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WIVES' LABOR FORCE INVOLVEMENT AND HUSBANDS' FAMILY WORK: A DUAL SPOUSAL PERSPECTIVE

The Ohio State University
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WIVES' LABOR FORCE INVOLVEMENT AND
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SPOUSAL PERSPECTIVE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Philip B. Gordon, B.A., M.S.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1981

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I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to my parents, Ben and Bea. With their aid, support, and understanding, they have dedicated themselves to their family and children. I am especially thankful for the appreciation for life which they have helped to foster within me. The respect for the ideas of others, and the ability to savor them without blind acceptance or stubborn rejection, is an ability I cherish and an attitude I value. Nowhere has the human spirit been so keenly exemplified as through their model.

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Lastly, a dedication to families and children everywhere, in all their miraculous styles and forms and to the spirit which gives them meaning.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

The statistical history and demographics of wife/mother labor force participation over the last thirty years has been well documented. In reviewing the U.S. Department of Labor data on married women's labor force participation from 1947-1978, Smith (1979) notes that over one-half of these married women between the ages of 16 and 54 are now in the labor force, including over one-third of the mothers of young children. Of the 35 million female labor force participants under age 55, 56% are married and living with their husbands. Furthermore, three-quarters of these women are working at least 35 hours per week (full-time employment) or looking for full-time jobs. Smith (1979), in projecting through 1990, estimates that 55% of all eligible women will be in the labor force, an increase of 15% over 1978, that most will be between 25 and 54 years of age and married, and many will have minor children.

In reference to the increasing extent of female participation in the labor force, a rather crucial question is succinctly stated by Hofferth and Moore (1979):

Adding up, we estimate the weekly burden of work in the average household to be between forty and seventy hours. If household work is this time consuming, what happens when a wife goes to work outside the home (p. 112)?
Several studies of household work contributions by family members provide overwhelming evidence that wives contribute significantly greater amounts of labor to the maintenance of the household and family than either their husbands or children regardless of the extent of their participation in the labor force (Berheide, Berk, & Berk, 1976; Robinson, 1977; Walker & Woods, 1976).

Scanzoni (1978) speculates that the definitions of obligation and the personal or attitudinal (psychological) importance of both husband's and wife's work performance may ultimately determine the character of household maintenance:

Once the idea becomes widely held that women have the same kind of duty to be family providers as men do, that would be the signal that their work roles have become socially entrenched in the same way men's are... Specifically, if both spouses have the duty to provide for the household, then the husband can no longer automatically regard other duties (routine chores) as incursions. Their performance will now have to be negotiated (pp71-72).

Safilios-Rothschild (1970) was one of the first to introduce the variable of work commitment into the analysis of the relationship between wife's employment and various aspects of family structure and dynamics. She noted that work commitment was strongly related to differential patterns of family decision-making.

Ridley (1973), in a study of teachers and their husbands, noted the necessity of distinguishing between job satisfaction and job involvement in assessing the impact of wife's work on family life. His results indicated the need to distinguish
between women who view their work as important and, thus, carry that work home, and women whose work saliency is low. Using role-conflict variables in distinguishing between women in various occupational statuses, Nevell and Damico (1978) note that role conflict and role performance in work and family spheres is modified according to the women's perception of the importance of their occupation.

Sobol (1974), in her chapter on commitment to work, emphasizes that the economic contribution of the job is but one consideration in understanding the impact on the family. Most importantly, however, she stresses the need to carefully consider definitions and measures of commitment associated with the resultant phenomena to be studied. Pleck (1977), while discussing the work-family role system, postulates that the asymmetry of penetrable boundaries between work and families will shift with women's increased labor force participation and increased work experience. The resultant change in sex-role definitions and the carryover to family will lead to adjustments in normative role functioning. Lein (1979) has defined the process of work-role saliency for men and women by extrapolating from a small case study analysis and noting the importance of reference group differences. She speculates that as the number of women in the labor force increases, the definition of sex-linked roles for women will change as normative support moves closer to that which men
have traditionally experienced, including commitment to the job and desire to remain in the labor force.

Two recent studies note the importance of wives' work history in determining the impact their employment has on family members. Treiman and Terrell (1975), in the development of an explanation of differences or similarities in status attainment for working men and women, note the necessity of accounting for the wife's work experience. Scanzoni (1978) notes that women who have been consistently and highly involved in the labor force are able to consider their employment an obligation.

Since women's labor force participation will continue to increase at a rate greater than that for men, whose participation may in fact be on the decline (Smith, 1979), the systematic study of the effects on family life of female work involvement becomes important for understanding family maintenance patterns and relating social implications.

Significance of the Study

Increased women's labor force participation has several important implications, not the least of which is household role performance. Despite several attempts to account for husband's degree of participation in family tasks, a number of conceptual problems remain. Perhaps most importantly, few comprehensive explanations have yet been attempted to adequately "describe" how aspects of the wife's employment affects marital and familial task performance. Oppenheimer's
economic exchange perspective (1977), and Scanzoni's role violation-conflict model (1978) are two exceptions. Little has been done to coordinate or systematically associate sociological or psychological components of wives' employment with the findings of contribution to home task measures (Scanzoni, 1978). Additionally, those studies which have attempted to relate some component of wife's employment to marital and family functioning are typically the result of what Safilios-Rothschild (1970) has called "wives' family sociology," measuring of only the female spouses' perception of marital interaction.

Since Blood and Wolfe's (1960) seminal work indicating sex segregation on eight broad categories of household tasks, several time budget studies have shown that husband's contribution to family work has not increased by any great amount (Pleck, 1979). As always assumed, husbands performed less work than their wives, but more surprisingly the wife's employment status per se seemed to make little difference in the husband's absolute contribution. Yet, there have been recent studies to indicate a gradual, if not decisive or abrupt shift in wife-husband responsibility and performance.

Using data collected from a 1977 national survey, Pleck (1979) notes what he refers to as the, "first funding of non-trivial increments in husband's family work associated with wives' employment in a study assessing family work in terms of time in a large, representative sample." These data, while
not directly comparable to time budget accounts, indicate a substantial proportional increase of time which husbands of working wives spend in household tasks.

Lastly, Scanzoni (1978) using a sex-role modernity orientation notes an increase of shared functioning of household tasks, rather than assumption of certain home jobs by husbands. The shift in this case is explained by increased power negotiation resulting from, "not only the relative income issue, but also the social definition of that income—her status as coprovider (p. 72)."

Thus, despite only mixed evidence of shifts in male family performance, some evidence of long awaited change in the symmetry of husband-wife family task performance does exist. Previous research indicates that such change could be related to wives' increased commitment and increased definition of importance of their work role.

Hypotheses

This study will be an exploratory attempt to investigate the nature and effect of wife/mother labor force involvement and the subsequent extent of husband/father participation in traditionally female home and family tasks as perceived by both husbands and wives. More specifically, the degree of work or professional commitment and the saliency of the work role will be viewed as having an effect on the configuration of family maintenance patterns through husband/father involvement. The following measures of wife's work involvement
that have previously been or thought to be related to changes in family role performance will be examined:

2. Commitment to work (Kanter, 1977; Ridley, 1973; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970; Sobol, 1974).
The following hypotheses will be tested:

H 1A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expressed psychological reason for working.

H 1B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed psychological reason for working.

H 2A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expressed commitment to work.

H 2B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed commitment to work.

H 3A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expressed job satisfaction.

H 3B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed job satisfaction.

H 4A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expression of conflict over roles (work vs. family).
H 4B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed conflict over roles (work vs. family).

H 5A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expressed sex-role modernity.

H 5B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed sex-role modernity.

H 6A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her educational attainment.

H 6B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's educational attainment.

H 7A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her labor force history.

H 7B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and her labor force history.
H 8A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and family size (number of children).

H 8B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and family size (number of children).

H 9A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her occupational status.

H 9B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's occupational status.

H 10A: There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her level of employment.

H 10B: There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's level of employment.

**Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study:

1. **Dual-worker family** is a family in which both husband and wife are engaged in employment to any extent outside the home.
2. **Commitment to work** is the wife's expressed importance (saliency of her employment) as measured on a Likert scale of her willingness to leave employment if economic necessity were of not importance, and to give extra time to the job if necessary at the expense of family time (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970).

3. **Role conflict** is the wife's expressed desire to exit the labor force so as to spend more time with her family as measured by a Likert scale (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970).

4. **Job satisfaction** is the wife's expression of "happiness" or "like" for various aspects of her work role and work environment as measured by The Index of Job Satisfaction Scale (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951).

5. **Sex-role modernity** is wife's orientation to the appropriateness of the assignment of task by sex as measured on The Sex Role Attitude Scale (Osmond & Martin, 1975).

6. **Reason for working** is wife's explanation of labor force participation expressed on a Guttman scale of economic need versus psychic reward.

7. **Educational attainment** is the wife's raw number of years of formal education.

8. **Labor force history** is the percent of married life the wife spent in the labor force.

9. **Family size** is the total number of children in the family.
10. **Occupational status** is the classification of the wife's job or occupation based on the Hollinghead (1958) ranking of occupational attainment.

11. **Level of employment** is part-time or full-time participation of wife in the labor force.

12. **Family tasks/work** include those tasks adopted from Blood and Wolfe (1964) by Price-Bonham and Skeen (1978) considered essential to family maintenance. These are grouped into three broad categories of traditionally female tasks, traditionally male tasks and childcare tasks (Scanzoni, 1978; Sobol, 1974). Husband's participation is the degree to which he participates in subtask areas; i.e., alone, shared or not at all.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In 1978 more than 42 million women were in the labor force, constituting more than two-fifths of all workers (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1979). Among husband-present married women in 1979, more than one-half were in the labor force, totaling over 48 million (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1979). When wives work full-time, year round, they contribute nearly two-fifths of total family income often raising the family out of poverty. These statistics reflect a more than ten-fold increase in working mothers, and a more than tripling of all working women since the period immediately preceding World War II (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1979).

