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BUECHE, NANCY ANN

RELATIONSHIP OF FAMILY EMPLOYMENT STATUS TO HUSBAND AND  
WIFE MARITAL SATISFACTION AND SEX ROLE PREFERENCES

*The University of North Carolina at Greensboro*

PH.D. 1981

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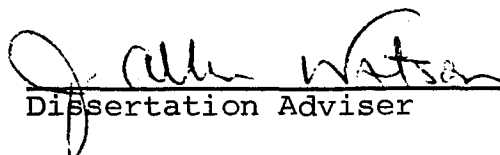
by

Nancy Ann Bueche

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

Greensboro  
1981

Approved by

  
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APPROVAL PAGE

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January 12, 1981

Date of Final Oral Examination

BUECHE, NANCY ANN. Relationship of Family Employment Status to Husband and Wife Marital Satisfaction and Sex Role Preferences. (1981) Directed by: Dr. James A. Watson. Pp. 71

The purpose of the study was to investigate the sex-role preferences and marital satisfaction of husbands and wives in dual career, dual earner, and single earner family types.

The study was descriptive and utilized the survey approach in obtaining responses from both husbands and wives in the three differing occupational types. The total sample consisted of 196 respondents. Sex role preferences were measured by an instrument developed by Scanzoni (1970) and marital satisfaction scores were measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). Occupational types were delineated by both the husbands' and wives' current work status. All families surveyed had at least one preschool-aged child and were in the early parenthood stages of the family life cycle.

When measuring both marital satisfaction and sex role preference scores, occupational type was found to be a significant factor.

The majority of respondents in this sample did not score in the traditional category (lower third) of the sex role preference measure. All respondents scored in the transitional (middle third) to modern (highest third) categories. Females scored significantly higher on the sex role

preference measure suggesting more sex role modernity than did the male groups. This finding held true regardless of the subject's occupational type. In addition, the sex role modern group reported higher marital satisfaction scores when compared to the transitional group regardless of occupational types.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my Committee Chairman and Adviser, Dr. James A. Watson, Full Professor and Chairman of the Department of Child Development and Family Relations, for his guidance. Special appreciation is also expressed to the other members of my Committee: Dr. Lynne S. Koester, Assistant Professor of Child Development and Family Relations; Dr. Hyman Rodman, Excellence Fund Professor; Dr. William Powers, Associate Professor of Mathematics; and Dr. Nancy White, Associate Professor of Child Development and Family Relations.

To my mother and stepfather, Mrs. Phyllis C. Bueche and Dr. Frederick Bueche, I express my deep appreciation for their many years of guidance, inspiration, and support.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Margie Wright and Matthew Shope for their statistical advice and expertise in computer programming and to the following persons for their assistance in securing subjects: Ms. Patsy Austin, Ms. Joan Moran, Ms. Louise Wilson, and Ms. Connie Wright.

I am particularly indebted to all the parents who shared their feelings and experiences with me as subjects in the study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
APPROVAL PAGE . . . . .	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS . . . . .	iii
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	vi
LIST OF FIGURES . . . . .	vii
 CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Assumptions . . . . .	2
Limitations . . . . .	2
Definition of Terms . . . . .	3
General Proposal for Research . . . . .	4
Hypotheses . . . . .	5
General hypotheses . . . . .	5
Hypotheses relating wives' sex role preferences, marital satisfaction, and family type . . . . .	5
Hypotheses relating husbands' sex role preferences, marital satisfaction, and family type . . . . .	6
II. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE . . . . .	7
Marital Satisfaction . . . . .	7
Marital Satisfaction and Employment Status	10
Intervening Variables Relating Wives'	
Employment and Marital Satisfaction . . . . .	14
Social Exchange Theory and Marital Satisfaction . . . . .	15
Sex Roles as Preferences . . . . .	16
III. METHOD . . . . .	19
Subjects . . . . .	19
Data Collection . . . . .	20
Instrumentation . . . . .	23
Measure of Sex Role Preferences . . . . .	23
Measure of Marital Satisfaction . . . . .	27
Demographic Variables and Occupational Types . . . . .	27



TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

CHAPTER	Page
IV. RESULTS. . . . .	32
Sex Role Preferences . . . . .	32
Marital Satisfaction . . . . .	34
Test of Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 . . . . .	35
Test of Hypotheses 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. . . . .	39
V. DISCUSSION . . . . .	44
Measurement of Sex Role Preferences. . . . .	44
Sex Role Preferences as Dependent Variable . . . . .	46
Marital Satisfaction as Dependent Variable . . . . .	48
Hypotheses Relating Wives' Sex Role Pref- erences, Marital Satisfaction, and Family Type. . . . .	49
Hypotheses Relating Husbands' Sex Role Preferences, Marital Satisfaction, and Family Type. . . . .	51
VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. . . . .	53
Conclusions. . . . .	53
Recommendations. . . . .	55
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	56
APPENDIX A Introductory Letter to the Parents. . . . .	60
APPENDIX B Follow-up Letter to the Parents . . . . .	62
APPENDIX C Questionnaire Forms for Parents . . . . .	64

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 Distribution of Educational Levels of the Sample . . . . .	21
2 Distribution of Combined Family Incomes. . . . .	22
3 Distribution of Occupational Types . . . . .	30
4 Summary Table for Analysis of Variance, the Effects of Sex, and Occupational Type on Sex Role Preference Scores . . . . .	36
5 Summary Table for Analysis of Variance, the Effects of Sex, Occupational Type, and Sex Role Preferences on Marital Satisfaction Scores . . . . .	40

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1 Mean sex role preference scores for males and females for the three occupational types . . .	37
2 Mean marital satisfaction scores for sex role preferences and occupational type. . . . .	42

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

"There have been few events which have as profoundly affected the organization of the family as the movement of women into the labor force" (Burke & Weir, 1976, p. 279). This influx reached significant proportions during World War II, slowed down during the years after the war, and has accelerated in more recent times. A number of trends converged to give impetus to this movement. The rise of egalitarian ideologies, which is one trend, raised further issues concerning women's rights, roles, and status in the family and society. As more women chose to seek employment, the two-earner pattern of family life became more firmly established in our society.

Recent interest in families in which both husband and wife work for monetary gain revived a debate over whether the wife's work status affected either her or her husband's marital adjustment and satisfaction.

Further, there is increasing evidence that preferences concerning sex role behavior are changing to fit current patterns of dual working families (Scanzoni, 1978). In other words, household maintenance and child care are no longer the sole responsibility of the wife nor is the provider role the sole responsibility of the husband. Currently

over 50% of all married women work at full-time jobs (Marriage, Divorce, and the Family Newsletter, 1976) and thus become co-providers with their husbands for the welfare of the family unit. Conversely, husbands are expected to help out with the traditional tasks of home and family maintenance. The extent of the overlap between the two roles is currently under debate and individuals are presumed to fall on a continuum of sex role traditional to sex role modern depending upon their preferences for sex role interchangeability.

#### Assumptions

The major assumptions of the study were that the attributes of sex role preference and marital satisfaction were present and measurable within the population of parents involved in the study. Further, it was assumed that these husbands and wives differed on their sex role preferences and marital satisfaction and that these differences could be adequately measured.

#### Limitations

The study was limited to parents who had children enrolled in the preschool programs of the University of North Carolina-Greensboro system, the Guilford Technical Institute system, and Chimney Lane Day Care Center. Because of this these parents may have had differing values and expectations for their children than parents who send their children to other centers in the community. The UNC-G child care system

is known to be a prestigious center in which to enroll one's child. Most parents earned an above-average annual income. The Guilford Technical Institute's center is also prestigious. Both centers are highly selective and have lengthy waiting lists of parents who are hopeful of having a child enrolled. The Chimney Lane Day Care Center is not considered as prestigious as the other centers. However, most parents earned an above average annual income.

Sex role preferences may be affected by this population's inherent belief and value system, although a preliminary pilot study (Robinson, Watson, & Morris, 1981) suggested that the wives' responses to sex role preferences fell on a continuum from modern to traditional. Marital satisfaction scores may also be affected due to the fact that the sample was from the middle and upper middle class, although it was assumed that marital satisfaction scores would be diverse enough to measure.

#### Definition of Terms

The following terms have been defined with the purpose of maintaining clarity and consistency within the study:

1. Sex Role - "A set of preferences, rewards, tastes, and goals that a person learns because he or she happens to be male or female" (Scanzoni, 1978, p. 6).

2. Marital Satisfaction - High marital quality is associated with good judgment, adequate communication, a

better than average level of marital happiness, integration, and a high degree of satisfaction with the relationship (Lewis & Spanier, 1979).

