THE EFFECT OF MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT ON THE SEX ROLE ORIENTATION OF ADOLESCENTS

THESIS

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MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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The sex-role orientation was determined for 352 high school seniors in Plano, Texas. Using maternal employment status as the independent variable, the students were divided according to full-time employed mothers or full-time homemaker mothers. Results indicated that adolescents of employed mothers had a more liberal sex-role orientation and attitude towards the division of household tasks than adolescents of homemaker mothers. When male and female scores were analyzed separately, the order from most liberal to least liberal was females of employed mothers, females of homemaker mothers, males of employed mothers, and males of homemaker mothers. The mean scores indicated a non-traditional attitude. The study also indicated that maternal happiness with employment did not affect male and female sex-role orientation.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF TABLES</th>
<th>iv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Chapter**

I. **INTRODUCTION**                              1
   Need for Study
   Statement of Problem
   Hypotheses
   Limitations
   Delimitations
   Assumptions
   Definitions
   Procedure
   Chapter Bibliography

II. **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**                      14
   Introduction
   Maternal Employment and the Effects on Adolescents, 1960-1972
   Adolescent Development
   Changing Attitudes Towards Sex Roles
   Maternal Employment and the Effects on Adolescents, 1973-1982
   Summary
   Chapter Bibliography

III. **METHODOLOGY**                             40
   Sample
   Sampling Technique
   Instrument I
   Instrument II
   Analysis of Data
   Demographic Information
   Administration
   Chapter Bibliography

IV. **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**         47
   Demographic Characteristics of Subjects
   Presentation and Analysis of Data
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Maternal Employment Status</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Living Arrangement of Subjects</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Maternal Educational Level</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Maternal Employment Positions</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Analysis of Sex-Role Orientation using Analysis of Variance</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Analysis of Sex-Role Orientation using T-Test</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Analysis of Sex-Role Orientation Scores (SRO) for Maternal Happiness using T-Test</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Analysis of Household Task Scores When Husband and Wife are Both Employed (Inventory I)</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. Analysis of Household Task Scores When Husband is Employed Wife Not Employed (Inventory II)</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The number of employed married women with children has increased significantly in the past 30 years. Fewer than one in five mothers was gainfully employed in 1950 (4, p. 102). By 1968, this number had increased to 38 percent (15). The Department of Labor (15) reported that one-half of the mothers in the United States were employed outside the home by 1978. Less than two years later the number of working mothers surpassed the 50 percent mark (16). Waite (18) projects that if society continues to accept the egalitarian attitude toward sex roles, that this percentage will be even higher by 1990.

During the 1960's many women sought employment outside the home so that their families could maintain the high standard of living that was becoming increasingly difficult due to inflation and rising prices (4, pp. 3, 9). The social change of the 1970's influenced by the women's movement has encouraged more women to seek employment outside the home. Many women now feel that they are happier and more fulfilled when practicing the dual-career pattern (1).

Social scientists have tried for years to ascertain the effects of employed mothers on their children. The studies
that were conducted before the 1960's were concerned with the broad question of "What happens to children whose mothers are employed?" (13). The results were inconclusive, but suggested that the employed mother was a problem, creating conditions of child neglect and disorganized family life (13).

During the 1960's, many researchers investigated the ways in which the parents influence the personality characteristics of their adolescent children. Adolescent children were reported to have personality problems that ranged from a lack of self-confidence and social skills to outward rebellion and protest leading to delinquency (10). Yet, Nelson (10) found that the employment of the mother had no ill effects on the male or female adolescents. Nelson (10) also reported that adolescent boys of full-time employed mothers were better adjusted than those whose mothers did not work outside the home.

During the 1970's, researchers focused on the effects of maternal employment on various adolescent attitudes. Attitudes such as educational/career aspirations, future life goals and sex-role ideology were examined (4). Tomeh (14) concluded that adolescent sons' attitudes towards women's employment were influenced positively if their own mother worked. This same study indicated that young women's attitudes toward female employment were more non-traditional
if their own mother worked. However, the female subjects' attitudes may have been influenced by factors other than the employed mother. Gold and Andres (6) hypothesized that both sons and daughters of employed mothers would have broader, less differentiated conceptions of sex roles. This hypothesis was not accepted for sixteen year old adolescents, but seemed to be true for younger adolescents. Maternal employment and a broad parental sex-role orientation seem to be correlated to a strong career-orientation in high school and college women (9, 12). Yet, Komarovsky (8) maintained that neither the employment nor the occupational status of the mother has any bearing on the career aspirations of college freshman women.