Noting the above changes in wives' labor force participation, a number of pioneering researchers have attempted to identify through qualitative or case studies the complexity of her work role and the subsequent effect on family life. Rapoport and Rapoport (1971; 1978) identified a number of variables affecting husbands and wives in work and family roles and have offered a number of insights on how those couples cope with the apparent dichotomies in work and family life.

Other researchers (Hoffman, 1963; Orden and Bradburn, 1969; Ridley, 1973; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970; Sobol, 1974) have begun the quantitative studies which recognized and
emphasized the fact of women's (wives') employment. Most of that data have characterized the attitudes of women toward work and have noted a general sense of commitment to labor force involvement. However, the data on dual-earner families remain sparse when attempting to describe the total configuration or multiple character of variables which women bring from the labor force into the home. And, even less prevalent is literature and quantitative analysis which describes the effect of those complex of variables on marital and familial functioning (one exception is Protikowski and Cuts-Christophe, (1981).

This chapter will begin with a review of role theory as it pertains to involvement in work and to family interaction and functioning, particularly household maintenance and division of labor. The next section will focus on work-family symmetry literature, i.e., the influence of each sphere on the other, particularly, work on family. The last section will focus on the present status of research which has characterized the effect of women's employment on topics of marital satisfaction and adjustment and which has led to consideration of aspects of women's work which affects the "traditional" sex-role divisions in marital and familial functioning.

Role Theory

Structural role approaches. In their review of role theory approaches to the family, Burr et al. (1979) note the
divergence of conceptualization of role concepts, particularly as they apply to the family. The main distinction is between those scholars who emphasize structure and those who emphasize emergent or interactionist processes. Of those theorists who emphasize roles as part of an institutionalized system, the emphasis seems to be on the behavioral fulfillment of particular sets of social norms or expectations which accompany each position or status. Such a definition is consistent with that first proposed by Linton (1936) and implies a good amount of proscribed behavior. So, for example, Parsons (1949, 1955), using a strict structural-functionalist approach, assumed that given the tasks necessary for the internal workings of the home to be maintained, the need for women to be at home was essential. Ultimately, the husband had responsibility to maintain or enhance family status through occupational attainment. If the woman worked outside the home, her job must not have competed with her husband's status. The ultimate goal was the status or positional maintenance of the family and its members.

Nye (1967) building on and modifying the concept of socially common expectations and structures (roles) has emphasized the degree to which individuals fulfill or "enact" the roles. Thus, some elasticity is allowed to normatively prescribed functions. Nye (1974, 1976) in characterizing roles by expectation, but with shifting boundaries according to situation, removed the problems of static labels. The result
seems to be continued use of analytical tools and hypotheses testing of variables which share meanings across social situations yet which adapt to the peculiarities within each family's circumstance. Nye (1976) clusters normative definition according to function, e.g., provider role, therapeutic role, sexual role, etc., as well as positional roles of husband, wife, or child.

Burr et al. (1979) note the analytical flexibility such conceptualization provides for any given combination of expectations. The result of this modified structural approach is that an individual may be asked to report in such a way as to determine both the degree of enactment and the nature of the behavior. In other words, roles within roles can be measured. This telescoping or funneling approach leads not only to consideration of a person's performance but to consideration of the nature of that performance which meets or fails to meet what had been expected.

Using Nye's (1976) housekeeper role as an example, the degree and nature of role enactment may be ascertained as well as simple statements of adequacy. A husband/wife may be asked not only if they function or if their spouse performs particular tasks, but satisfaction with performance and how that role is accomplished, e.g., efficient/inefficient housekeeper.

Emergent Role Approaches

A distinction still exists between scholars who indicate the prescribed nature of roles and those scholars who
emphasize improvisational or role-making and taking orientations. Turner (1970), while recognizing the structural nature of the family, has emphasized the continually ongoing interaction between family members by which those individuals define and redefine mutual expectations and identities. Through that ongoing process, the family (or group) solves problems, makes decisions, and performs behaviors necessary to maintain itself with a minimum of disruption. This approach is well founded in the symbolic interactionist tradition. A number of excellent reviews exist outlining the development of the interactionist approach (see Burr et al., 1979; Meltzer et al., 1975; Stryker, 1959, 1964).

Stryker (1964) reviewed four propositions of G. H. Mead he had tested earlier (1956) with specific reference to role-taking accuracy in a family context (parent-offspring relationships). While these four tenets summarize a voluminous body of thought, they succinctly characterized the interactionist position of role theory. They are:

Four propositions were drawn from Mead: (a) social activities are embedded in the structure of roles, i.e., are self-other patterns; (b) to engage in social activity, one must take the roles of other(s) implicated in that activity; (c) a significant segment of the role one must take consists of attitudes; and (d) ability to take the role of the other is predicated upon a common universe of discourse, a system of common social meanings (p. 156).
Stryker (1959) in developing the interactionist concept of role for use in family study suggested operational (useful) distinction between position and role. Positions are socially accepted categories of actors which serve to classify and help to organize behavior toward each of those categories of individuals. Examples given by Stryker (p. 114) are father, policemen, and teacher. Roles on the other hand are the expectant behaviors attached to those positions. Ultimately the social meaning of positions depends upon the extent to which behavior is shared. Thus role refers to the interactions in relationships as actor and other engage one another in a social setting.

When individuals interact they classify objects and situations for themselves and others in relevant ways by comparing existent behavioral expectancies to the behaviors in the ongoing situation. The result is the development of self, "defined in terms of socially recognizable categories and their corresponding roles (Stryker, 1959: 115)."

The development or socialization of self is continual. When discussing the individuals in a family context, Stryker (1959) notes that it is the congruence of definitions of role, self, and positional identities which determine the extent of efficient organized behavior. When incongruencies exist, disorganization occurs, until such time that new shared definitions of roles have been established. A husband with a wife entering the labor force for example may find his
expectation of a "wife's" role performance lacking because of a conflict with her role as "co-provider." Given the established and expectant patterns of behaviors that become disrupted with the new position and role, both husband's self and wife's identity shift. Through interaction (verbal communication) using old but still meaningful symbols, and with the development of new symbols, new shared behavioral expectancies and thus new roles emerge. Such changes then also lead to new identities or self-concepts.

In the example presented here, family disorganization might be overcome by husband's acceptance of roles previously assigned to the "wife position" or by the acceptance of loss of roles no longer defined as necessary. Since the family is a social system, the wife in response might also sacrifice "provider" status for role consistency and agree to demote the importance of provider role.

As family members express different commitments to familial and extrafamilial identities, i.e., other spheres of influence such as the workplace, the extent of divergence will determine the degree of stress and disorganization. Stryker (1968) has noted that when different identities become "contingent at some point in time (p. 560)," behavior may become incompatible or result in role conflict. When both sets of behaviors (roles) are important or salient in an individual's hierarchy of roles, the conflicting behavioral expectations are resolves through interaction with others (familial and/or
extra-familial). Which role or identity emerges with greater or lesser saliency will depend upon the intensity and extensiveness of various networks of relationships. Both instrumental need and emotional investment determine the input of those networks and the commitment which they incur (see Stryker, 1968; hypotheses 1-4, pp. 461-562). Thus, roles are established and adjusted in social contexts, e.g., the family or the workplace.

Work-Family Symmetry

The Work-Family Role System

Over the past 20 years the mutual influence of work and family worlds has become well documented. As Rapoport and Rapoport (1965) reported, the study of relationships between work and family roles had been little explored subsequent to the "functional differentiation that occurred following the industrial revolution (p. 381)." Using a "task accomplishment" approach, based in functionalist theory, the authors note that both familial and occupational worlds are often influenced by similar norms and values despite the apparently segmented structures of the two spheres. Rapoport and Rapoport (1965) argue that the directionality and scope of influence between the family and workplace are the result of a matrix of four variables. Relative saliency of work tasks, isomorphism of work-family relations, transition in the life cycle, and the general integration between work and family life all result in "the complex interplay in a given field of forces (p. 387)."
Similarly, Kanter (1977) speculates that both work and family sectors are arenas in which individuals learn a degree of accomplishment of instrumental tasks and of intimate relationships.

Thus, the 'instrumental' portion of family life is as likely as that of occupations to contain impersonal, performance-oriented standards. And the expressive portion of organizations—the fact that they consist of individuals forming relationships—is as likely to contain pluralistic, emotional elements as in the family (p. 73).

Specifically, Kanter cites the labeling and measurement of household maintenance performance with terminology applied to task accomplishment in the work world, and, conversely, the labeling of occupational relationships with familial constructs.

Continuing to build toward the understanding of work-family linkages, Pleck (1977) defines the asymmetrical nature of the "work-family role system" according to the sex-segregated nature of the female work role, the female family role, the male work role, and the male family role. Despite Pleck's view of the work-family role system as asymmetrical, the boundaries between each role are viewed a "permeable" for both sexes. By using a role-system approach Pleck contends that the degree of "role actualization" (performance), the character of each role (social-psychological measures), and
the effects on or relativity to other roles, may all be conceptualized simultaneously.

