3 2 1

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please fill in the circles that best describe your feelings.

(Question 3) Identify how satisfied you are with these aspects of your work life.

5 = Very satisfied

1 = Very dissatisfied

(Question 4) Identify what effect these aspects have on your family life.

5 = Very positive

1 = Very negative

0 = No Effect

Check DOES NOT APPLY (✓) if the aspect does not apply to you.

| WORK ASPECTS | Does Not Apply (✓) | QUESTION 3 How satisfied with work life? | | | | | QUESTION 4 What effect on family life? | | | | |
|--|--------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|---|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|
| | | Very Satisfied | | | | Very Dissatisfied | Very Positive | No Effect | | Very Negative | |
| Number of hours worked per week | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Work schedule | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Flexibility of work schedule | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Fringe benefits | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Working conditions/ physical environment | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Job security | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Work policies and regulations | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Meals and break times | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Parking arrangements | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Amount of commuting time | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Work status | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Amount of energy required on the job | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Friendships at work | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Support of supervisor/ management | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Opportunity to work independently | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Salary or Pay | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |

Please fill in the circles that best describe your feelings.

QUESTION 3 (cont'd)

QUESTION 4 (cont'd)

| WORK ASPECTS | Does Not Apply (✓) | How satisfied with work life? | | | | | What effect on family life? | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----|-----|---------------|
| | | Very Satisfied | | | | Very Dissatisfied | Very Positive | No Effect | | | Very negative |
| Amount of control over how you do your job | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Variety of work tasks | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Opportunities for advancement | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Challenge of the job | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Likelihood of transfer | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |
| Work expectations | | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) | (5) | (4) | (3) | (2) | (1) |

Overall, how satisfied are you with your work?

Very satisfied $\frac{\quad}{5} \cdot \frac{\quad}{4} \cdot \frac{\quad}{3} \cdot \frac{\quad}{2} \cdot \frac{\quad}{1}$ Very dissatisfied

Overall, what effect do you think your work has on the quality of your family life?

Very positive $\frac{\quad}{5} : \frac{\quad}{4} : \frac{\quad}{3} : \frac{\quad}{2} : \frac{\quad}{1}$ Very negative

How difficult is it for you to combine work and family responsibilities?

Not difficult at all $\frac{\quad}{5} \cdot \frac{\quad}{4} : \frac{\quad}{3} \cdot \frac{\quad}{2} : \frac{\quad}{1}$ Very difficult

What else would you like to say about how satisfied you are with your family life and work life? (Please write below, on the back of this page, or attach a separate sheet.)

APPENDIX B

Data Analysis Concepts and Frequency Counts

DATA ANALYSIS CONCEPTS AND FREQUENCY COUNTS

| CATEGORY | CONCEPT | FREQUENCY |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Family Life | spousal support | 44 |
| | money/lifestyle | 38 |
| | time with children | 28 |
| | household responsibilities | 24 |
| | single parent status | 20 |
| | personal time | 18 |
| | age of child | 18 |
| | children's support | 13 |
| | child care experience (+) | 13 |
| | family time | 12 |
| | outside support | 10 |
| | family unity | 8 |
| | money spent on children | 4 |
| | time with spouse | 3 |
| | guilt (support of money) | 2 |
| | discipline problems | 1 |
| Work Life | enjoy work | 25 |
| | money | 23 |
| | part-time preference | 20 |
| | prefer not to work | 17 |
| | requirements | 14 |
| | support of supervisor | 13 |
| | flexibility | 13 |
| | benefits | 11 |
| | commute | 10 |
| | sacrifice | 5 |
| | numbers of hours in child care | 4 |
| | work at home | 3 |
| | environment | 2 |
| | not enjoy work | 2 |
| | child at work | 1 |
| Family/Work Interaction | difficult to balance | 31 |
| | time | 27 |
| | impact of work on family | 26 |
| | stressed | 25 |
| | guilt in leaving | 21 |
| | impact of family on work | 20 |
| | compromising work or family | 17 |
| | student (outside commitments) | 11 |
| | employer receptiveness | 8 |
| | sick children | 7 |

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| positive attitude | 7 |
| impact on children | 4 |
| "very busy" | 3 |
| positive influence of faith | 3 |
| school | 2 |

APPENDIX C
Emerging Themes

EMERGING THEMES

PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY LIFE SATISFACTION:

- Influence of Relationships
 - Influence of spousal support
 - Influence of children's support
 - Influence of outside support
- Burden of Responsibilities
 - Impact of household responsibilities
 - Impact of single parent status
 - Impact of age of children
 - Impact of child care experience
- Time concerns
 - Sacrifice of personal time
 - Limited time with family
 - Quality time with children

Necessary income for lifestyle maintenance

PERCEPTIONS OF WORK LIFE SATISFACTION:

- Effect of Work Environment
 - Effect of supervisory support
 - Effect of job requirements
 - Effect of flexibility
 - Effect of employee benefits
 - Effect of length of commute
- Desire for Reduced Work Load
 - Preference for part-time employment
 - Preference for no employment
 - Employment sacrifices made by mother
- Impact of Personal Satisfaction
 - Effect of money
 - Effect of enjoyment

PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY/WORK INTERACTIONS:

Balancing Work and Family

- Difficulty in combining work and family
- Limited time to meet demands
- Resulting stress from lack of time

Spillover Effects of Family/Work

- Effect of work on family
- Effect of family on work
- Compromises made by mother

Effect on Children

- Influence of sick child on work
- Feelings of guilt about children
- Impact of mother's employment on children

Other Influences

- Influence of employer receptiveness to family needs
- Effect of employed mother's attitude

OTHER EMERGING THEMES:

- Discrimination

- Cycle of Despair