Studies of adolescent children and the effects of working mothers have shifted focus over the years. Presently, no evidence was found to indicate that maternal employment is psychologically harmful to children (4, p. 116, 7). Young adults whose mothers worked after World War II say that generally they think they learned to be more self-reliant. Many are still proud of their mother's achievements even though their memories still focus on a mother who was always tired and undervalued for her work at home and on the job (4, p. 117). Researchers are still not certain just what effects the employed mother has on her children.

Sex roles in our society are in flux; attitudes towards sex roles are changing rapidly. The present adolescent
population has not experienced the dramatic change in women's roles, yet they are affected by this change. The mothers of these children most likely entered the work force or chose not to be employed at some point in their children's lives. Research of the 1970's and 1980's that used maternal employment as the variable, focused on adolescent attitudes towards education and career goals. Very little research has been conducted to study the effects of maternal employment on the adolescent attitudes towards (1) the traditional sex-based division of labor and power in marriage, (2) the political status of women, (3) the dress and moral codes of behavior, or (4) the appropriate sex-role socialization of children.

Need for Study

Although numerous studies have been conducted to determine the effects of maternal employment on the adolescent, none have been found that focused on the sex-role orientation of adolescents, the interrelationship of the sex-role orientation and perceived maternal happiness with employment or the adolescents attitude towards the division of household tasks (5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 17). Many studies have focused on either early adolescents or college students attitudes towards sex-roles, but have failed to study the late adolescent period of 17 and 18 year olds (2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12). Several studies have been conducted to determine the relationship between maternal employment and the daughter's
attitudes towards sex-roles, but very few studies have included the son's attitudes towards sex-roles (2, 7, 8, 12). This study was conducted to focus on maternal employment and these aspects of the sex-role attitudes of 17 and 18 year old high school males and females.

Studies indicate that women will continue to seek gainful employment in more fields of work in our contemporary society than they have at any previous time (1, 2, 6, 7, 10, 12). It is imperative that family life educators have an understanding of how male and female adolescents view all areas of adult sex-roles, so that they will know how to approach this subject in classes and in counseling. It is important that adolescents understand that differences in sex-role orientation between males and females can be a result of their own family background. They may base their feelings about the appropriateness of sex-roles on the roles that were played out in their family of origin. It is important that adolescents understand that differences in sex-role orientation between males and females can cause conflict in the family, in the workplace and in the political arena. This study contributes to the body of literature that can help family life educators help adolescents to understand themselves.

Statement of Problem

The problem for this study was to determine if maternal employment has an effect on the sex-role orientation of male
and female high school seniors. The mother's happiness with employment as perceived by the respondent was also considered a factor that might influence the sex-role attitudes of males and females. Finally, male and female attitudes towards the division of household tasks was compared on the basis of maternal employment.

Hypotheses

1. The male and female seniors of full-time homemaker mothers will have a more traditional sex-role orientation than the male and female seniors with full-time employed mothers.

2. The female seniors of full-time homemaker mothers will have a more traditional sex-role orientation than those female seniors with full-time employed mothers.

3. The male seniors with full-time homemaker mothers will have a more traditional sex-role orientation than the male seniors of employed mothers.

4. The female seniors with full-time homemaker mothers will have a more traditional sex-role orientation than male seniors with full-time employed mothers.

5. The female seniors with full-time employed mothers will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than male seniors with full-time employed mothers.

6. The female seniors with full-time homemaker mothers will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than male seniors of full-time homemaker mothers.
7. The male and female seniors who report that their employed mothers are happy with their working situation will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than those male and female seniors who report that their mothers are not happy working.

8. The female seniors who report that their employed mothers are happy with their working situations will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than those female seniors who report that their mothers are not happy working.

9. The male seniors who report that their employed mothers are happy with their working situations will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than those male seniors who report that their mothers are not happy working.

10. The male and female seniors with full-time employed mothers will have a more egalitarian view in regard to the division of household tasks than will the male and female seniors of full-time homemaker mothers.

11. The female seniors with full-time employed mothers will have a more egalitarian view in regard to the division of household tasks than will the female seniors of full-time homemaker mothers.

12. The male seniors with full-time employed mothers will have a more egalitarian view in regard to the division of household tasks than will the male seniors of full-time homemaker mothers.
Limitations

1. The sex-role orientations and the attitudes towards household roles of the students may be influenced by factors other than the labor force participation of mothers.