The degree to which the change in one role affects accommodation in other roles to which it is linked depends on, "two structural 'buffers' in the links among these roles, limiting how much change in one role affects the others (Pleck, 1977:423)." The first buffer is the sex-segregated market mechanism in both paid and family work. Traditionally, the lack of competition between men and women for the same jobs has led to the asymmetrical relationship where women's paid work has been influenced by her family work, and conversely for men, their family work has been influenced by their paid work. Thus, the second structural buffer influencing the role system has been the "permeableness" of those symmetrical boundaries.

The reality of mutual influence between home and work worlds belies the myth of separate spheres perpetuated by organizational and bureaucratic structure (Kanter, 1977) where individuals, usually husbands, were expected to manage family life so as to allow for achievement and efficiency in the occupational sphere. With the increase in married women's labor force participation noted earlier, the asymmetrical nature of the work-family role system might be expected to shift toward the "symmetrical family" (Young & Wilmot, 1973). The result is a configuration where both marital partners have significant occupational and family roles, including shared responsibility for household maintenance.
Effects on Marriage and Family

Marital Adjustment and Satisfaction

If the shifts in wives' labor force participation result in previously postulated role shifts within the family, then a "stressful" period of marital adjustment should be noted. The disorganizing phase should be followed by a reorganization period in which "successful" or, couples who remain intact, adopt new role assignments and/or performance standards.

The stress for husbands should be noted because of socialization factors (Pleck, 1977) and because of normative reference group support at work (Lein, 1979) which continues to reinforce the traditional concept of sex-appropriate household activities. For wives, stress should initially result from the attempt to manage both household and occupational roles. As wives are "allowed" to enter occupations which are status competitive with male workers, the result might be husbands who are willing to redefine the scope of male family roles (Plek, 1979).

The review of research literature over the past two decades would indicate the changes in role performance described. Early studies which consider wives' employment and the effects on marital relationships note an inverse relationship between her work and the "stressful" effect on marital satisfaction and adjustment. Blood (1963) pointed to the fact that what little research that could be found on the effects of wives' work attitudes and behaviors actually
concentrated on employment status per se and different or random aspects of marital interaction. Ridley (1973), noting this absence of defined and systematic investigation, emphasized the necessity of understanding the relative importance of the wives' occupations in influencing family roles.

Other researchers have reported conflicting findings on the level of marital adjustment, usually the effect on husbands, when wives enter or are in the labor force. In a replication and refutation of a Burke and Weir (1976) investigation, Booth (1977) presents evidence that husbands with wives in the labor force were at least as satisfied and under less stress than traditional husbands. While measures of satisfaction with spousal household performance were noted in these studies, no measures of role or task accomplishment were actually taken. Bebbington (1973) explained the phenomena in dual career families by stating that stress plays an adaptive function in resolving normative inconsistencies. Couples in his sample were "provided" the opportunity to often successfully negotiate and clarify role hierarchies and role performance when the stress of dual careers forced consideration of household responsibilities.

Douglas and Wind (1978) postulate about a similar function of the household disorganization created in dual worker families. Using a small convenience sample of working and nonworking marital dyads, they emphasize the nature of the family situation. Douglas and Wind contend that most families have no clearly stated and consistent patterns of authority
across the various household or family arenas. Their conclusion is that investigation of authority and performance patterns should be conducted relative to specific areas or work role and family life.

Specifically, Ridley (1973) points to the need to distinguish between job satisfaction and job involvement (perceived saliency) when analyzing the impact of wives' work on family life. In measuring the marital adjustment from a sample of 210 wife-teacher couples, he demonstrates previously confirmed results (see Hicks and Platt, 1970 for a review of previous literature) of the dominance of the work role for the husbands. Wives' job satisfaction and level of marital adjustment did not exhibit significant relationships. Ridley explains this result using role theory to emphasize that work satisfaction does not necessarily place the job role in a dominant position in the role hierarchy. When saliency of the role (importance relative to other roles) was introduced as an interacting variable, job satisfaction was found related to marital adjustment for highly invested wives. Ridley goes on to only speculate concerning the consequences for familial functioning.

The saliency-adjustment link is given further support by Heckman, Bryson and Bryson (1977) in a study of 200 psychologist couples. That is, these wives as a group tend to subordinate job roles to family roles, but since their profession was highly salient for most, frustration was
expressed and role conflict was evident. For this sample, the effects on marital adjustment were ameliorated by what the authors explain as some degree of status derived from husbands' accomplishments. Martin, Berry, and Jacobson (1975) report in the results of a five-year longitudinal study of professionally endogamous couples that the wife benefits from the occupationally specific dual career marriage when compared to other females in the profession. The result is that marriage to a professional colleague entails fertile interaction relevant to the profession.

By way of summation, while some trends appear to be emerging from both controlled and case study research, the literature remains disjunctive. One aggregate conclusion is that when wives work the status of the job or career has an effect on various aspects of marital adjustment. Most of these studies also reflect the effects of cultural norms, especially when roles conflict for working women. Sobol (1974) has recognized the need to systematically describe the character of wives' work, much as it has been for men, and to then measure the effects of her employment on marital and family life. Specifically, she notes that as women move into the work force, their commitment to the job, and the factors which affect that importance, influence relationships and performance within the home. Specifically, Sobol (1974) emphasizes the importance of the following variables of wives' work role: need to work, work experience and expectations, family size,
education, reference group support, and to some extent sex-role orientation.

Since Sobol's review, relatively few studies have attempted to systematically investigate the effect of these work-role variables on family functioning. Scanzoni (1978) using a "reward-cost approach" notes the effects of sex-role preferences, economic resources, and career orientation on household tasks performance and in marital conflict resolution. While adequate financial resources seem to have an overall significant effect for his sample, social class and importance of her job contribute to the degree husbands are willing to acknowledge wives as co-providers. That recognition ultimately determined the extent of husbands' role assumption in sharing household tasks.

One recent study (Protikowski and Cust-Christophe, 1981) considers six aspects of women's jobs and the effect on family adjustment. Intrinsic job gratification, satisfaction with job security, job-related mood, time spent at work, occupational prestige and salary were all regressed on some measure of familial adjustment. The experiences of the workplace were significantly related to a measure of family relations and positive home mood.

**Division of Household Labor**

Regardless of perspective and effect on marital adjustment, most couples must come to some agreement as to the division of household labor and as to the degree of role
enactment necessary for a desired or efficient household organization and maintenance. Walker (1973) noted that the value of a full-time homemaker, receiving minimum wages could be estimated at approximately $7,000 dollars per year in 1973 dollars. Hofferth and Moore (1979) citing U.S. Bureau of the Census data note that the median income for full-time civilian female workers that year was $6,335 dollars. The conclusion for working women is that:

Complete substitutional help would be prohibitively expensive for most families. The option that remains are: (1) to rely on non-paid help from spouse, relatives, and friends; (2) to reduce housekeeping standards; (3) to become more efficient at household work, and (4) to work part-time. Working women typically use some combination of these options (Hofferth and Moore, 1979: 112-113).

Studies of household task performance may be divided into two broad categories. First, a group of studies exist which attempt to measure actual performance. These include time budget measures for diary accounts of task allocation. Second, a body of literature exists which attempts to characterize the basis on which the allocation of roles is made.

Until recently, most data, whether diary accounts of daily activity or actual time use measurements, indicated that regardless of the employment status of wives, husbands' contribution to family tasks remained minimal and steady. Walker (1970) found that husbands contributed about 1.6 hours per day to family tasks in both dual-worker and single-worker dyads. The difference in time allocated to household tasks was noted
in the wives' time budget. In these data, working wives averaged 4.8 hours per day in family work compared to 8.0 hours for nonworking wives. Vanek (1977) has noted similar time resource information for women in the labor force. She found that although working wives continue to spend a good deal of time in housework, 26 hours per week, that figure is approximately one-half that spent prior to entering the labor force. These findings have been corroborated by Meisser, et al. (1975) in a Canadian study of housework, and by Walker and Woods (1976) in their analysis of time use data.

As early as 1960, Blood and Wolfe, using comparative reports of division of labor between husbands and wives noted that those spouses of working women did spend more time in family tasks. With reference to these data, Pleck (1979) notes that descriptive comparison of activity allows for comparative analyses on the division of labor per se, but does not allow for proportional comparison based on standardized units of time. One sophisticated diary account approach (Berk, 1979) using rank order of time spent in activities in a cluster analysis noted that the constraints of the activities themselves allow husbands to organizationally "escape" activities for which no apparent time exists. The analysis of the data however, did reveal that despite the limits that existed in both dual-worker and traditional families, "points of change" for reorganization of the day did exist. Berk (1979) speculates that with changes in
normative definition of sex-appropriate roles, husbands should begin to take "advantage" of such opportunities.

Pleck (1979), using 1977 national survey time budget data, has analyzed the proportional and absolute hours that spouse of working and nonworking women spend in family roles. He found that husbands' of employed women spend a statistically significant greater amount of time per week absorbed in family roles. Although the actual hourly differences does not appear large, Pleck notes that these may be the first, "nontrivial increments in husbands' family work associated with wives' employment (p. 487)," and that for the first time this type data is consistent with comparative division of labor information.

Despite some rudimentary evidence that husbands of working wives are beginning to spend more time in family work, household maintenance responsibilities remain the primary domain of those women. A number of scholars (Aldous, 1969; Lamouse, 1969; Kuth and Brubaker, 1977; Mawrer, 1969; Pleck, 1977; Scanzoni, 1978; Szinovacz, 1977) have demonstrated across various populations that family tasks have been allocated primarily according to traditional sex-role norms. Husbands have perceived themselves as breadwinners, whose legitimate responsibilities lie outside the home. And, wives have viewed their family obligations as primary. However, each body of research reflects a more complex understanding of the dynamics involved, which until recently has maintained the
asymmetrical nature of husbands' nonfamilial domain and wives' household sphere.