### 3. Family Types:

Dual career--Both spouses have extensive educations (e.g., Ph.D., MBA., M.D.), are considered to have white-collar types of occupations and state an ongoing commitment to their professions. Typically, their salaries reflect earnings greater than dual earner and single earner families. One of the latest definitions of a career is formulated by Aldous, Osmond, and Hicks (1979, p. 243) and states,

We are defining career occupations as those occupations requiring a period of systematic training in an institution of higher education, and where there is a gradation of positions in the occupation with increased responsibilities, power, and remuneration accruing to the person who moves from one level to the next.

Dual earner--Both spouses have some education (e.g., B.S. or trade-school training) but do not see their work as a career and often do not participate in ongoing job training or keeping abreast in their field. Dual earner family types typically engage in an eight-hour work day.

Single earner--In this family type there is only one spouse (typically the husband) who is employed in either a career or job.

### General Proposal for Research

The present study measured marital satisfaction and sex role preferences of both husbands and wives in dual career, dual earner, and single earner families.

## Hypotheses

General hypotheses. Based upon the proposal statement, the following hypotheses were presented for this study:

1. Females will have significantly higher mean scores than males on the sex role preference measure.
2. Dual career families will have significantly higher mean scores than either the dual earner or single earner family types on the sex role preference measure.
3. The single earner family type will score significantly lower than either the dual career or dual earner family types on the sex role preference measure.
4. There should be no significant difference between the mean marital satisfaction scores of either males or females.
5. The sex role modern group, regardless of gender, will report significantly higher mean marital satisfaction scores than the traditional group.

Hypotheses relating wives' sex role preferences, marital satisfaction, and family type.

6. Sex role modern wives in either the dual career or dual earner family types will have significantly higher mean marital satisfaction scores than wives in the sex role modern single earner family type.
7. Sex role traditional wives in the single earner family type will report significantly higher mean marital satisfaction scores than wives in the sex role traditional dual earner or dual career family type.



Hypotheses relating husbands' sex role preferences, marital satisfaction, and family type.

8. Sex role modern husbands in the dual career or dual earner family types will report significantly higher mean marital satisfaction scores than those husbands in the sex role modern single earner family type.

9. Sex role traditional husbands in the single earner family types will report significantly higher mean marital satisfaction scores than those husbands in either the sex role traditional dual career or dual earner family types.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The purpose of the study was to investigate the sex role preferences and marital satisfaction of husbands and wives in dual career, dual earner, and single earner family types. In view of the nature of this study, the review of the literature is presented with the two main dependent variables (i.e., sex role preferences and marital satisfaction) as the focal points. A review of the theory and research of the concept of marital satisfaction is presented first, followed by the relationship of employment status with marital satisfaction. In addition, this study reports on the use of the social exchange theoretical perspective when explaining marital satisfaction. The last section of the review focuses on the concept of sex role preferences.

#### Marital Satisfaction

The concept of marital satisfaction has taken a prominent place in the empirical study of marriage and family relations. Despite criticism of marital satisfaction and related concepts, it is one of the most frequently studied dependent variables (Spanier & Cole, 1974).

The study of marital adjustment has a history dating back to Hamilton's (1929) seminal work. Since that time a number of measures have been developed which have purported

to assess the quality of the marital union. An examination of these measures indicated that few of them have an adequate demonstration and reporting of validity and reliability, nor is there a clear conceptual plan behind the scale development (Spanier, 1976). Further, researchers have rarely utilized the same language to assess the concept of marital adjustment.

Marital adjustment may be viewed in two distinct ways-- either as a process, or as a qualitative evaluation of a state. Defining marital adjustment as a process rather than a state has several implications for measuring the concept. Mainly, a "process" is best studied either longitudinally or with a cross-sectional design. The second view of adjustment, as a qualitative evaluation, may be defined further in two ways. First, the assessment of adjustment may assume that there exists a continuum of this concept in which a "snapshot" of the continuum is taken at one point in time. This definition acknowledges a process taking place, but studies adjustment by examining the process at specific points in time. The second way of viewing adjustment does not address the time dimension. When adjustment is conceptualized as an unchanging state, the technique of studying it is simplified since the researcher need only be concerned with the quality of the relationship at the time of the data collection.

Typically, current measures of marital adjustment do not assess a changing process, but measure a point on a

continuum ranging from well adjusted to maladjusted. A "process" definition is predicated on the existence of a continuum and the belief that there is movement along such a continuum. Thus, the process consists of those events which move a couple back and forth along the continuum.

Considering both the complexities of studying process and the oversimplification resulting from the static measure of the "snapshot" approach, marital adjustment has evolved to be the following phenomenon. Having accepted the idea that adjustment is a process rather than an unchanging state, one then selects the most meaningful measure which would evaluate the relationship at any given point in time. This approach also is the most consistent approach with previous research which has sought to evaluate the quality of the marital dyad within a given time frame. Thus, this writer subscribes to the notion that adjustment is an ever-changing process with a qualitative dimension which can be evaluated at any point in time on a dimension from well adjusted to maladjusted. Consistent with this view, marital adjustment can be defined as a subjective evaluation of a married couple's relationship. The range of evaluations reflects a continuum of characteristics of marital interaction and marital functioning. High marital quality, therefore, is associated with good judgment, adequate communication, a better than average level of marital happiness, integration, and a high degree of satisfaction with the relationship (Lewis & Spanier, 1979).

This definition does not convey a fixed picture of discrete categories (i.e., a high versus low quality marriage) but suggests the existence of a continuum ranging anywhere from high to low.

The above conceptual approach is consistent with Spanier's (1976) development of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale for measuring the quality of marriage and/or other similar dyads (e.g., cohabiting couples). For this reason the Dyadic Adjustment Scale was utilized in the present study.

#### Marital Satisfaction and Employment Status

Recent interest in both husband's and wife's working for pay has revived an interest over whether a wife's work status (usually defined as either working or not working) affects her own or her husband's marital adjustment and satisfaction. In order for researchers to resolve this debate they must compare families in which both spouses work to families where only one spouse is gainfully employed (Poloma, 1980; Staines, Pleck, Shepard, & O'Connor, 1978). Relevant studies must also contain psychological measures of marital adjustment and must analyze separately the marital adjustment reported by each spouse. Due to these issues and limitations this literature review addresses only those studies that comply with the above.

Thirteen studies have included zero-order comparisons on marital adjustment between working wives and nonworking

wives and husbands where the wife was either gainfully employed or not employed for pay.

In some of these 13 studies, a limited percentage of working wives whose husbands were not currently working were included. All of the studies employed national or community-wide samples, drawn either through probability sampling techniques or through less exact procedures which they state as having produced nearly representative samples. In addition, of these 13 studies several were conducted in European settings with the majority involving American samples. All of these studies used different measures of marital adjustment.

Seven of the studies reported somewhat higher marital adjustment among housewives than among dual earning wives (Buric & Zecevic, 1967; Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976; Gover, 1963; Michel, 1967; Radloff, 1975; Safilios-Rothschild, 1967; Scanzoni, 1970). Only one study (Gover, 1963) was able to establish the difference as significant. Four studies (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Gross & Arvey, 1977; Haavio-Mannila, 1971; Orden & Bradburn, 1969) obtained trivial differences and one study (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970) reported no significant difference. In no instance was there a finding suggesting a significant reversal of the dominant pattern (i.e., greater adjustment/satisfaction among the employed wives).

Axelson (1963) and Scanzoni (1970) reported higher marital adjustment among husbands if they were the sole

breadwinner in the family when compared to families where both spouses were employed. But a third study (Campbell et al., 1976) found no difference.