2. The students may have personality traits that influence their reaction to their mothers' specific work role.

3. The results of this study can only be generalized to the adolescent population in Plano and other communities with similar populations.

4. Those students whose mothers have been working full-time for more than two years may exhibit a somewhat different sex-role orientation than those whose mothers have worked only the past two years.

5. The students whose mothers have worked only part-time or at a time period of the adolescent's life other than that specified for this study may have been influenced by the maternal employment.

Delimitations

1. The data were obtained from high school seniors in the Plano Independent School District. The ages of these students varied from 16-19.

2. The data were collected during the students regular class time. This factor could possibly influence the student's attitude towards completing the instrument.
3. The individual instructors may have influenced the students, if an unanticipated question about the instrument or a specific statement on the instrument occurred during the administration of the instrument.

4. The results may have been influenced because the students, rather than the mothers, will be asked to determine the mother's happiness with the present employment status.

Assumptions

1. The reading level of the instrument was understandable to the student participants.

2. The language and word usage of each statement on the instrument was understood by the student participants.

3. The school administration and English teachers whose classes were selected as a part of the sample were cooperative in the administration of the instrument.

4. The topic of this research project is relevant and meaningful to the study of human development and family studies.

5. The students taking the instrument reported all demographic information and each question with absolute honesty.

6. The students chose to complete the instrument, even though it was offered on a voluntary basis.
7. The students in the sample had mothers who were either full-time homemakers or full-time employees.

Definitions

1. Senior - Student enrolled in the 12th grade at Plano Senior High School or Plano East Senior High School.

2. Senior High School - A campus that serves only junior and senior students.

3. Full-time Homemaker Mother - A mother who has not been employed, either part-time or full-time, in a paying job for the past two years.

4. Full-time Employed Mother - A mother who is in paid employment a minimum of 35 hours weekly, and who has been employed continuously for the past two years.

5. Part-time Employed Mother - A mother who has been engaged in paid employment for less than 35 hours weekly for the past two years.

Procedure

This study was administered to a randomly selected sample of high school seniors at Plano Senior High School and Plano East Senior High School in the fall semester of the 1982 school year. Demographic information pertaining to the work history of the mother was collected. The students completed an instrument designed to measure their general sex-role orientation and the perception of sex-appropriate distribution of household work. The data were analyzed by
dividing the adolescents according to the work history of the mother. The study attempted to determine if there was a difference in sex-role orientation between adolescents whose mothers are presently employed and those whose mothers do not work outside the home.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The effects of maternal employment on children have been a research topic of considerable interest in the United States since the end of World War II. During World War II, many mothers began to work in factories while their children were cared for in government supported day care centers. While this day care was extremely important during the war time, after the war the government became quite concerned about the fact that it might appear as though maternal employment was being sanctioned. Immediately following World War II, the funds for the day care centers were repealed (5). At about this same time, studies concerning the effects of maternal employment on children were begun (7, p. 119). The social scientists hypothesized that the working mother would have a negative impact on her children. School grades, social and personality adjustment, and mental attitude were among the factors that were measured in studies with employed mothers pitted against non-employed mothers. Nye and Hoffman (30) published the inconclusive results of these studies in 1963, suggesting that perhaps it was not the employment alone that caused problems for the children but a set of conditions that surrounded and accompanied the mother's employment (6, 18). Researchers were
encouraged to pay greater attention to variables such as sex and age of the child, and socioeconomic status of the family, that would make the effects of maternal employment more clear (14, 18, 38).

Maternal Employment and the Effects on Adolescents 1960 Through 1972

The research of the 1960's clearly indicated methodological improvements. Research of this time period investigated the conditions that accompanied maternal employment, differentiating between sexes and ages of the children and the social class of the parents. Individual traits of the children were examined so that the effects of the employed mother on her children might be more clear (19). The dependent variables that were studied during this time period were the adolescents' general mental health and social adjustment, the social attitudes and values, cognitive abilities, achievement motivation and intellectual performance (19).

Social Adjustment

Etaugh (14) reviewed studies and found no relationship between female juvenile delinquency and maternal employment. Nelson (29) compared the personality adjustment of adolescents. The findings of this study revealed that the majority of females with non-working mothers had better social adjustment scores than females with mothers who worked full
time or part-time. Two studies reported by Etaugh (14) indicated that females with working mothers had fewer total problems and were better adjusted than those with middle-class homemaker mothers, although females with lower-class employed mothers reported more problems.