Szinovacz (1977) in a large Austrian study, and Lein (1979) in an American sample, both note that female employment did not necessarily result in egalitarian assignment of household responsibilities. Of particular interest in both populations is the fact that working wives seem to make efficient use of external and internal social support systems. Because these women reduce the role strain on themselves to what they perceive to be a tolerable level, husbands apparently do not perceive an obligation to respond as though their spouses are co-providers. Model (1981) concluded that,

Unknowingly, such women have reinforced their second-class status at home. They remain in a weak bargaining position with respect to their husbands (p. 236).

The result is that a vicious cycle has developed in which working wives also put themselves in a weak labor market position.

Scanzoni (1978) speculates that as wives' labor force participation becomes more normative, the meaning of her role as co-provider will supercede or at least carry equal weight to her household responsibilities. Despite the findings of his sample that working wives must make a substantial contribution to be viewed as co-provider to induce their husbands to perform more household chores, he states:

Nevertheless, for years ahead the trend seems clear— as women continue to increase their level of sex-role modernity, together with increases
in possession of tangible and non-tangible resources— they are increasingly likely to involve men in routine and nonroutine (child-care) household duties (82-83).

Those changes reflect similar concepts reflected upon elsewhere in this review by Pleck (1977) and Lein (1979). Additionally, studies by Gross and Avery (1977) and, Keith and Brubaker (1977) indicate that for younger marrieds the nature of wives' work in combination with their age (possibly reflecting sex-role orientation) has an effect on household task allocation. Husbands in both samples were at least willing to share more in family work. A similar trend was noted by Scanzoni (1978) in his sample.

In summary, husbands of working wives appear to be only reluctantly assuming an increased home maintenance function. As women continue to enter the labor force in greater numbers, more households will be affected by the decreased allocation of time for familial roles. If working wives are, in fact, a normative phenomenon the character of their involvement at work becomes important to understand. The effects on both instrumental and intrinsic areas of family life will adjust. Which aspects of the provider role most directly affect husbands' perception of their changing family responsibility has yet to be clearly defined. Regardless, as wives become more involved and psychologically committed or absorbed to labor force participation the changes in functioning will be noted.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Design

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between role variables of wife's employment and the extent of husband's participation in family tasks, specifically, this investigation was designed to reach beyond the wife's employment status per se and to determine which characteristics of her labor force involvement were associated with husband's degree of participation in traditionally sex-role defined family tasks using an ex-post facto correlational design.

The independent or predictor role variables included: wife's commitment to work, reasons for working, role conflict, job satisfaction, sex-role modernity, educational attainment, labor force history, family size occupation, and extent of participation. Two dependent variables, wife's perception of husband's participation in family work, and his own perception of his participation in family work were measured.

The investigation was part of a larger study entitled, "The Impact of Maternal Employment on the Family's Definition of the Male Role," directed by Dr. Patrick C. McKenry and administered by the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (Hatch-644) in cooperation with Dr. Sharon Price-Bonham, University of Georgia.
Sample Selection

The sample for this study was determined by a "neighborhoods sampling technique" which included four neighborhoods purposively selected from information received from the United States Bureau of the Census on all middle-class, Franklin County, Ohio and Clarke County, Georgia, neighborhoods. The sampling technique had been chosen to conform to guidelines established by Dr. Sharon Price-Bonham (University of Georgia) who administered the same survey in preselected housing areas in Fulton and Clarke Counties, Georgia. Households in each of these areas were canvassed and only two-parent families with at least one adolescent (aged 12-18) living at home were included in this study.

Information was collected from 68 families in Franklin County, Ohio and 55 families in Fulton and Clarke Counties, Georgia. Approximately 75% of all families contacted and meeting the criteria cooperated in the study.

Subjects. For the purpose of this study data will be used from the 68 employed women and their husbands in the aforementioned sample (see Table 1). The subjects are white, middle-class (Hollingshead & Redlich, 1958) intact families. The couples have been married for approximately 19 years and have a mean number of 2.79 children. The mean age of the oldest child is 17.53 years; the mean age of the youngest is 12.27. The mean age of the women is 41.08; the mean age of the men is 43.84.
### TABLE I
DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years married</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age oldest child</td>
<td>17.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age youngest child</td>
<td>12.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age wives</td>
<td>41.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age husbands</td>
<td>43.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years education—husbands</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years education—wives</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All but one of the men are employed; all of those employed work fulltime whereas 56% of these working women were employed on a fulltime basis. The mean education level of the men is approximately 17 years (college completed, some post-bachelor education). The mean education level of the women is approximately 15 years (3 years of college). Approximately 80% of the males are employed in white collar occupations. Approximately 90% of the females are employed in white collar occupations; approximately 45% of these women are employed in clerical or sales positions.

**Procedures.** The data collection for this study was completed over a one-year period. Data collection for Franklin County, Ohio was completed over a six-month period,
January through June 1979, whereas the collections for the Georgia sample was completed six months previously, June through December 1978. Questionnaires had been administered to the selected sample of females which included questionnaires specifically designed for husband/father and wife/mother. Trained data collectors explained the nature of the study, collected consent forms (Appendix B), and left the questionnaires and accompanying individual envelopes with the family members. The completed sealed questionnaires were then collected one week later. All information remained anonymous and the name of the participating family was never associated with any information provided.

**Instrumentation**

Questionnaires were used because they were the most economical and practical means of obtaining the desired information. The following measures were used to test the hypotheses of the study:

**Performance of household tasks.** Blood and Wolfe (1968) in their study of Detroit area families identified eight broad categories of household tasks, excluding childcare. They found contributions to household maintenance to be sex segregated. The tasks participation instrument was modified and developed by Price-Bonham and Skeen (1978) from the measures in the 1964 Blood and Wolfe study and in accordance with subsequent home time-budget research (Berheide, Beck & Beck, 1976; Walker & Wood, 1976). The specific tasks were
analyzed individually and collectively grouped under three broad headings: female tasks, male tasks and childcare tasks.

Participation was analyzed according to husband's contribution relative to participation of wife and/or other family members (Beck, 1979; Lein, 1979; Pleck, 1977; Scanzoni, 1978). Each task was coded from the questionnaire as accomplished alone, shared, or other. Both husbands' and wives' perceptions were considered.

**Reason for working.** Several researchers (Orden & Bradburn, 1969; Salfilios-Rothschild, 1970; Scanzoni, 1978; Sobol, 1974) have noted the necessity to consider the wife's perceived need to work, making the distinction between economic necessity and choice of entrance into the labor force for psychic rewards. Specifically, reason for working appears to affect both the stability of the intended role change, and affect the nature of spousal decision-making. Reason for labor force participation will be analyzed by a Guttman measure of the extent of economic influences, as opposed to psychic reasons on continued participation.

Female respondents indicated on an eight-item scale the reason they worked. Three items were indications of degree of economic need and five items were indications of degree of social-psychological need. The items were then collapsed and scored according to economic need (low score) or psychic need (high score).
Commitment to work. Kanter (1977), Ridley (1973), Safilios-Rothschild (1970), Sobol (1974) have all noted the importance of wife's commitment to the job and the effect on marital and familial interaction and performance. For the purpose of this study, work-role saliency (Stryker, 1968) will be measured by a Likert scale comparing the importance of that work to willingness to leave employment.

Female respondents were asked to respond to three items which indicated commitment to a particular occupational position, commitment to job time (extra hours) versus family time, and commitment to remaining in the work force if economics were of no consequence. The scoring was based on the total of the three items. Low sums indicated a wife's commitment to her job with high scores indicating low commitment to her labor-force participation.

Role conflict. Role conflict refers to competing interests on an individual's time and resource allocation, including psychological abilities (Stryker, 1968). Specifically, with reference to family, role conflict may result when two or more competing roles vie for time and energy, for similar or different reasons, and when behaviors associated with both roles need to be accomplished (Nye, 1976). Of primary consideration for this study are the conflicts that arise between competent role performance on the job and perceived degree of fulfillment within home and family roles. Burke and Weir (1976) and Ridley (1973) for example, have
noted the effect of satisfaction with performance of working women on marital satisfaction and adjustment. Role conflict will be measured by a Likert measure of the desire to be with family versus desire to remain in the labor force.

Female respondents were asked to indicate whether they felt conflict between working and parenting, and, if so, to what extent they were prevented from fulfilling that role. (4-point scale). High scores indicate no conflict and low scores indicate a great deal of conflict.

**Level of employment (fulltime versus part-time).** Orden and Bradburn (1969), Bahr, Bowerman, and Gecas (1974), and Lupri (1969) all make the distinction between involvement in work according to time spent at the job and commitment in terms of perceived saliency. Specifically, an individual may spend a varying amount of time at the job, but define the work as extremely salient (important) for either economic, or most often psychic reasons. For the purpose of this study 30 hours or more per week will be considered fulltime employment. Less than 30 hours per week will be considered part-time employment.

**Job satisfaction.** Nevell and Damico (1978) and Ridley (1973) both note the importance of distinguishing between job satisfaction and job involvement. Women's perception of satisfaction with their employment appears to directly effect their interpretation of her occupation and subsequently performance in family roles. Job satisfaction will be taken as
total scores from Likert-type scales reflecting contentment with various aspects of the work role. The specific scale to be used is "An Index of Job Satisfaction" developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951). The scale specifically measures subjective attitudes and perceptions of the labor environment. Reliability of the scale is reported as .87 using the Spearman-Brown connection on odd-even product moment reliability.