"While zero-order comparisons among the marital groups hold considerable interest, they may obscure more potent differences within specific subsamples" (Staines et al., 1978, pp. 91-92). Twelve of the studies examined the impact of wives' employment status on marital adjustment within one or more levels of education. Eleven of the 12 studies included comparisons among educated wives. The term educated wives in these studies meant college educated. The zero-order pattern noted previously tended to indicate that better marital adjustment among housewives than among employed wives existed before 1960 among educated women (Chesser, 1956; Davis, 1929; Locke & Mackeprang, 1949). Interestingly, by around 1970 the studies of educated women suggested no clear advantage to housewives in that roughly as many studies found higher adjustment among working wives (Burke & Weir, 1976; Campbell et al., 1976; Scanzoni, 1970) as among housewives (Fogarty, Rapoport, & Rapoport, 1971; Tavris, 1971). In addition several studies reported no advantage for either group (Fidell, 1977a, 1977b; Tavris & Jayaratne, 1976). To confuse the issue further, those studies that found significant differences for educated wives (Burke & Weir, 1976; Campbell et al., 1976; Fogarty et al., 1971) were inconsistent as to direction. Scanzoni (1970) and

Hauenstein (cited in Staines et al., 1978) reported on wives mainly without high school diplomas. Both of these studies were fairly recent and also pointed to the housewife as having the better marital adjustment. Finally, Bryson, Bryson, and Johnson (1978) in a study of dual career couples only, reported that wives were less satisfied with domestic arrangements than were husbands. By and large the recent studies concerning levels of education suggest that the decrement in marital adjustment of working wives relative to housewives is greater among less educated than among better educated wives. The literature pertaining to husbands' marital satisfaction and education has conformed to no clear trend (Burke & Weir, 1976; Locke & Mackeprang, 1949; Scanzoni, 1970; Staines et al., 1978).

Aside from education, the literature on wives' and husbands' employment status and marital adjustment includes no systematic, cross-sectional evidence on other important control variables such as family life cycle stage (Poloma, 1980; Staines et al., 1978). Further, the wives' or husbands' education has rarely been clearly delineated. For instance employment type (i.e., career as opposed to job) has not been addressed. For these reasons this study attempted to utilize a sample which contained three distinct family types. These family types were labeled dual career, dual earner, and single earner.



There is literature accumulating on dual career family types and the literature has set this type aside as a new and emerging family form. All studies reporting on dual career families have found that their goals and marital relationships have been distinctly different from past family forms (Fogarty, 1971; Holmstrom, 1972; Poloma, 1980; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). This study, therefore, assumed that each of the three family types utilized have distinctly different sex role preferences which may affect spouses' reported marital satisfaction scores. Because of this, sex role preferences was treated as an independent variable when analyzing marital satisfaction scores. Sex role preferences was a dependent variable for all other analyses.

#### Intervening Variables Relating Wives' Employment and Marital Satisfaction

The relationships between wives' occupational characteristics and marital satisfaction are more obscured than those for husbands (Lewis & Spanier, 1979). Unemployed wives typically report higher quality marriages than do employed women (Axelson, 1963; Grover, 1963). When both spouses pursue careers they report decreased marital quality, probably due to work (role) overloads (Fogarty et al., 1971). In addition, several variables have been documented as intervening in the relationship between marital satisfaction and wives' working. Freedom of choice appears to be such a variable (Orden & Bradburn, 1968). One might interpret these

findings to mean that a wife employed because of economic necessity rather than personal choice may, because of resentment, negatively evaluate her marriage. This reasoning may also explain why part-time employment is also associated with higher marital quality (Orden & Bradburn, 1968).

Further, a proposition set forth by Lewis and Spanier (1979) suggests that the higher the husband's approval of his wife's employment, the higher the marital quality. This proposition was induced from a number of empirical findings (Axelson, 1963; Goode, 1964).

When one combines the above intervening variables (wives' freedom of choice and husbands' approval of wives' employment) it can be hypothesized that the more the spouse's satisfaction with the wife's working, the higher the marital quality.

#### Social Exchange Theory and Marital Satisfaction

The social exchange viewpoint concerning human interaction, following especially Thibaut and Kelley (1959), Homans (1964), and Blau (1964), presupposes that if the personal profit from interaction is rewarding, there is a building up of positive sentiments. In other words, a relationship will continue to grow, whereas if the costs of the interactions are less than the profits, the relationship will probably either slow down in its growth and development or be terminated.

The social exchange framework has not been utilized as thoroughly in the study of marital relationships as it has been used in the study of the acquaintance process and short-term groups (Lewis & Spanier, 1979). Some of the reasons for this are that the study of marital satisfaction is a more complex task as well as the fact that marriages often evidence asymmetrical exchanges and contain many different levels of exchange resources, rewards, and costs (Edwards, 1969). It is reasonable to assume that the forecast of future rewards, as balanced against future cost in addition to the memory of cumulative rewards and costs throughout the history of the marital relationship, does greatly affect the quality of the marital relationship.

In spite of the great complexity of marital relationships, the continued development of a social exchange theory of marital quality and stability appears to be one of the most fruitful tasks that could be undertaken by family theorists. In other words, the potential for a social exchange theory in this area is very promising indeed, as viewed from our inventory of propositions. (Lewis & Spanier, 1979, p. 285)

Because exchange theory offers promise in the investigation of marital interaction, the writer proposed to interpret the results using this theoretical framework. In addition, the hypotheses incorporated a social exchange perspective with sex role preferences and family type.

### Sex Roles as Preferences

In order to assess marital preferences and goals, Holter (1970) suggests looking at the construct known as

sex role preferences. While psychologists view sex roles somewhat differently, Holter believes that to sociologists sex roles are sets of preferences, rewards, tastes, and goals that an individual learns because he or she happens to be either male or female. Further, the assumption is made that women and men share preferences regarding a goal labeled as degree of gender role differentiation. Gender role differentiation is defined as the degree to which women or men prefer or desire gender roles that are egalitarian or interchangeable with regard to the rewards and costs of both occupational and household behaviors.

These preferences lie on a continuum with some women (as well as men) preferring a high degree of interchangeability in terms of both sets of behaviors. Persons at this end of the continuum prefer low differentiation or very little sex typing of behaviors. These women, for example, wish to participate as fully as men in the rewards of occupational involvement. In addition, they also want men to participate more fully in the costs of household behaviors and their gratifications, especially when these behaviors involve parenting. This end of the continuum has typically been labeled "modern" or "contemporary" (Scanzoni, 1978).

The opposite end of the continuum has usually been termed "traditional". A traditional orientation reflects preferences for continued role differentiation between husbands and wives, with occupational and household behaviors being ascribed chiefly on the basis of sex.

Several studies suggest that increasing numbers of people are beginning to hold gender-role preferences that are more modern or egalitarian and less traditional than those preferences held by persons some years ago (Scanzoni, 1978). In addition, women have exhibited the greater amount of change toward more sex role modern preferences than have men.

The present study was designed to measure sex role preferences of both husbands and wives in dual career, dual earner, and single earner family types. Sex role preferences of these family types were also used to explain the marital quality of the husbands and wives.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHOD

The purpose of the study was to investigate the sex role preferences and marital satisfaction of both husbands and wives in dual career, dual earner, and single earner family types. A descriptive study utilizing the survey approach was considered by the researcher to be the most appropriate design.

#### Subjects

All subjects were from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Centers (Nursery School, Infant Care Center, Carter Center), Guilford Technical Institute, and the Chimney Lane Day Care Center of Franklinville, North Carolina. These centers utilized a standard curriculum directed toward the developing child. The questionnaire return rate for the University of North Carolina at Greensboro system was 72%, the Guilford Technical Institute system was 61%, and the Chimney Lane Day Care Center's return rate was 68%. Nursery school centers were chosen because a previous study (Koester, Bueche, & Watson, 1980) found that the married parents utilizing these centers fell into three family types (i.e., dual career, dual earner, and single earner). In addition, all parents were in a particular life cycle stage (i.e., children were preschoolers and average family size

was two children per couple). It was important to control for these variables since previous researchers investigating marital satisfaction and sex role preferences have not accounted for either family type or family life cycle stage (Poloma, 1980; Staines, Pleck, Shepard, & O'Connor, 1978).

Additional sample characteristics are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Thus, the sample was primarily college educated, and middle-to upper-middle class. Further, average age of the respondents was 32.7 years, and the age range varied from 19 years to 56 years old. The average number of years married was 8.3 years, with a reported minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 26 years. No single parents were included, and all respondents were married at the time of the survey.

#### Data Collection

Surveys given to the parents at the designated preschool centers included a cover letter, the questionnaire, and a return envelope in which to put the completed questionnaire. The cover letter included a statement of the problem, an explanation of the study, an appeal for participation, an assurance of confidentiality, and a statement of appreciation for their effort and time (see Appendix A).

Both spouses were asked to participate; however, generally only one spouse brought their child to the center. For this reason the parent accompanying the child was given two identical envelopes (one envelope for each spouse).

Table 1  
Distribution of Educational Levels of the Sample

Educational Level	N	%
Some high school	0	0
Completed high school	8	4
Technical training	8	4
Some college	21	12
Completed college	27	16
Some graduate work	25	15
Completed M.A., M.S., etc.	51	30
Completed M.D., Ph.D., etc.	31	18
No answer	1	
TOTAL	172	100

Note:  $\bar{X}$  = Completed college.