Male adolescents of full-time employed mothers were reported to be better socially adjusted than the sons of non-working mothers, as evidenced by the scores on the Minnesota Counseling Inventory (29). Lower-class males were observed to be more rebellious and less active when the mothers worked full-time than were sons of lower-class, part-time working mothers and middle-class sons of part or full-time employed mothers (14).

The research of the effects of maternal employment on personality and social adjustment of adolescents was inconclusive. However, the findings from several studies did indicate that there were some differences in the effects of maternal employment between adolescents of lower-class and middle-class mothers.

Cognitive and Intellectual Performance

Hoffman (19) discussed one study that was conducted to measure the effect of maternal employment on IQ levels in adolescent males and females. The findings indicated that maternal employment was related to high IQ levels in girls and low IQ levels in the boys from upper-middle class families. This longitudinal study used the mother's
employment status when the child was 15 as the independent variable. Hoffman reported that the daughters of working mothers had a higher IQ at age 6 and 15 than the daughters of non-employed mothers at the same age. It was not determined whether the mother was working when the child was six years old. The author interpreted these findings for the girls as reflecting an association between non-traditional femininity and higher IQs in girls. The opposite relationship for boys was found, but no interpretation for these results was offered.

At the high school level of academic performance, most studies showed no difference in the school performance of adolescents of employed and non-employed mothers. Some data indicated that sons of professionally employed mothers had lower school grades than the sons of non-employed mothers. In the "skilled labor" group of employed mothers, the sons had higher grades than those of mothers not working outside the home (14, 19).

An estimated eleven studies of educational and career aspiration were done during this time period (14). Nine of these studies were done with all female samples and most yielded the consistent finding that maternal employment is associated with higher career aspirations for daughters. Two relevant studies on this topic were completed late in this time period, having 1971 and 1972 publishing dates (2, 36).
Almquist and Angrist (2) did a longitudinal study at a small co-educational private college. These researchers gave annual interviews and questionnaires to 110 women through the four years of college. The purpose of the study was to determine factors that lead to career salience of college women. Although other areas were analyzed, such as social life, marriage plans and role models, the results pertaining to familial influence were most meaningful to this study. It was found that the mothers of career-salient women had more education and their fathers had higher status occupations than those women who were not career oriented. A strong correlation was also found between the career salient young women and maternal employment during the subjects college years. The authors reported that in the interviews, students mentioned their mother's employment spontaneously and often discussed it at length. The women with employed mothers had a favorable attitude toward combining marriage and career.

Tangri (36) studied 200 university women who were classified as to the occupation that had been selected for adulthood. The subjects were classified as Role Innovators if they chose an occupation with fewer than 30 percent women, Moderates if they chose a field that included 30-50 percent women, and Traditionals if they were entering a field of work that included over 50 percent women. Tangri (36) reported that the mother's present employment was
positively related to the daughter's work orientation and motivation. In this sample, approximately 36 percent of the mothers had at least a bachelors degree. It was reported that the women in this study were more likely to take the mother as a role model if she had at least a bachelor's degree. The daughters of higher educated non-working mothers viewed their mothers as acceptable role models, although most of them held a more traditional view of the division of household labor. Tangri concluded that the higher the maternal educational level and job status, the more she serves as a role model for the daughter.

Etaugh (14) reported that the daughter's educational aspirations were more affected by maternal employment than the son's educational goals. However, there was some evidence that the mother's employment status is positively related to the son's upward occupational striving in white-collar families (14). The results of Banducci's (3) 1967 study revealed a positive association between maternal employment and plans for college for the sons of laborers and skilled workers. The sons of professional working mothers were less likely to expect to go to college and had lower grades than other groups. Hoffman (19) suggested that the mothers might have been employed in a family business or the family was simply not education oriented. However, these variables were not examined in the original study.
Social Attitudes

Sex-role perceptions and ideology of adolescents compose the majority of studies on social attitudes. Vogel and associates (38) reported that college sons and daughters of working mothers were more androgynous in their conception of sex roles. The students answered questions about the status and work history of their mothers and completed a Likert type scale that asked them to rate 122 short phrases about typically masculine and feminine personality traits. There were 24 men and 24 women whose mothers had never been employed. Another 35 men and 38 women had mothers who were currently employed. The length of the employment was not determined. The mothers were in jobs that ranged from professional to unskilled positions. The mother's age and education and the fathers' education and occupational level were uniform throughout the sample. The authors concluded that children of working mothers felt freer than their parents to engage in overlapping role behaviors and to achieve a greater degree of sex-role equality in their own lives (38).