In the form adopted, the scale is a 20-item, 5-point scale. Scaling was achieved so that high scores indicated high satisfaction and so that low scores indicated low satisfaction.

Sex-role modernity. Scanzoni (1978) discusses and notes the mediating effect of wives' sex-role modernity (or traditionality) on her willingness to assume both home and labor force responsibilities. Specifically, he noted that both husbands and wives modify their actual performance based on expressed sex-role orientation and wives' subsequent involvement in the labor force. Osmond and Martin (1975) developed a scale of sex-role attitudes (SRA). The reported reliability coefficient (Cronback's Coefficient Alpha) was .88. The scale consists of 32 items grouped into four broad areas: Family Roles, Extrafamilial Roles; Stereotype of Male/Female Nature and Behaviors; and Social Change as Related to Sex-Roles Scoring for the purpose of this study will compare total scale scores of wives.
In the form adopted, the scale is a 34-item, 5-point scale. Scaling was achieved so that low total scores indicate modernity and high total scores indicate traditionality.

**Labor force history.** Once a wife/mother defines herself as a co-provider the effect is directly noted on role saliency shifts and indirectly on the configuration of household task achievements. Specifically, her past employment, as perceived and measured by degree and length of employment becomes necessary to comprehend. Scanzoni (1978) in his study notes, "Women who have been consistently and highly involved in the labor force are able to consider their employment an obligation." Two measures of labor force participation were noted. Wife's labor force history was coded as percent of married life employed and as percent of total life employed.

**Educational attainment.** Sobol (1974) has noted the necessity to consider a woman's educational achievement as it relates to job commitment and family functioning. Wife's educational attainment was coded raw according to the number of years completed.

**Family size.** Several researches have noted the effect that children play in creating conflict away from or push toward the labor force for women (Haller, 1971; Parnes, 1970; and Sobol, 1963). Family size was coded as a raw score, according to the number of children.

**Occupational status.** Nevelle and Damico (1978) have noted differential effect of various occupational status
levels on a woman's degree of role conflict and desire to remain in the labor force. Sobol (1974) also has speculated as to the relationship between a woman's occupational status attainment, desire to remain in the labor force, and the effects on the family. Because of the apparent effect, this study will include the Hollingshead (1958) scale measure of wife's occupational status.

The occupational status subscale is a seven-point scale with the lowest occupational positions assigned a one (1) and the highest status position assigned a seven (7).

Data Analysis

Best possible subsets regression and Pearson product moment correlations were used to analyze the data. Best possible subsets regression performed all possible regression combinations to determine what predictors were significant in the presence of other predictors. The ten independent variables (measures of wives' work involvement) were regressed on the dependent variable (husband's participation in family work tasks). Two separate regressions were run—one using the wives' data and one using the husbands' data—since several studies have indicated that husbands and wives may disagree about who performs various household tasks (Larson, 1974).

The statistical program used was designed to choose, from among the predictors, the one variable at each state which
accounts for the highest proportion of variance in the dependent variable beyond that accounted for by the remaining predictors. Subsequently, the predictors which make the largest contribution to $R^2$, sample variance, are also chosen by the program (Cohen and Cohen, 1975).

**Limitations of the Study**

The possible limitations of this study include the following:

1. The method of obtaining subjects was based on a purposively selected sample and was not generalizable to other populations.

2. The cross-sectional character of the study imposed limitations characteristic of many social science investigations. Despite the middle-class bias of the sample, adult life tends to be characterized by major turning points or transitions characteristic to all socio-economic groups. This study tended to focus on families and marriages of women who had accomplished a substantial amount of childrearing and may, in fact, be preparing to "launch" children as well as having re-entered or continued labor-force involvement.

3. Because husbands and wives were asked for their perception of the marital and home situation, the study was limited by the lack...
of direct observation. The theoretical orientation, however, may help re-establish much of the validity and reliability.

4. Although the study was an attempt to coordinate and account for a number of variables at one time as they associated wives' labor force participation with husbands' family work, the causal connections are lacking. Upon completion of this study, further steps may now be possible in the development of such causal models where statistically significant links have been made.

5. Because the study used a self-report methodology, the possibility of intrafamilial contamination exists. Although instructions were explicit as to the desire to obtain each family members' individual response, attitudes about participation may have been communicated. Subsequently, responses may have been affected, despite no evidence of collaboration during follow-up interviews.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the relationship between wives' labor force participation and husbands' participation in family tasks. Specifically, the relationship of ten descriptors (independent variables) of wives' perceived occupational involvement to husbands' perceptions and wives' perceptions of husbands' involvement in family tasks was sought.

The ten independent or predictor variables were: work history, level of employment, occupational status, reason for working, role conflict, number of children, educational level, commitment to work, satisfaction with work, and sex-role modernity.

The statistical method chosen to assess the relationships between these ten independent variables (predictors) and the dependent variables was best all possible subsets regression. This all possible subsets analysis is simply a large number of simultaneous regressions, where each regression performed uses all subset of the predictors.

The large number of equations generated relative to the small sample size requires that the results of these
regressions be viewed as interpretations of the sample rather than the population. The explanation is that in any small sample size the data can be "fit" rather easily when, in fact, the population estimates fit less well. Therefore, the use of population estimates of the amount of variance accounted for (adjusted $R^2$) would seem more accurate even though that statistic will often appear as several percentage points lower. Those adjusted estimates of population variance will be discussed in the report of results and discussion.

Because correlations among the predictors (part of the definition of multicollinearity) was expected, interpretation of their weights and of their significances might be misleading. For example, APEMP (percentage of total life employed) and MPMEP (percentage of married life employed) are highly correlated at .92. In this case of high collinearity, the standard regression test of significance of a regression weight attached to either predictor would appear nonsignificant. Thus, neither variable may appear significant, while in fact, either alone might be a good predictor, but when used together neither improves prediction significantly over what may be achieved singly.

The standard regression test of the significance of a predictor is, in fact, the test of the hypothesis that prediction is better with than without the predictor in the equation. Multicollinearity makes interpretation of such tests in a simultaneous regression somewhat misleading.
Statistical significance was determined by the *t* statistic with *p* < .05, to test hypothesized relationships.

To present the results of the study, the remainder of the chapter will be divided into three sections: (1) data analysis; (2) hypotheses testing; and (3) summary of findings. Descriptive data concerning the means, standard deviations, and range of all predictor (independent) variables may be found in Appendix A.

**Data Analysis**

**Wives' Perceptions**

This section includes the statistical analysis of relationships between wives' involvement in the labor force and measures of husbands' participation in the family task areas as previously delineated. Based on wives' responses, husbands' participation in traditionally female family tasks was largely accounted for by wives' socioeconomic status variables of education and occupation (Table II). However, because education and occupation were highly correlated (*r* = .71), they did not appear together in any multiple regression equation. Both predictors were significant in univariate equations, with education accounting for 19.6 percent of the estimated population variance and occupation accounting for 11.1 percent of the estimated population variance. If either education or occupation is present in a regression equation which includes any combination of other predictors, only education or occupation is significant, and in no case is there
TABLE II
Best Possible Regression with ALL Predictors Significant at p = .05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wives' Perception of Husbands' Participation in Traditionally Female Tasks</th>
<th>Husbands' Perception of Their Participation in Traditionally Female Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>R^2</strong></td>
<td><strong>R^2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (.46)</td>
<td>.214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation (.36)</td>
<td>.131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Working (-.29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Working (-.29) Commitment to Work (.38)</td>
<td>.301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Working (-.29) Job Satisfaction (.29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Working (-.29) Commitment to Work (.38)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction (.29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Univariate r in parentheses
any additional contribution to the estimate of population variance (adjusted $R^2$) as those other variables are added.

**Traditional female tasks.** Furthermore, analysis of wives' perceptions of husbands' participation yielded no other significant results on childcare, male, female, or total family tasks with any combination of other variables in a regression equation.

The only other significant findings indicate that, in univariate regressions, sex-role modernity and commitment to work were related to wives' perceptions of husbands' participation in male tasks. However, there is so little estimated population variance for which they account (less than six and five percent respectively) that the relationship is rather meaningless.

**Husbands' Perceptions**

The results differ when husbands' responses are used as the dependent variable. Based on husbands' perceptions, wives' commitment to work, job satisfaction, and reason for working were significantly related to husbands' perceived contribution to traditionally female family work (See Table II, reports of sample $R^2$). These three predictors are each significant in univariate equations which account for the correlation with the dependent measures of husbands' perceived participation in female tasks. Additionally, commitment, satisfaction, and reason for working together account for the best three variable regression equation (adjusted $R^2 = .32$).
In the presence of these three predictors, no other variables or set of variables significantly improves the adjusted $R^2$.

Attempting to interpret a simultaneous regression equation with all eleven predictors present may be somewhat misleading. However, in the case of husbands' perception of participation in traditionally female tasks, the full equation yields an $R^2 = .50$. Reason for working in the full equation for female tasks contributes the greatest amount to $R^2 (.24)$ when the other ten dependent (predictor) variables are in an equation. Again, commitment appears as a significant contributor and adds .11 to $R^2$ if included in an equation containing the remaining independent (predictor) ten variables. Satisfaction is marginally significant and would appear to contribute relatively little if added to an equation containing the remaining predictors.