Table 2  
Distribution of Combined Family Incomes

Annual Income Levels	N	%
\$0- 9,999	6	3
\$10,000-14,999	14	8
\$15,000-19,999	16	9
\$20,000-24,999	20	12
\$25,000-29,999	28	17
\$30,000-34,999	26	15
\$35,000-39,999	11	6
\$40,000-44,999	9	5
\$45,000 and over	39	22
no answer	<u>3</u>	<u>      </u>
TOTAL	172	100

Note:  $\bar{X}$  = \$25,000-29,999

They were urged not to collaborate with their spouse until after they had returned the survey. Instructions were worded so that each spouse was encouraged to answer as truthfully as possible and to return the survey to the center the following week. In addition, the respondents were assured total anonymity. An additional letter was sent thanking those who complied and asked for respondents to return their completed questionnaires if they had not already done so. This letter was sent exactly one week after the survey was distributed and stated that the results would be available. Parents who wished to receive copies of the results were instructed to leave their names with the day care center directors (see Appendix B). Respondents who left names were given written copies of the findings.

### Instrumentation

Research participants were asked to complete the Measure of Sex Role Preference (Scanzoni, 1975), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), and a set of questions designed to obtain specific demographic information (see Appendix C).

### Measure of Sex Role Preferences

The Measure of Sex Role Preferences was developed by Scanzoni (1978) to investigate sex role attitude changes arising from the feminist movement. The instrument consisted of questions to which respondents indicated their agreement or disagreement using a 5-point Likert-type scale. The

questions included items related to the Position of Wife, items related to the Position of Husband-Father, and items related to the Position of Mother. These three categories can be further divided into seven role indices which were not used in the analysis of this study. A discussion of the items in each category and role index follows:

#### Position of Wife

1. Traditional Wife Role (TW)--This role index contained eight items related to responsibility for caring for husband and children; equal pay and promotion opportunities in the work setting for men and women; the physical, mental, and emotional nature of women as related to work and career; and the reason for wives to work. The questions were phrased so that a positive response was related to a traditional or differentiated attitude toward sex roles.
2. Wife Self-Actualization (SA)--This index contained four items related to work and career, and the importance of available day care centers and nursery schools. The questions were phrased so that a positive response was related to a modern or undifferentiated attitude toward sex roles.

#### Position of Husband-Father

1. Problematic Husband Alterations (PHA)--This index contained five items related to husbands' response to wives working, and women as supervisors in the

work setting. The questions were phrased so that a positive response was related to a modern or undifferentiated attitude toward sex roles.

2. Institutionalized Equality (IE)--This index contained two items related to husbands' responsibility in household maintenance and child care. The questions were phrased so that a positive response was related to a modern or undifferentiated attitude toward sex roles.
3. Traditional Husband Role (TH)--This index contained two items related to the husband as head of the family, and the importance of a husband's job responsibilities. The questions were phrased so that a positive response was related to a traditional or differentiated attitude toward sex roles.

#### Position of Mother

1. Religious Legitimation of Mother Role (RLM)--This index contained two items related to motherhood as a special calling from God, and marriage and family as established by God. The questions were phrased so that a positive response was related to a traditional or differentiated attitude toward sex roles.
2. Traditional Mother Role (TM)--This index contained five items related to the affect of a mother's working on her children, the importance of children to a marriage, and a difference in attitudes towards

sons and daughters. Three of the questions were phrased so that a positive response was related to a traditional or differentiated attitude toward sex roles, and two questions were positive indications of the modern or undifferentiated attitude.

A total score was obtained by summing the numbers related to the responses. The items that were phrased in the modern direction were scored in the opposite direction, i.e., Strongly Agree--5, Agree--4, etc. The scores were placed on a continuum with the higher scores indicating a preference for modern or undifferentiated sex roles and the lower scores indicating a preference for traditional or differentiated roles. The seven roles indices may be scored separately; however, it was not done in this study because the global concept of sex role preferences was one variable under investigation.

Scanzoni reported alphas between the seven role indices using the 1971 data and the reinterview data in 1975. Correlations between these role indices vary from .20 to .81. The highest correlation reported was between the index measuring the traditional wife role (alpha = .81). The lowest correlation appeared when measuring the traditional husband role (alpha = .20). The author reported no other reliability measures.

### Measure of Marital Satisfaction

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale was designed to measure the concept of marital satisfaction. For researchers wishing to use an overall measure of dyadic adjustment, the 32-item scale was considered to be comprehensive and contained four subscales. The four subscales measure dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus, and affectional expression which have been found to be conceptually and empirically related to marital satisfaction and adjustment (Spanier, 1976). The majority of items were designed to assess one's perception of the adjustment of the relationship. For the present study all 32 items were included in the questionnaire.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale was the most recent, valid, and reliable measure assessing marital satisfaction.

Evidence is presented suggesting content, criterion-related and construct validity. High scale reliability is reported . . . and it is concluded that the scale represents a significant improvement over other measures of marital adjustment. (Spanier, 1976, p. 15)

### Demographic Variables and Occupational Types

In addition to the above measures, respondents were asked to report their age, number of children within the family, sex of respondent, and marital status. Investigations pertaining to marital satisfaction used the categories of (1) education (either high school degree or college degree) and (2) employment (either employed wives or nonemployed

wives) (Burke & Weir, 1976; Feldman, 1965; Fidell, 1977a; Hauenstein, 1976; Scanzoni, 1970; Staines, Pleck, Shepard, & O'Connor, 1978). Husbands, when included in the studies, were always employed and categorized according to the employment status (i.e., employed or nonemployed) of their wives.

Family types were categorized further in this report by including the dual career family as well as the single earner and dual earner families. The variables delineated by the seminal works of Holmstrom (1972) and Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) that described differences between dual career and dual earning family types were (1) education, (2) occupation, (3) annual income, (4) number of hours worked per week, (5) number of professional/volunteer organizations respondent is a member of, and (6) whether or not the respondent feels a long-term commitment to his/her work. These descriptors were utilized in the present study to categorize dual career and dual earner family types.

For the present study the occupational types were defined as follows:

Single earner wives. Wives currently married but not employed who classified themselves as housewives and whose husbands were currently employed in either a career or a job.

Single earner husbands. Husbands currently married and employed in a career or job whose wives were currently unemployed.

Dual earner wives. Wives currently married and employed in a job whose husbands were also currently employed in a job.

Dual earner husbands. Husbands currently married and employed in a job whose wives were also currently employed in a job.

Dual career wives. Wives currently married and employed in a career whose husbands were also currently employed in a career.

Dual career husbands. Husbands currently married and employed in a career whose wives were also employed in a career.

Aldous, Osmond, and Hicks (1979) stated one of the most recent definitions of a career.

We are defining career occupations as those occupations requiring a period of systematic training in an institution of higher education, and where there is a gradation of positions in the occupation with increased responsibilities, power, and remuneration accruing to the person who moves from one level to the next. (p. 24)

Thus, a job was characterized by an 8-hour work day, requiring little ongoing job training and little advancement opportunities.

Occupational types are shown in Table 3. The largest percentage of the parents surveyed were categorized in the dual career family type. Respondents were not included if they did not clearly fit into one of the three categories. For instance, if the husband was labeled dual career and wife of that unit was labeled dual earner, then that family



Table 3  
Distribution of Occupational Types

Occupational Types	N	%
1. Dual Career	40	23
2. Dual Earner	82	48
3. Single Earner	<u>50</u>	<u>29</u>
TOTAL	172	100%

was not used in the sample. There were seven families that responded and could not be categorized according to the classifications used in the present study.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Sex Role Preferences

Sex role preferences were measured by the Sex Role Preference Scale designed by Scanzoni (1978). A sex role preference score was obtained by adding an individual's score on an 18-item measure. The scores ranged from 18 to 90. A score of 90 would typify a respondent who was sex role modern. A minimum score of 18 would typify a respondent who was sex role traditional. Subjects could score below the minimum of 18 if they left items blank or neglected to fill out the measure.

Mean scores were utilized to account for missing observations. A mean score instead of a total score for each subject was calculated to analyze the data. The mean score was obtained by summing an individual respondent's answers to the questions and then dividing by the total number of questions answered. Thus, an individual's total mean score could range from one to five.

The total sample mean score for this measure was 3.7. The scores ranged from a high of 5 to a low of 2.6. The samples' modal score was 4.27. In general, there were few sex role traditional respondents and no single individual scored below a value of 2.