A study by Baruch (4) involved asking college women to read a number of journal articles and relate the quality of the article and the author. Half of the articles were given feminine author names and half were named to be written by a male. Baruch found that the daughters of employed women did not downgrade the articles attributed to the female
authors as much as the daughters of non-employed mothers. Baruch also administered to the students, a scale that measured attitudes towards careers for women. Maternal employment was not an influence upon the college women's attitudes toward the dual role pattern. Thus, if a mother had successfully integrated the mother-worker roles then the daughter tended to rate high on the competence test and have a positive view of the dual role. The daughter evaluated women's competence highly but was unfavorable to the dual role pattern if her mother had worked and experienced negative consequences because of her career.

Smith (34) addressed adolescent attitudes in regard to the employment status of the mother. The study conducted in 1968, concluded that daughters of working mothers expressed more favorable attitudes toward combining marriage, motherhood and a career and they were more accepting of their mothers as a model for a "homemaker." Socioeconomic status was not a significant factor in this study. Race was a significant factor, with non-white girls expressing a more favorable attitude than white girls toward the dual role pattern.

Meier (26) also indicated a positive association between the number of years the mother was employed and egalitarian attitudes towards sex roles in a study of 219 college students. The higher status jobs of mothers also related to more egalitarian attitudes for the daughters,
but the son's attitudes were unrelated to prestige of the mother's occupation.

Etaugh (14) reviewed several studies that were concerned with the effects of maternal employment on adolescent perceptions of sex-roles. One study of male and female college students whose mothers either were currently employed or whose mothers had never worked, supplied evidence that these students were influenced by maternal employment (14). The female students' perceptions of sex-roles were more influenced by a working mother than were male students. However, both sons and daughters of employed mothers perceived themselves as having more of the traits that were considered socially desirable for the opposite sex. For example, men of working mothers considered themselves to be more warm and women considered themselves more competent.

Griggs (17) study of 628 high school seniors showed a negative relationship between maternal employment and contemporary sex-role ideology. The study indicated that children whose mothers work outside the home displayed less favorable attitudes towards mothers and wives working than did children whose mothers were not employed.

Hoffman (19) summarized the studies that pertain to adolescent views of social attitudes. The studies of this time period indicated that maternal employment was
associated with less traditional sex role concepts. Many studies revealed more approval of maternal employment and a higher evaluation of female competence.

Adolescent Development

Adolescence is accorded a position of particular importance in Eriksonian theory because this developmental period is considered to be a particularly decisive time for the formation of identity (15, p. 194). During this time, youth examine all of the possibilities and alternatives for an adult life before settling into an adult role. This developmental task includes the formation of appropriate sex roles for an adult life (15, p. 200).

Rigid sex typing frequently occurs among adolescents (28). Minnigerode and Lee (28) revealed that, when asked to rate male and female differences across the life span, adolescent and young adult subjects rated roles as being the most divergent during adolescence and young adulthood. This finding is consistent with Erikson's statement that "sexual polarization" occurs among adolescents as an attempt is made to define appropriate sex roles (15, p. 200).

Alternatives for adult living, including marriage, are often discussed and considered during late adolescence (20). Keith and Brubaker (10, 20) report that adolescents project a division of household tasks that is different from the traditional male-female division of work, although the tasks
of yard and car maintenance were still assigned to the husband the laundry was projected as the wife's responsibility in the adolescent's family of procreation. This study also revealed that a high percentage of adolescents thought that washing dishes, shopping, planning social events and earning money were household tasks that should be shared (20).

Changes in the thought processes also occur during adolescence. Preadolescents seem to view men's and women's roles from a personal point of view that is based on their own family experience (12). This rationale is consistent with Piaget's study of cognitive development. During this stage of concrete operations the child's egocentric point of view still dominates the thought process (15, p. 107).