**Total family tasks.** Analysis of total household task performance as perceived by husbands yields slightly different results. Univariate regressions found wives' reason for working and both measures of work history (correlated at $r = .92$) forming statistically significant relationships (Table III), with only the first, reason for working, accounting for any appreciable adjusted $R^2 (.115)$. Because percent of married life employed and percent of total life employed are so highly correlated, they do not appear together in any other regression equation (an indication that they probably are measuring the same effect).
TABLE III
Best Possible Regression with ALL Predictors Significant at $p = .05^1$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Husbands' Perception of Their Participation on Total Family Tasks</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Working (-.366)</td>
<td>.134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent All Life Wife Worked (.262)</td>
<td>.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Married Life Wife Worked (.251)</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reason for Working (-.366) Educational Attainment (.219) .223

Reason for Working (-.366) Role Conflict (.101) Education Attainment (.219) .275

$^1$Univariate in parentheses
The best three variable equations relating husbands' response on total family task performance to the predictors indicates that reason for working, educational level, and role conflict are the significant contributors (Table III). Together these three variables account for an adjusted $R^2 = .22$. In the presence of these three predictors, no other independent (predictor) variable or set of variables added to a regression equation improves adjusted $R^2$.

The full equation on total family task response for husbands, containing all eleven variables, yields an $R^2 = .42$. Both educational level and reason for working appears as significant variables. Reason for working in this full equation would contribute the greatest amount to $R^2$ (.23) if added to an equation containing the remaining ten predictors. Educational level would add .12 to $R^2$ in an equation containing the ten remaining independent variables.

**Child care and traditionally male tasks.** Analysis of husbands' perception of both childcare and traditionally male tasks yielded only one significant predictor in each case; i.e., wives' work history (percent of married life in the case of childcare tasks and percent of total life in the case of male tasks). However, both account for so little estimated population variance (adjusted $R^2 < .05$ in both cases) that the relationships are essentially meaningless.

Statistical explanations for some of the apparent discrepancies in the results will be addressed in the summary section of this chapter.
**Hypotheses Tested**

This section summarizes the data analysis in terms of the research hypotheses tested in this study.

**Hypothesis 1:** A. There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expressed reason for working.

Under no subcategory of family task performance childcare, traditionally male, traditionally female, or on total task performance, did scores correlate significantly with wives' perceptions of husbands' participation in that work.

**Hypothesis 1:** B. There exists a positive relationship between husband's perceptions of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed reason for working (psychological reason vs. economic need).

For traditionally female tasks and for total task scores, husbands' perception of their participation in family tasks are significantly correlated with wives' reason for working ($r = -0.286$ and $r = -0.366$ respectively, $p \leq 0.05$). These results indicate that the more the wife expresses her participation in the labor force as economic necessity, the greater the probability that the husband perceives himself as participating to some degree in previously cited task areas. The negative
correlations are the result of scoring psychic need (reasons) to work higher than economic reasons for working. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported and, in fact for this sample, exhibited a significant opposite relationship.

**Hypothesis 2: A.** There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expressed commitment to work.

Under only one task subcategory, participation in traditionally male tasks, is wives' commitment to work significantly correlated ($r = .255, p < .05$) with her perception of husbands' participation. The reader, however, should be aware of the discussion in the previous section concerning the amount of accounted-for variance.

**Hypothesis 2: B.** There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed commitment to work.

Under only one subtask category, participation in traditionally female tasks, is wives' expressed commitment to the job significantly correlated ($r = -.379, p < .05$) with husbands' perception of his participation in that task area. (The negative correlation is the result of scoring wives' commitment to job low and commitment to family high.) Thus,
the hypothesis 2B is supported; when wives express commitment to work, husbands perceived themselves as participating more in female tasks.

**Hypothesis 3**: A. There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expressed job satisfaction.

Under no subcategory of family task performance, childcare, traditionally male, traditionally female, or on total task performance did scores correlate significantly with wives' perception of husbands' participation in that work.

**Hypothesis 3**: B. There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed job satisfaction.

Under only one subcategory, participation in traditionally female tasks, is wives' expressed job satisfaction significantly correlated ($r = .291, p < .05$) with husbands' perception of his contribution. (The reader should refer to the previous discussion of this variable as it appears in the total simultaneous equation.) Thus, the hypothesis 3B is supported; as wives express a greater degree of job satisfaction, husbands increase their perceived participation in traditionally female tasks.
Hypothesis 4: A. There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her degree of conflict over roles (work vs. family).

Under no subcategory of family task performance, childcare, traditionally male, traditionally female, or on total task performance, did scores correlate significantly with wives' perception of husbands' participation.

Hypothesis 4: B. There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's conflict over roles (work vs. family).

Under no subcategory of family task performance or on total task performance did scores correlate significantly with husbands' perception of his participation. Thus, the hypothesis that the wives' conflict between their home and work roles relate to their perception or husbands' perception of his participation in tasks is not supported.

Hypothesis 5: A. There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her expressed sex-role modernity.
Under only one subcategory task, participation in traditionally male tasks, is wives' expressed sex-role modernity significantly correlated ($r = .290, p < .05$) with their perception of husbands' participation. The reader, however, should be aware of the discussion in the previous section concerning the amount of variance accounted for which makes dubious any statement of support for the hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 5:** B. There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's expressed sex-role modernity.

Under no subcategory of family task performance, childcare, traditionally male, traditionally female, or on total task performance did scores correlate significantly with husbands' perception of their participation. Thus, the hypothesis that wives' sex-role modernity is related to their perceptions or husbands' perceptions of his participation in tasks is not supported.

**Hypothesis 6:** A. There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her educational attainment.

Under only one task subcategory, traditionally female tasks, is wives' educational attainment significantly correlated ($r = .462, p < .05$) with her perception of participation.
Unlike the other significant variables in wives' perception, there is an appreciable amount of estimated population variance for which education accounts (adjusted $R^2 = 21.3$). Thus, hypothesis 6A is supported, i.e., that the more education a wife obtains, the more she perceives husband as contributing in traditionally female tasks. The only caveat here is to note the high correlation between education and occupation (see hypothesis concerning occupational status).

**Hypothesis 6: B.** There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's educational attainment.

Under no subcategory of family task performance, childcare, traditionally male, traditionally female, or on total task performance, did scores correlate significantly with husbands' perception of their participation. Thus, the hypothesis that wives' educational attainment is related to husbands' perception of participation in tasks is not supported.

**Hypothesis 7: A.** There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her labor force history.

For the purposes of analysis of data, labor force history was calculated two ways, as percentage of married life employed and as percentage of total life employed. Where
significant, the prior will be referred to as MPEMP and the latter as APEMP.

Under no subcategory of family task performance—childcare, traditionally male task, traditionally female task, or on total task performance—did scores correlate significantly with wives' perception of husbands' participation.

Hypothesis 7: B. There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's labor force history.

For childcare tasks, traditionally male tasks, and total tasks performance, one measure of work history appears significantly correlated with husbands' perception of his participation in each area. The results on each area are as follows: childcare, $r_{MPEMP} = .251, p < .05$; male tasks, $r_{APEMP} = .272, p < .05$; total tasks, $r_{APEMP} = .262, p < .05$; and $r_{MPEMP} = .251, at p < .05$. Again, none of these correlations accounts for any significant amount of adjusted $R^2$.

The extremely high correlation between the two work history variables ($r' = .919$) should be noted and the reader should refer to the earlier discussion on collinearity. Given the high degree of correlation, a suppression effect may be operating. In all instances, the predictor not achieving significance in each task category stated approaches the appropriate levels. Thus, to state that the hypothesis is supported would be misleading (because of low $R^2$). Some
measure of work history may well be important if sample size were larger or only one measure were included in the regressions.

**Hypothesis 8**: A. There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and the family size (number of children).

**Hypothesis 8**: B. There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and the family size (number of children).

Under no subcategory of family task performance, childcare, traditionally male, traditionally female, or on total task performance, from both wives' and husbands' perspective, did number of children correlate significantly with participation. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported.

**Hypothesis 9**: A. There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her occupational status.

For the purposes of these data, wives' occupational status was scaled according to the Hollingshead (1957) sub-scale of socioeconomic status. Under only one task subcategory, traditionally female tasks, is wives'
occupational status significantly correlated ($r = .362, p < .05$) with her perception of participation. Since a discernable amount of adjusted $R^2$ (estimated population variance for which the variable accounts) is present (.12), hypothesis 9A is supported and might be stated as; the higher the occupational status of a wife, the more she perceives husband as participating in traditionally female tasks. Again, the same note is issued as in Hypothesis 6; the reader should take into account the high correlation between occupational status and educational attainment (.919).

**Hypothesis 9:** B. There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his participation in household/family tasks and wife's occupational status.

Under no subcategory of family task performance, childcare, traditionally male tasks, traditionally female tasks, or on total tasks did the predictor score correlate significantly with husbands' perception of his participation. Thus, the hypothesis that wives' occupational prestige is related to husbands' perception of his participation is not supported.

**Hypothesis 10:** A. There exists a positive relationship between wife's perception of husband's participation in household/family tasks and her level of employment.

**Hypothesis 10:** B. There exists a positive relationship between husband's perception of his
Hypothesis 10: B. (continued)

participation in household/family
tasks and wife's level of employment.

Under no subcategory of family task performance, child­
care, traditionally male tasks, traditionally female tasks
or on total task performance, from both wives' and husbands'
perspective, did the number of hours worked per week
correlate significantly with participation. Thus, the
hypothesis was not supported.

Summary

This section will consider, from a statistical perspec­
tive, why certain predictors, which were expected to establish
a significant relationship with the dependent variables, did
not obtain significance. Possible substantive or conceptual
explanations and interpretation will remain for the following
chapter.