A second question placed at the end of the questionnaire (and not part of the Sex Role Preference Measure) asked respondents whether or not they considered themselves to be traditionally oriented. Seventy percent of the sample responded that they thought of themselves as being traditionally oriented. Twenty-nine percent reported that they did not think of themselves as traditionally oriented. One percent of the sample chose not to answer.

Only 11 respondents scored below the scale rating of 3 (the continuum was on a point basis of 1 through 5). In addition, the lowest value on the Sex Role Preference Measure was 2.6. While respondents reported thinking of themselves as traditional, they did not score in the traditional category on the Sex Role Preference Measure. The findings from this question are not consistent with the Sex Role Preference Measure which showed few scores in the traditional category.

When using the analysis of variance procedure, the variable sex role preference was categorized in the following manner: if an individual's mean score was less than 3.5 and greater than 2.5, the individual was placed into the group labeled "transitional". If an individual's mean score was greater than 4 and less than 5, the individual was placed into the group labeled "modern". Respondents who reported scores of 3.6 to 3.9 were not included in the categories or the statistical analyses. Thus, sex role preferences were categorized into two distinct groups.

### Marital Satisfaction

Marital satisfaction was measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). A marital satisfaction score was obtained for each respondent by summing individual scores on a 32-item measure. Each question was arranged in Likert-type fashion ranging from 0 to 5. Five was assigned "always agree" or "always satisfied" or a similar term indicating extreme satisfaction with the relationship. The rating of 0, which was labeled "always disagree" or "never" indicated the lowest possible choice and extreme dissatisfaction with the relationship in respect to the question asked. An individual's total score could range from 160 points (most satisfied with their marriage) to 0 points (most dissatisfied with their marriage).

Instead of "throwing out" those subjects who missed or did not respond on one or more questions, a mean score, as opposed to the total score, was calculated for this instrument. A mean score for each respondent was obtained by summing the values from each question and dividing by the number of questions the subject answered. A subject's individual score could range from 0 to 5.

The sample mean response for the scale was 3.44 and the modal response was 3.19. The scores ranged from a low of 2.21 to a high of 4.8. In general, respondents reported satisfaction with their marriages and the following analysis confirmed this fact.

A question was included at the end of the survey which asked respondents if they were (1) very satisfied, (2) fairly satisfied, or (3) not at all satisfied with their marriage. Seventy-five percent of the sample reported that they were very satisfied with their marital relationships. Twenty-four percent reported being fairly satisfied, and one percent said they were not at all satisfied with their marital relationships. The findings from this question are consistent with the results of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale varied little, with most respondents reporting satisfactory marital relationships.

#### Test of Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3

A two-factor analysis of variance was performed, utilizing scores on sex role preferences as the dependent measure. Independent measures were (1) sex of respondent and (2) family type of the respondent. The analysis was significant beyond the  $p < .05$  level, as shown by Table 4. The independent variables accounted for 13% of the total explained variability ( $R^2 = .129$ ).

The researcher hypothesized that sex role preference mean scores would be significantly higher for the female group over the male group. This first hypothesis was tested by comparing mean scores on sex role preferences of both males and females. Sex of respondent was significantly different as shown by Figure 1. Females had higher mean

Table 4

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance, the Effects of Sex,  
and Occupational Type on Sex Role Preference Scores

N = 172

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F
Model	5	6.633	1.326	4.92***
Error	166	44.766	.269	
Corrected Total	171	51.400		
Sex	1	1.977		7.33**
Occupation	2	4.532		8.40***
Sex/Occupation	2	.124		.23

Note: Multiple  $R^2 = .129$

\*\*  $\frac{p}{p} < .01$   
\*\*\*  $\frac{p}{p} < .001$

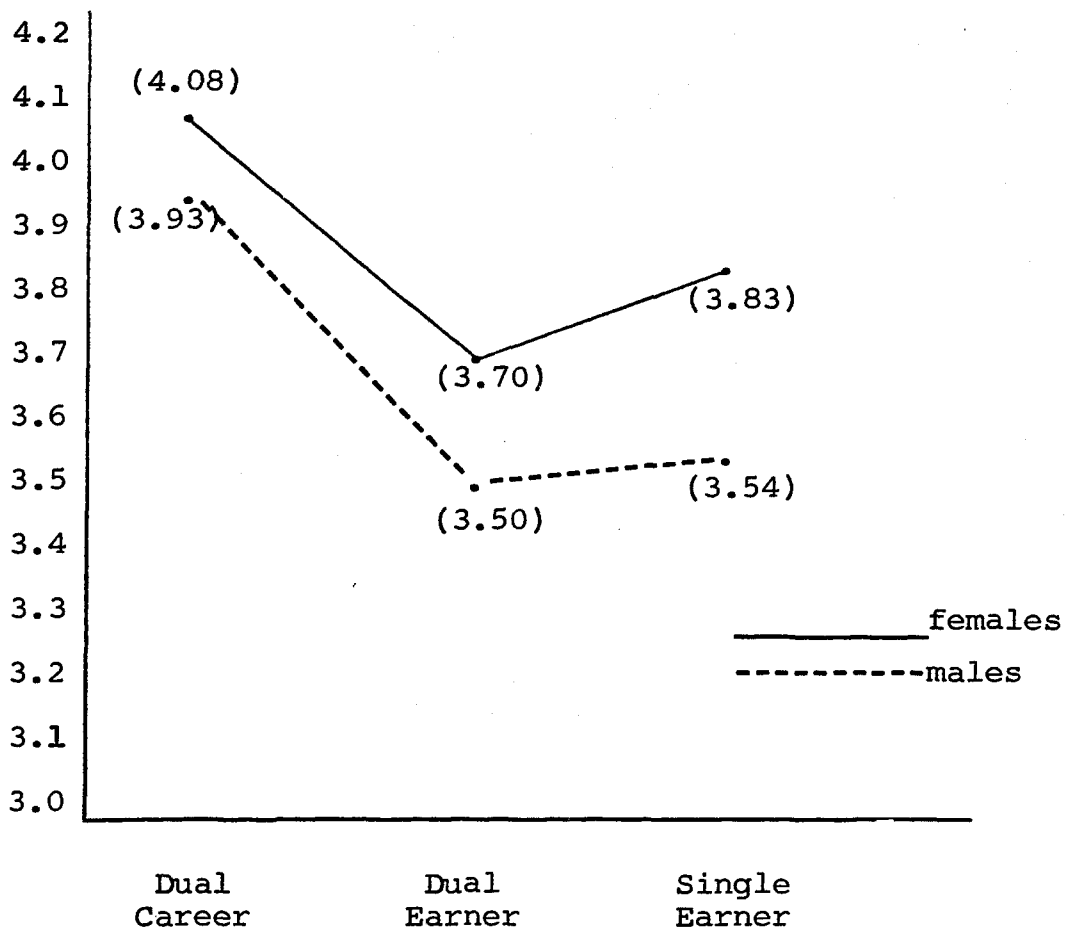


Figure 1. Mean sex role preference scores for males and females for the three occupational types.



scores than males regardless of their family type. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2 stated that dual career families would report significantly higher mean scores than either the dual earner or single earner family types on the sex role preference measure. Further, Hypothesis 3 stated that the single earner family type would report mean scores that were lower than either the dual career or dual earner family types.

Both of these hypotheses were tested by comparing mean sex role preference scores of the three family types. Significant differences were found between the dual career, dual earner, and single earner family types, although post hoc analyses failed to show significant differences between the three groups. Since there were unequal cell sizes in the data, the Scheffe test for multiple comparisons was employed.

Thus, Hypotheses 2 and 3 cannot be accepted. There were significant differences reported between family type and sex role preferences, although post hoc analyses failed to differentiate the dual career, dual earner, or single earner family types.

There were no significant interaction effects. A multiple regression analysis was performed with sex role preference designated as the dependent variable and sex of subject and family type as independent measures. Results of this analysis were similar to the two-factor analysis reported above.

### Test of Hypotheses 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9

A three-factor analysis of variance was performed utilizing scores on marital satisfaction as the dependent measure. Independent measures were (1) sex of respondent, (2) family type of respondent, and (3) sex role preference of the respondent. The analysis was significant beyond the  $p < .05$  level as shown in Table 5. The independent variables accounted for 21% of the total explained variability ( $R^2 = .2146$ ).

Marital satisfaction mean scores of both males and females were compared to test for significant differences. Hypothesis 4 stated there should be no significant difference between these two groups. Sex of respondent was found not to be significant and therefore Hypothesis 4 cannot be rejected.

Hypothesis 5, which stated that the sex role modern group will report significantly higher mean marital satisfaction scores than the traditional group, could not be tested. However, analyses compared the sex role modern group with the sex role transitional group and found that these sex role preferences were significant as shown by Table 5. The sex role modern group report higher mean marital satisfaction scores ( $\bar{X} = 3.48$ ) than the sex role transitional group ( $\bar{X} = 3.31$ ) regardless of family types.

Hypotheses 6 and 7 could not be tested. There were no traditional (as measured by sex role preference scores) respondents in the sample. Instead, the analyses utilized

Table 5

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance, the Effects of Sex,  
Occupational Type, and Sex Role Preferences  
on Marital Satisfaction Scores

N = 172

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F
Model	11	3.749	.340	2.41**
Error	97	13.720	.141	
Corrected Total	108	17.469		
Sex	1	.199		1.41
Occupation	2	1.335		4.71*
Sex/Occupation	2	.559		1.98
SRP	1	.563		3.98*
Sex/SRP	1	.034		.25
Occupation/SRP	2	.949		3.36*
Sex/Occupation/SRP	2	.108		.38

Note: Multiple  $R^2 = .215$

\*  $\underline{p} < .05$

\*\*  $\underline{p} < .01$

Sex (male; female)

Occup (dual career; dual earner; single earner)

SRP (transitional; modern)

scores in the categories labeled transitional and modern. Sex role modern wives did not score significantly higher on the marital adjustment measure (than sex role transitional wives) if they were in either the dual career or dual earner family types. Nor do sex role transitional wives score significantly higher than sex role modern wives if they are in the single earner family type.

Hypotheses 8 and 9 also could not be tested. However, when sex role modern husbands were compared against sex role transitional husbands the sex role modern husbands did not score significantly higher (than sex role transitional husbands) on marital adjustment when they were in either the dual career or dual earner family type. Nor did sex role transitional husbands score significantly higher (than sex role modern husbands) when they were in the single earner family type.

In addition, family type was a significant variable when predicting marital satisfaction scores. Although family types were significantly different, post hoc analyses revealed no significant differences between dual career, dual earner, and the single earner family types. The Scheffé method was chosen as the post hoc analysis due to the unequal  $N$  of the sample's cell sizes.

There was a significant interaction between family type and sex role preferences as shown by Figure 2. There were no significant interactions for either (1) sex and family

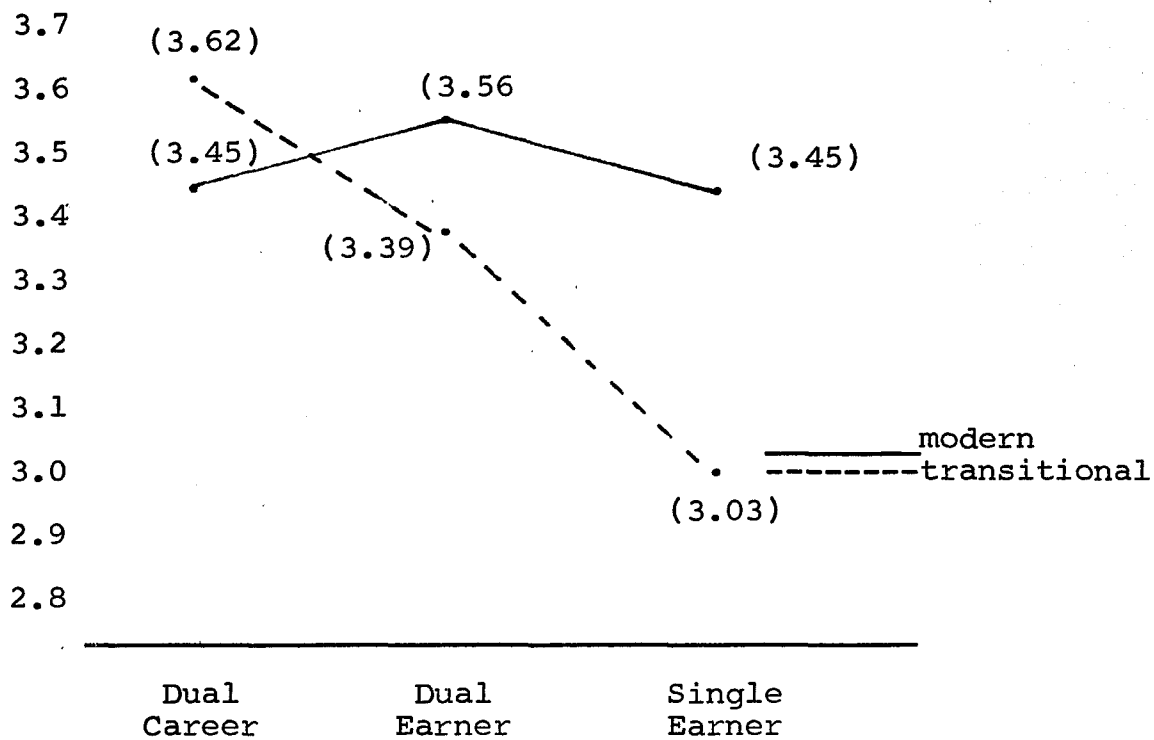


Figure 2. Mean marital satisfaction scores for sex role preferences and occupational type.

type, (2) sex and sex role preferences, or (3) sex, family type and sex role preferences.

A multiple regression analysis was performed with marital satisfaction scores designated as the dependent variable and sex of respondent, family type, and sex role preferences as independent measures. Results of this analysis were similar to the three-factor analysis of variance reported above.

In addition to multiple regression analyses, a multivariate analysis of variance utilizing all variables (sex role preferences, marital satisfaction, sex of respondent, and family type of respondent) was performed, with results comparable to the multiple regression procedures, the two-factor analysis, and the three-factor analysis reported earlier. The two- and three-factor analyses of variance were reported in detail because of their illustrative nature.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

This study was designed to investigate the concepts of sex role preferences and marital satisfaction of both husbands and wives in dual career, dual earner, and single earner family types. Controls for life cycle stage of each family and socioeconomic status were incorporated. Each family had one (or more) preschool children and was in the "beginning parenthood" (Duvall, 1971) stage of the family life cycle. As a result of controlling for this particular family stage, most respondents were in the same age category ( $\bar{X} = 32$  years) and all respondents had been married at least two years ( $\bar{X} = 8$  years). The sample was middle to upper middle class socioeconomically, and most subjects were college educated.

#### Measurement of Sex Role Preferences

The researcher assumed that sex role preferences would lie on a continuum from traditional to undifferentiated to modern based upon past research (Scanzoni, 1978). The traditional category should reflect preferences for role differentiation between husbands and wives, with both occupational and household behaviors being ascribed chiefly on the basis of sex and tradition. On the other hand, women and men preferring a high degree of interchangeability in terms of occupational and household behaviors were termed modern.

Respondents who scored in the middle ranges on the scale are thought to be undecided as to their sex role preferences. In the present study these respondents were labeled transitional.

Of concern was the lack of traditional scoring respondents on the sex role preference measure. The sex role preference measure may not be adequately measuring gender preferences or role interchangeability. If it is not, then questions arise regarding the names of the categories within which respondents are placed. This study and another investigation by Robinson, Watson, and Morris (1981) failed to find respondents who scored in the traditional category. Most respondents scored in the middle third (transitional) or in the highest third (modern), although subjects in this study reported thinking of themselves as being traditionally oriented on a question which was separate from the sex role measure.

Perhaps another conclusion regarding the sex role preference measure would be to suggest that it measures respondents' attitudes toward working women. Categories could still be labeled the same way (i.e., traditional, undifferentiated, modern). Traditional respondents could be said to be against a wife's employment outside of the home for religious and child-bearing/raising reasons. An undifferentiated score would still typify someone who was undecided, while a modern score would suggest agreement with outside employment and career goals for a wife with children.



Another explanation could be that society has shifted away from reporting sex role traditional behavior. Scanzoni (1978) analyzed the original 1971 data with reinterview data from 1975 and reported a shift toward more modern sex role preference scores for women.

Those who in 1971 had been strongly traditional had by 1975 moved into the less traditional, the ambivalent (mixed feelings), or the modern categories; the ambivalents had moved into the modern categories; and the 1971 moderns tended to remain stable or else had moved into the strongly modern categories. (p. 17)

He concluded that the women studied were part of what appeared to be a general trend in American society toward more egalitarian definitions of gender roles.

Assuming that the above reported trend was accurate would help explain why no respondent in the present study scored in the traditional category. Based upon Scanzoni's finding, one could argue for a further egalitarian shift from 1975 to 1980.