As indicated, analysis of data based on wives' responses
indicate that socioeconomic variables are significantly
correlated with their perception of husbands' participation
in family tasks, especially traditionally female tasks. From
the male perspective, their view of their participation appears
connected to wives' reason for working, commitment to the labor
force, and job satisfaction, with the first consistently
significant in traditionally female tasks and on total task
performance.
Of particular significance are some data which did not appear in the report of results. In a number of instances, from both husbands' and wives' perspectives and across all task areas for husbands, predictors reported as not significant either approached those levels or accounted for what might be considered a relatively significant proportion of variance. An example of this recurring phenomena is the previously mentioned husbands' response correlating significantly with wives' work history, in childcare and traditionally male task areas, with little variance accounted for. Two statistical considerations should be noted here.

First, the small sample size results in relatively low power for the statistical procedure used, especially as it relates to the number of variables used (Cohen and Cohen, 1975). As stated in the introduction, the small sample enables the data to "fit" rather easily to the peculiarities of the sample. A larger sample size would give the study and the statistical procedure used more power, and, therefore, more sensitivity to predictor relationships. The result would be the ability to detect relationships at levels which might be significant and to account for variance effects smaller than the five or six percent range necessary to have calculated shifts in $R^2$ for a number of predictors throughout the data analysis.

An alternative would have been to reduce the number of variables so as to enhance the sensitivity of predictor
weights in regression equations given the sample size. However, theoretical considerations would have been jeopardized. Although statistical control of multiple regression is weaker than experimental control, the careful introduction of variables permits greater confidence in findings (Lewis-Beck, 1980).

A second statistical phenomena associated with sample size is sampling error, i.e., peculiarities of the population measured. The mean age of the population measured is one example. Sampling a predominantly middle-aged group (see Chapter III) might have influenced the effect of certain other predictors, e.g., the effect of the number of children. One way to have circumvented this problem might have been to have a nonpurposive sample.

Finally, the factors of marginal power of the tests may have worked with problems of sampling error and collinearity (see introduction) to result in the possibly suppressed significance of factors such as sex-role modernity, work history, etc. For example, the fact that socioeconomic variables were highly correlated for wives may be an indication of the higher social status of these families (sampling error). If such status is then accompanied by higher equalitarian values, relationships to other variables might also be postulated. This type of suppression effect might subsequently shift the relative weights of predictors in equations when sample size is small. In this example, indeed,
sex-role modernity was significantly ($p \leq 0.05$) related to both education ($r = 0.35$) and occupation ($r = 0.26$). The result then may have been significance or nonsignificance of certain other predictors.

In spite of the aforementioned warnings, the variables exhibiting statistical significance and contributing to a significant amount of accounted for variance appear solid indicators of effect. That is, when correlated with husbands' responses of his participation in female tasks in univariate equations, but especially in multiple regression equations, wives' expressed commitment, satisfaction, and reason for working. The theoretical analysis and implications appear in another area of this report. The findings in sum would indicate that the wives' psychological investment in their work as measured by commitment, satisfaction, and reason for working, determined the extent of perceived male participation in household/family tasks.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS,
AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

Some recent research has indicated greater participation in husbands in family work as a response to increased wives' participation in the labor force (Pleck, 1979). Factors related to such male participation in family work have not been clearly identified. The specific purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between wives' work involvement and husbands' degree of participation in family tasks. From the review of theoretical and substantive literature, a number of predictor or independent variables measuring female labor force involvement were hypothesized to have been positively associated with increased male participation in the home.

Both husbands' and wives' perception of his participation were sought because, as Safilios-Rothschild (1969) has noted, there may be...

two realities, the husband's subjective reality and the wife's subjective reality...each spouse perceives "facts" differently according to his own needs, values, attitudes, and beliefs (p. 291).

And, in fact, the mean differences in participation scores (Appendix A, Table A2) in this study were found to be significantly different at the $p = .05$ level. This finding is
consistent with other research literature (e.g., Larson, 1974; Price-Bonham & McKenry, 1979) in which husbands viewed themselves engaging in family work to a greater degree than do wives or as perceiving themselves more dominant in family life than are wives.

The ten predictor or independent variables of wives' occupational involvement hypothesized to be positively related to husbands' participation were: reason for working, commitment to work, job satisfaction, conflict between work role and wife/mother role, sex-role modernity, educational attainment, labor force history, family size, occupational status, and level of employment. The dependent variable, husbands' participation, was measured as total score of task items on three task areas: childcare (seven items), traditionally male tasks (six items), traditionally female tasks (eight items) and a summary of total task scores. Respondent views of participation were scored as: does not participate, shares participation, performs alone. Best possible subsets regression and Pearson product moment correlations were used to analyze these data.

The remainder of this chapter will be divided into: (1) a discussion which will note the significant findings between predictor variables and husbands' participation, attempting to explain those results from both theoretical and/or substantive perspectives; (2) recommendations for further study and analysis; and (3) implication for policy makers and practitioners.
Discussion of Univariate Findings

This section will analyze the findings of significant relationships on univariate regressions in support of the hypothesis. That discussion will be followed by interpretation of significant multiple regressions and additional analysis.

Wives' perspective. From the wives' perspective, the predictors which appeared most significantly and positively related to the extent of husbands' participation in traditionally female tasks were wives': expressed commitment to work, sex-role modernity, educational attainment, and occupational status.

Of these relationships only the socioeconomic status variables of education and occupation accounted for enough variance to be confidently discussed. With the high correlation ($r = .708$) between the two predictors, the assumption might be made that occupation and education are, in fact, both associated with wives' measures of their perceived status. The mechanism which operates to relate these variables to husbands' participation in traditionally female tasks might be better comprehended by noting the relationship between these socioeconomic variables and other predictors which were hypothesized to be indications of wives' labor force involvement. For instance, although occupational status was not highly correlated with wives' reason for working ($r = -.098$), educational attainment was moderately associated with
psychological need to work ($r = .20$). Each status variable exhibited relatively strong relationship to other measures which indicate some degree of psychic involvement in the labor force. Psychological commitment to work, as opposed to commitment to family, exhibited moderately strong relationships with both occupational status ($r = -.214$) and educational attainment ($r = -.353$). Both status predictors also exhibited moderately strong associations with sex-role modernity (occupational status, $r = -.260$; educational attainment, $r = -.351$).

Despite having accounted for the only appreciable amount of variance in regression equations, the strong association between status variables might have masked the effects of the social-psychological predictors of wives' labor force involvement.

Given the relationship between educational attainment and psychological need to work and the association of each status variable with commitment to work and sex-role modernity, socio-economic predictors may take on a psychological definition as these women become entrenched in the labor force. This interpretation is supported by a number of researchers (e.g., Lein, 1979; Hofferth & Moore, 1980; Pleck, 1977 and 1979; Scanzoni, 1978; Sobol, 1974) who speculate that as women increasingly work outside the home for longer periods of their family lives, the normative (social-psychological) definition of the importance of that work becomes entrenched.
The result should be the shift in family dynamics and functioning which this study may reflect. As Hofferth and Moore (1980) note ...

Employment of a wife may change not only the economic structure of the family but also the social and psychological rewards families gain from marriage. A wife who once obtained satisfaction such as social contact, feelings of competence, prestige, and the like from marriage and family may obtain these satisfactions outside the family (p. 104).

One indication that the stated effect for the sample studied may have occurred is to note that from husbands' perspective, wives' work history appears as a marginally significant variable across all task areas. Thus, while wives associated their status contributions most strongly with husbands' increased participation in traditionally female household tasks, the aforementioned relationships indicate that status resources and social-psychological influences may actually coexist.

**Husbands' perspective.** From the husbands' perspective the predictor variables which appeared most significantly and positively related to his participation in all task areas were: wives' expressed economic reason for working, wives' expressed commitment to labor force involvement, wives' expressed job satisfaction, and one measure of wives' labor force history. Of these predictors, only the first three accounted for any appreciable amount of estimated population variance and only in relation to traditionally female tasks.
Commitment to the job accounted for the greatest amount of variance in univariate regressions.

The problem of collinearity (intercorrelation and masking effect) among these variables does not appear great, given the low to moderate relationship between the variables (highest between commitment and reason for working at $r = .23$) and, given that all three appear in the same three variable regression equations (see following section). Where relationships exist between the significant predictors, commitment to the job appears correlated with psychological reasons for working. Less strongly related, but of moderate strength ($r = -.221$), is the relationship between commitment to job and job satisfaction. The relationship between job satisfaction and reason for working only approaches moderate ($r = .14$) significance.

Based on the univariate analysis of the above mentioned variables, substantive interpretation of the connection would at first seem difficult given that, for two predictors (commitment and job satisfaction), husbands indicate their involvement in family tasks to be a response to the psychological commitment of their wives' employment. However, for the third area (reason for working), the association of involvement is with wives' economic contributions. Noting the positive relationship between occupational commitment and social-psychological reasons for working, one interpretation might be that as wives entered the labor force, the economic benefits
contribute enough to influence husbands to participate in nonmonetary ways to household maintenance. As wives become more committed and psychologically anchored to the job, benefits may accrue which add to family status. Possibly, a proportion of husbands may be responsive to wives' involvement and thus encourage their spouses to decrease any ambivalence about their commitment by increasing his participation in tasks she traditionally accomplished.

Discussion of Multiple Regression Findings

Only for husbands' responses in multiple regressions were results significant or did they account for any significant amount of variance. The most significant multiple regressions contained the three significant husband univariate predictors: commitment, job satisfaction, and reason for working. Adding other predictor variables to a regression equation did promote significance for two other independent variables (sex-role modernity and job satisfaction), but added virtually nothing to the accounted for variance. In support of comments made about univariate findings for husbands' responses, these three significant predictors would appear to account best for husbands' participation in the home, especially on traditionally female tasks.

One other multiple regression equation for total task performance indicated that wives' expressed reason for working, educational attainment, and role conflict (mother/wife vs. job) contributed a moderate amount to the established population
variance \( (R^2 = .22) \). Reason for working accounted for the greatest amount of variance on total task performance (adjusted \( R^2 = .11 \)) on univariate regressions, with neither education or conflict significant in univariate equations.

Based on consideration of the best multiple regression equation, the results indicated that only husbands perceived themselves as contributing to any degree in household maintenance, especially in the area of "traditionally female" responsibilities. Also, the discrepancy again arises between the significance of the association between economic reason for working and the contributions of the psychological measures of saliency (commitment) and satisfaction.

The relationships and possible explanations of the psychological meaning of economic contribution has been previously discussed in the review of wives' responses. However, one other note should be made concerning the occupational status of wives' labor force participation. For this sample, occupational attainment was centered at the middle of the status scale \( (M = 4.5 \) on Hollingshead, 1957), indicating concentration in low paying and/or low prestige white-collar positions. Given the range of responses (category 2 - 6) for the sample, no women appeared in the top level of executives and major professionals. This data would seem consistent with general United States Labor Bureau statistics (1978). Thus, given the males' perception of women's occupations as not particularly adding to the prestige of the family, his
perception of increased participation may, indeed, be a response to her degree occupational involvement.

Again, in support of the above conclusion, a number of researchers (Lein, 1979; Pleck, 1977) have noted that, in the past, the male configuration of the labor force has lent itself to a distinct work-family asymmetry. The result being normative or reference group support for very little participation at home by husbands, with wives gaining status and fulfillment almost solely from household maintenance and child-care areas. With increased labor force participation (married women's participation up from 20% in 1974 to 48% in 1978; United States Bureau of the Census, 1979), one would expect greater reference group support and normative change in the definitions of role fulfillment for women. The result of the above shift in women's labor force participation should be a shift toward a more egalitarian household division of labor. Pleck (1979) noted one such indication. The results of this study lend further support. An indication of this change may be the difference in husbands' and wives' perceptions of his participation, supported by earlier data (Larson, 1974) which reports little concurrence on household task role performance. This study exhibits disagreement not only on amount of husbands' and wives' participation, but also suggests differences about the source of influence (resource orientation for wives, and social-psychological influence for husbands).
Recommendations

Of particular interest may well be the nonsignificant findings and some intervariable correlations not previously mentioned. Because of small sample size and the relatively large number of variables, several variables approached significance or they were significant without accounting for additional variance in multiple regression equations. The result of this reduced statistical power would be to suppress or hide the influence of those marginally significant predictors given their relative weights in the equations.

One independent variable previously discussed, wives' work history, appears several times, from both husbands' perspectives and wives' perspectives, as approaching significance. Additionally, work history variables appear associated with several other predictors. Work experience for these women may be an indication of other effects such as number of children and role conflict, or may have a more direct influence than indicated. Further research using larger or more heterogeneous samples should help to determine the significance, direction, and nature of the work experience effect.

Given the statistical warning above, the influence of job satisfaction, which appears correlated at least moderately with all other variables (lowest, -.11 with "hours worked" to highest, .23 with one measure of work history) should be considered. Job satisfaction may be influencing, in a
diminishing manner, the effect of other variables. That is, job satisfaction may be an indication of an additive effect of combinations potentially relevant variables. Thus, for example, although role conflict occasionally appears as a significant variable in a multivariate equation, its weight and, therefore, explanatory contribution might be greater. The substantive interpretation of wives' result might then shift somewhat away from a role orientation. Work history, role conflict, or number of children may then have more of an influence than revealed and subsequently lend support to the hypotheses in this study.

Further research is needed to clarify the actual extent of male involvement in family work and to identify other factors related to male participation. Time management studies, where diaries are carefully maintained on actual household participation, would clarify inconsistencies in husband-wife perceptions. Also, data on the husband-wife decision-making process would further delineate the differential impact of wives' work involvement on husbands' and wives' perception of family work roles.

In order to clarify the conceptual issues raised, several approaches could be considered. For example, reanalyzing the data using a path analysis methodology would provide evidence as to the possible causal links among variables. The result would be clarification of the relative contributions of resource and social-psychological determinants of husbands' household task performance.
The improvement of scales used to assess various measures of labor force participation could be improved. As Piotrkowski and Cuts-Christoph (1981) have noted, while qualitative case studies have identified the complexity of variables in dual-earner families, quantitative measurements have been somewhat imprecise. For example, reason for working should be more clearly defined, both as to the definition of economic necessity, and as to the meaning of psychological need. Threshold levels of need in each area could be established so as to identify each variable's point of greatest impact on family dynamics.

**Implications**

Some important implications can be derived from these findings for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers. These data suggest that husbands may be responsive to their perceptions of wives' work involvement, and therefore those interested in increasing husband participation in family work should encourage employed women not to be ambivalent about their work involvement. Women in American society have been socialized to deny the importance of or conceal their true enjoyment of their work so that their husbands will be more supportive. Educators and counselors should thus focus on overcoming this role conflict in women and reinforce the legitimacy of interests in both household and employment activities.
As women become more involved in their employment and men respond in a more supportive manner, intervention by family professionals is needed to facilitate this transition. To further increase male participation in family work, employers should devise work schedules that allow both men and women the flexibility to fully participate in family and work spheres of life based on individual interests without loss of benefits, seniority, and prestige. Also, males in American society have not been socialized to share household responsibilities and thus require the educational training that will allow them to comfortably assume more of an active role in the family. Such training would include basic household and childcare skills as well as positive socialization for this role.

Berger (1979) notes that wives may be expected to feel ambivalently as husbands feebly learn and eventually master these new roles. Counselors should be aware of this role strain. While feeling good about their husbands' sharing of these household tasks, wives may at the same time harbor resentment as males gain mastery in domains where they have traditionally demonstrated their ability. Quinn and Staines (1979) found that only 37.2% of their sample of working wives wanted more help from their husbands with household tasks. Berger (1979) also observes that husbands who assume a more active role in family work may require readily available support systems as traditional sources of support (e.g., friends, colleagues, and even family members) which may not be available; such role changes may be perceived as threatening by these individuals.
APPENDIX A
RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS
OF
PREDICTORS

The accompanying table A1 reports the mean, standard deviation, and range for the independent variables used in this study. As a reminder to the reader, the descriptive data are based on wives' reports or perceptions, the overall theoretical orientation being her labor force involvement as it affects family life. For a review of how the variables are measured, see Chapter III.
TABLE A1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>RANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent entire life worked</td>
<td>.243</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>0.0- .60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent married life worked</td>
<td>.510</td>
<td>.345</td>
<td>0.0-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of employment</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.0-5.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Class 1 - 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational status</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>2.0-7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 1 - 7</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for working</td>
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<td>.50</td>
<td>1.0-2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role conflict</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>2.0-4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___ - 4 none</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number children</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.0-6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational level</td>
<td>14.67</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>10.0-20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to work (family)</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>3.0-6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work 1 - 3 family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>77.37</td>
<td>8.22</td>
<td>59.0-93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex-role modernity</td>
<td>90.17</td>
<td>12.27</td>
<td>62-108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 - 170</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tradition - modern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following table reports the mean, standard deviation, and range for husbands' and wives' responses on the dependent variable, their respective degree of participation in family tasks. Included are each subtask category of childcare, traditionally male tasks, and traditionally female tasks, as well as total task performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>HUSBAND</th>
<th>WIFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MEAN</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare tasks</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male tasks</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female tasks</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total tasks</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Task scores were reported on task items as 0 = no male participation, 1 = shared participation with other family members, 2 = sole participation by husband.

2Total scores were summarized so scale range is 0-6.
APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

AND HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL
Parents Permission for Participation

I ________________________________ (name of parent) freely and voluntarily consent to participate in a research project concerned with parents and teen-agers' perception of family life. Specifically the purpose of the study is to obtain information from parents and teen-agers concerning attitudes and behaviors in your family life.

The procedure is as follows: I will complete a paper and pencil questionnaire (the questions will be multiple choice or fill-in-blank). I understand not to put my name on any material that is to be returned to the researchers.

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary. However, due to the anonymity of the questionnaire, it will be impossible to withdraw the data once I have turned it in.

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and I have the privilege of not participating in the project.

Date ___________________________________ Signature ____________________________________
ACTION OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Behavioral and Social Sciences Review Committee has taken the following action:

1. Approve (___ Waiver of written consent)

2. Approved with conditions

3. Disapprove

with regard to the employment of human subjects in the proposed research entitled: THE IMPACT OF MOTHER'S EMPLOYMENT ON THE FAMILY’S DEFINITION OF THE MALE ROLE

Patrick C. McKenry is listed as the principal investigator.

Fam Rel & Hum Dev
Campbell
1787 Neil Ave.

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to retain a copy of each signed consent form for at least four (4) years beyond the termination of the subject's participation in the proposed activity. Should the principal investigator leave the University, signed consent forms are to be transferred to the Human Subject Review Committee for the required retention period. This application has been approved for the period of one year. You are reminded that you must promptly report any problems to the Research Committee, and that no procedural changes may be made without prior review and approval. You are also reminded that the identity of the research participants must be kept confidential.

Date:          Signed:
              (Chairperson)

cc: Original-Investigator
    Ken Sloan
    Development Officer
    File

Form PA-025
Rev. 10/79
LIST OF REFERENCES


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Ridley, C. A. Exploring the impact of work satisfaction and involvement when both partners are employed. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1973, 36, 229-237.