The aim of the present paper was not to validate the measure used to assess sex role preferences. It was deemed to be one of the best available instruments to measure gender preferences.

#### Sex Role Preferences as Dependent Variable

As hypothesized, females scored significantly more sex role modern than did males. This finding is consistent with Scanzoni (1978) and Robinson, Watson, and Morris (1981) who suggest females have exhibited the greater amount of change toward more modern sex role preferences.

Of further interest in the study was the finding that females were more modern regardless of their occupational (i.e., dual career, dual earner, single earner) type. Thus, both employed and nonemployed wives reported preferring a higher degree of sex role interchangeability than did males.

The hypothesis stating sex role modern wives would score significantly higher on the marital adjustment measure if they were in the dual career or dual earner family types over sex role traditional wives could not be tested. Analyses were performed substituting the categories of sex role transitional wives and sex role modern wives, and no significant differences were found. Thus, one cannot state that sex role modern wives in either dual career or dual earner family types have higher marital satisfaction scores than transitional wives in single earner families.

The hypothesis stating that dual career families would have significantly higher mean scores on the sex role preference measure could not be accepted. Dual career families did not have significantly higher scores indicating more modernity over either dual earner or single earner families.

The hypothesis stating that the single earner family type would have the lowest mean scores on the sex role preference measure also could not be accepted. Single earner families did not score significantly lower, indicating that they were more traditionally sex role oriented than either the dual career or dual earner family types.

These hypotheses were not statistically significant when investigating differences between the family types. However, family type was a significant factor when explaining sex role preferences.

#### Marital Satisfaction as Dependent Variable

There were no significant differences between males and females when measuring marital satisfaction scores. In addition, most respondents in the present study reported that they were maritally satisfied.

The hypothesis stating that the sex role modern group will score higher on the marital satisfaction measure than the traditional group could not be tested. Instead, analyses were performed using the categories labeled transitional and modern. A significant difference was found between these two groups. The sex role modern group did report higher marital satisfaction scores over the transitional group regardless of the family type. Thus, it appears that sex role preferences affect marital satisfaction scores. The more sex role modern the individual, the higher the marital satisfaction regardless of the respondent's gender or family type.

This finding is consistent with a proposition set forth by Lewis and Spanier (1979) suggesting that the higher the husbands' approval of their wives' employment, the higher the marital quality. The proposition was induced from a number of empirical findings (Axelson, 1963; Goode, 1964).

A high score on the sex role preference measure would indicate that the respondent approved of a wife's working. Therefore, high scores, reflected by modernity, of both spouses (not just the husband) affected the marital satisfaction scores positively.

Hypotheses Relating Wives' Sex Role Preferences, Marital Satisfaction, and Family Type

Aside from education, unfortunately, the literature on wives' employment status and marital adjustment includes no systematic, cross-sectional evidence on variables such as family life cycle stage, occupational type or sex role preferences. Because of this, it is difficult to compare past research with the present study.

Studies have examined the impact of wives' employment status on marital adjustment within one or more levels of education. These levels of education were in the categories of (1) completed high school and (2) completed college (four-year degrees). There is a tendency to indicate better marital adjustment among housewives than dual earning wives, especially in the studies reported before 1960 and if the women were college educated (Chesser, 1956; Davis, 1929; Locke & Mackeprang, 1949). However, by 1970, the studies of educated women suggested no clear advantage to housewives in that roughly as many studies found higher adjustment among dual working wives (Burke & Weir, 1976; Campbell et al., 1976; Scanzoni, 1970) as found an advantage for housewives

(Fogarty, Rapoport, & Rapoport, 1971; Tavris, 1971). Several studies found no advantage for either group (Feldman, 1965; Fidell, 1977a, 1977b; Tavris & Jayaratne, 1976). To confuse the issue further, the three studies that reported significant differences for educated wives (Burke & Weir, 1976; Campbell et al., 1976; Fogarty et al., 1971) were inconsistent as to direction. Two studies reported on less educated wives, mainly wives without high school diplomas (Hauenstein, 1976; Scanzoni, 1970). Both studies reported an advantage in adjustment among housewives. Taken together, the recent studies concerning levels of education suggest that the decrement in marital adjustment of dual earning wives relative to housewives is greater among less educated than better educated wives.

Significant differences between dual career, dual earner, and single earner wives were not found, although family type was a significant variable. In addition, the sample was highly educated and all wives had completed high school, with the majority completing a four-year college degree. For this reason, the tendency in the recent literature toward a greater decrement of dual working wives' adjustment relative to housewives among less rather than more educated women, was not replicated.

Hypotheses Relating Husbands' Sex Role Preferences,  
Marital Satisfaction, and Family Type

Hypotheses comparing husbands' sex role preferences (sex role modern vs. sex role traditional) with family type and marital satisfaction were not tested. However, analyses were performed utilizing the categories of sex role transitional husbands and sex role modern husbands. No significant differences were found among these groups and their family type or marital satisfaction scores. One cannot state that sex role modern husbands in either dual career or dual earner families report higher marital satisfaction scores than sex role transitional husbands in single earner families.

This finding can be confirmed with Campbell et al. (1976) who compared marital adjustment among husbands who were the sole breadwinners with husbands in families where both spouses were employed and reported no differences. However, two other studies of marital adjustment of husbands (Axelson, 1963; Scanzoni, 1970) assigned an edge to sole breadwinners over dual earner husbands, although the earlier study was the only one reporting significant differences. These studies compared only single earner husbands' marital satisfaction with dual earner husbands' marital satisfaction and did not control for occupational type (i.e., dual career, dual earner, single earner) nor family life cycle stage.

A recent study investigated husbands' marital satisfaction with employment status of the wife and found no

significant differences (Staines, Pleck, Shepard, & O'Connor, 1978). In other words, wives' employment (as opposed to wives who were not employed) was not significantly related to their husbands' level of marital adjustment.

Occupational type of both husbands and wives was a significant factor when investigating marital satisfaction and sex role preferences. Thus, dual career, dual earner, and single earner family types had scores that differed on both the marital satisfaction measure and the sex role preference measure. However, one cannot state with certainty the direction of these differences.

CHAPTER VI  
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter contains a brief summary of the conclusions of the study and recommendations for further research.

Conclusions

Females scored significantly higher on the sex role preference measure suggesting more sex role modernity than did the male groups. This finding held true regardless of the subject's occupational type.

Occupational (family) type was also found to be a significant factor when explaining sex role preferences, although post hoc analyses failed to find significant differences between family types. Thus, one cannot state that dual career family types score higher on the sex role preference measure than either the dual or single earner family types. Nor can one state that single earner family types score lower on the measure than either of the other two family types.

In addition, the majority of respondents in this sample did not score in the traditional category (lower third) of the sex role preference measure. All respondents scored in the transitional (middle third) to modern (highest third) categories. For this reason, most a priori hypotheses could not be tested. Respondents could not be divided into



traditional and modern categories, nor could the middle third (labeled transitional in this study) be left out of the analyses. Therefore, the analyses presented were performed on respondents in the transitional and modern categories.

No significant sex differences were found when investigating marital satisfaction scores. Overall, the sample for this study reported being satisfied with their marital relationships.

As hypothesized, the sex role modern group did report higher marital satisfaction scores when compared to the transitional group, regardless of occupational types.

Sex role modern wives did not score significantly higher on the marital adjustment measure than sex role transitional wives, regardless of family type. Nor did sex role modern husbands score higher on the marital adjustment measure than sex role transitional husbands of any family type. Because respondents did not score in the traditional category (lower third) on this measure, hypotheses relating family type, sex of respondent, sex role preferences, and marital satisfaction could not be analyzed. All results presented were based upon respondents' scores which were placed into either sex role transitional or sex role modern categories.

### Recommendations

1. Further clarification is needed to determine the direction of the significant differences found between the family types (i.e., dual career, dual earner, single earner) for both the marital satisfaction measure and the sex role preference measure.

2. When utilizing the Sex Role Preference Measure, the most reliable role indices should be included, and the indices which reported lower correlations should be dropped out of the instrument (Scanzoni, 1978).

3. Comparisons of family types in other life cycle stages (i.e., "beginning parenthood" with "empty nest") need to be included when investigating marital satisfaction as well as sex role preferences.

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APPENDIX A  
INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO THE PARENTS

# FAMILY RESEARCH CENTER

*Department of Child Development and Family Relations*

University of North Carolina  
GREENSBORO, N. C. 27412

Dear Parents,

As members of the Department of Child Development and Family Relations, we are interested in finding out more about the problems and satisfactions currently felt by parents with preschool aged children. Although much has been written about working mothers, few studies have also included responses from working fathers and mothers.

Both you and your spouse are being asked to participate in this study. Your cooperation will take less than 15 minutes of your time and will only involve filling out the attached questionnaire. Since husbands and wives may differ in their responses to the questions it is very important that you each fill out your own questionnaire individually and return them promptly. We feel sure that you will want to discuss some of the questions with your spouse, but must ask that you do so only after you have both completed and returned your questionnaire.

When you have filled out your copy, please seal it in the envelope provided and return it to your child's center by July 23, 1980. You will notice that parents' names (or any other form of identification) are not required anywhere on the materials; your answers will remain completely anonymous throughout the study. There are two corresponding numbers on your spouses and your questionnaire, however these numbers only relate to an attempt to keep both questionnaires from your family together for later analysis. All answers are totally anonymous.

It is most important that you answer each item according to how you feel, not how you think other "experts" or your spouse feel about them! Most items are intended to be answered by everyone. Therefore, please make sure that you do not overlook any items.

Your kindness in supplying this information will be greatly appreciated. We hope that with your cooperation we will be able to bring together some unexplored concerns of parents in a meaningful way.

Sincerely,

*Nancy A. Bueche*

Nancy A. Bueche  
Doctoral Candidate

Lynne S. Koester, Ph.D.

J. Allen Watson, Ph.D.

PLEASE RETURN BY JULY 23, 1980



APPENDIX B  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO THE PARENTS

# **FAMILY RESEARCH CENTER**

*Department of Child Development and Family Relations*

University of North Carolina  
GREENSBORO, N. C. 27412

Dear Parents,

We wish to thank you for your assistance in filling out our questionnaire during the latter part of May.

We are sure that your time and consideration will help us in our study investigating the problems and satisfactions currently felt by parents with preschool aged children.

It is still not too late to return the questionnaire and we welcome further input from parents. If you have lost or misplaced the materials please feel free to take another packet, fill it out, and return it to your child's center at the earliest possible convenience. We need all of your help!

Your kindness in supplying this information is greatly appreciated. If you would like copies of the results of the study please leave your name with your child's center. Analyses should be completed by the end of August at which time we would be very happy to mail you the results of this study.

Sincerely,

Nancy Ann Bueche  
Doctoral Candidate

James A. Watson, Ph.D.  
Chairman

Lynne S. Koester, Ph.D.

APPENDIX C  
QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS FOR PARENTS

Please answer the following questions by checking the appropriate answer.

1. Sex

1. \_\_\_\_\_ male  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ female

2. What is your present marital status?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ married  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ single  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ divorced  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ separated  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ other

3. How long have you been married? \_\_\_\_\_ (in years)

4. Please check the number corresponding to the HIGHEST LEVEL of education you have completed.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Some grade school  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Completed grade school  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Some high school  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Completed high school  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Completed high school and also had other training but not college (such as technical training, business school, beauty school, etc.)  
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Some college  
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Completed college (BA, BS)  
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Some graduate work  
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Completed MA, MS, or equivalent  
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Completed Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent

5. What is your present occupation? (Please be very specific)

---

6. How many hours on the average do you usually work per week in your employment?

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. _____ 10-14 hours | 6. _____ 35-39 hours   |
| 2. _____ 15-19 hours | 7. _____ 40-44 hours   |
| 3. _____ 20-24 hours | 8. _____ 45-49 hours   |
| 4. _____ 25-29 hours | 9. _____ over 50 hours |
| 5. _____ 30-34 hours |                        |

7. What was your age at your last birthday? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What was your total family income before taxes for the past year considering all sources such as rents, profits, wages, interest, and so on?

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. _____ \$0-9,999       | 6. _____ \$30,000-34,999   |
| 2. _____ \$10,000-14,999 | 7. _____ \$35,000-39,999   |
| 3. _____ \$15,000-19,999 | 8. _____ \$40,000-44,999   |
| 4. _____ \$20,000-24,999 | 9. _____ \$45,000 and over |
| 5. _____ \$25,000-29,999 |                            |

9. How much of the above was your income?

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. _____ \$0-2,999       | 6. _____ \$15,000-17,999   |
| 2. _____ \$3,000-5,999   | 7. _____ \$18,000-20,999   |
| 3. _____ \$6,000-8,999   | 8. _____ \$21,000-23,999   |
| 4. _____ \$9,999-11,999  | 9. _____ \$24,000 and over |
| 5. _____ \$12,000-14,999 |                            |

10. In the box below please check the ages of all your children. (You may have more than one check.)

Male	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 & over
Female	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 & over

11. How many volunteer or professional organizations are you currently a member of? \_\_\_\_\_

## DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
1. Handling family finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Matters of recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Religious matters	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Demonstrations of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. Friends	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Philosophy of life	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Amount of time spent together	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Making major decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Household tasks	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. Leisure time interests and activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. Career decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. Do you confide in your mate?	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. Do you ever regret that you married? (or lived together)	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"	0	1	2	3	4	5
		Every Day	Almost Every Day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
23. Do you kiss your mate?		4	3	2	1	0
		All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?		4	3	2	1	0
	How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?					
	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. Laugh together	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Calmly discuss something	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Work together on a project	0	1	2	3	4	5

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometime disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

- |     | Yes      | No       |                          |
|-----|----------|----------|--------------------------|
| 29. | <u>0</u> | <u>1</u> | Being too tired for sex. |
| 30. | <u>0</u> | <u>1</u> | Not showing love.        |
31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| <u>5</u> | I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and <i>would go to almost any length</i> to see that it does.         |
| <u>4</u> | I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and <i>will do all I can</i> to see that it does.                       |
| <u>3</u> | I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and <i>will do my fair share</i> to see that it does.                   |
| <u>2</u> | It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but <i>I can't do much more than I am doing</i> now to help it succeed.   |
| <u>1</u> | It would be nice if it succeeded, but <i>I refuse to do any more than I am doing</i> now to keep the relationship going. |
| <u>0</u> | My relationship can never succeed, and <i>there is no more that I can do</i> to keep the relationship going.             |

Example for this section: Everyone should pay an honest income tax.

Circle a 1 if you STRONGLY AGREE with this statement.

Circle a 2 if you AGREE with this statement.

Circle a 3 if you have MIXED FEELINGS about this statement.

Circle a 4 if you DISAGREE with this statement.

Circle a 5 if you STRONGLY DISAGREE with this statement.

Thus, if you disagree with this statement, you would circle a 4.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	MIXED FEELINGS	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

1. A married woman's most important task in life should be taking care of her husband and children.

1 2 3 4 5

2. She should realize that a woman's greatest reward and satisfaction come through her children.

1 2 3 4 5

3. Having a job herself should be just as important as encouraging her husband in his job.

1 2 3 4 5

4. If she works, she should not try to get ahead in the same way that a man does.

1 2 3 4 5

5. She should be able to make long-range plans for her occupation, in the same way that her husband does for his.

1 2 3 4 5

6. A wife should not have equal authority with her husband in making decisions.

1 2 3 4 5



7. If she has the same job as a man who has to support his family, she should not expect the same pay.
- 1 2 3 4 5
8. If being a wife and mother isn't satisfying enough, she should take a job.
- 1 2 3 4 5
9. There should be more day care centers and nursery schools so that more young mothers could work.
- 1 2 3 4 5
10. A wife should realize that, just as a woman is not suited for heavy physical work, there are also other kinds of jobs she is not suited for, because of her mental and emotional nature.
- 1 2 3 4 5
11. A wife should give up her job whenever it inconveniences her husband and children.
- 1 2 3 4 5
12. If a mother of young children works, it should be only while the family needs the money.
- 1 2 3 4 5
13. Do you believe that the institution of marriage and family was established by God?
- 1 2 3 4 5
14. Do you feel that being a mother is a special calling from God?
- 1 2 3 4 5
15. Do you think that a working mother can establish just as warm and secure relationship with her children as a mother who does not work?
- 1 2 3 4 5
16. Do you feel that a parent gets more satisfaction when a son gets ahead in his occupation than when a daughter gets ahead in hers?
- 1 2 3 4 5

17. Do you feel that a marriage is incomplete without children?

1 2 3 4 5

18. Do you think that young girls should be permitted as much independence as boys?

1 2 3 4 5

19. Taking everything in your marriage together, would you say that you are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ very satisfied
2. \_\_\_\_\_ fairly satisfied
3. \_\_\_\_\_ not at all satisfied

20. Overall, do you consider yourself to be traditionally oriented?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time and consideration!