Piagetian theorists state that at around age 12 the adolescent enters the final stage of cognitive development termed formal operations (27). During this stage of development, adolescents begin to think more in the abstract and can draw from more than their own family background. Adolescent opinions may be influenced by their peers, media and school learning (13). Still the early family years greatly influence individuals and this influence will be incorporated into the adolescent's opinions and attitudes (13, 27). Some evidence suggests that only 50 percent of the adult population in the United States ever completely reaches the formal operations stage (27). However, evidence
of the cognitive developmental difference between preadolescents and adolescents was found in one study of equal groups of boys and girls from intact families (12). Dellas (12) and associates reported that, on the question of "Should women with children work?", preadolescent children with working mothers were more likely to say "yes" (78.2 percent), while those with non-working mothers were more likely to say "no" (56.9 percent). Children with non-working mothers were more likely to support the notion that mothers should be home with their children. No significant difference was found between the adolescent children of employed and non-employed mothers. The authors did control for the length of time of maternal employment prior to the study, but no attempt was made to measure outside influence on the subjects. Therefore, the conclusion was made that the effects of maternal employment on adolescents may be more subtle and require a data collection method different than the interview that was used for this study.

Adolescence is characterized by the "conquest of thought . . . and the realization of identity" (27, p. 243). It is a time when the consideration of adult sex roles is particularly salient and the influence of the family is critical in the formation of one's ideas about the order of a larger society (15, p. 201, 27).
Changing Attitudes Towards Sex Roles

Since 1964, considerable progress has been made toward developing more egalitarian sex-role definitions (25). Mason's (25) analysis of five surveys made during this period indicated that women's attitudes concerning their home situation were becoming more related to their attitudes concerning rights in the labor market. Included in this attitude shift is the feeling of the general population that maternal employment is not harmful to children.

In a study of Ivy League college men, Komarovsky (21) concluded that these young men have ambivalent feelings towards employed wives. One young man stated that he would not want to marry a woman whose only goal was to become a housewife. Evidence demonstrates that this finding was true for the majority of the men in the study, yet this traditional pattern was only modified by the total acceptance of a woman being employed when her children are grown. Parelius (31) suggested that college men are conservative on a 50-50 split of household work, but show more willingness to help with the housework. The study on adolescent perceptions of division of labor in the household shows an increasingly more egalitarian view among the young adult population (20).

Although very few college women think that a woman's most important role is that of wife and mother, there is
little willingness to sacrifice marriage and motherhood for a career (31). Cook, et al., (11) reported more acceptance of smaller families and childless marriages among younger college women in 1979 compared to a similar survey taken in 1972.

Prior to 1972, very few studies investigated the relationship between maternal employment and adolescent sex-role orientation (14, 19). The majority of studies conducted since this time have investigated the relationship between maternal employment and adolescent sex-role orientations (6, 9, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 32, 34, 36, 38, 41). These studies are discussed in the following section.

Maternal Employment and the Effects on Adolescents 1973 Through 1982

Male Subjects

Gold and Andres (16) hypothesized that the sons of employed mothers would have broader, less differentiated conceptions of sex roles. The Lambert Sex Role Differentiation Scale was included in the battery of tests that was administered to the sons and daughters of middle-class, intact families. The hypothesis was supported; the sons of working mothers were reported to have broader concepts of sex-roles, but the results were not as significant as those for younger children.

The purpose of the Lueptow (23) study was to determine the parental influence on the sex-role orientation of high
school seniors by examining the parental influence on post high school plans. Paternal or maternal influence was scored if the student named the father or the mother as one of three persons having the most influence on their post high school plans. Mother was named as the most influential person by 10 percent of the males. The result demonstrated a decrease in maternal influence from a survey done in 1964, yet the employed mother had an increased influence on the son's plans. It was, simply, the employment of the mother and not the occupational status or the educational level of the mother that was the significant factor in this study. This result was explained in terms of Parsonian power structure; her work brings family income and in this way the mother contributes to the support of her family, thus gaining more influence (23).

Zuckerman's (41) study of university men and women revealed no correlation between the mother's employment status and the son's sex-role orientation. The sample for this study was more heterogeneous than for some studies, yet 55 percent of the subjects reported that their mothers were currently employed. The author concluded that the mother's work history might be a more effective predictor of sex-role orientations.

When the mother's occupation and work experience is known, Tomeh (37) pointed to evidence that the son's
sex-role attitudes are influenced. The study examined four aspects of sex-role orientation: a) personality disposition, b) self-actualization, c) attitudes towards employment of married women, d) institutionalized equality—where the husband's and wife's working interests are of the same importance. Overall, the sex-role orientation of the sons of employed mothers was influenced more in every category than the sons of non-employed mothers. The daughters in this study tended to have the broadest sex-role orientation regardless of maternal employment status and history.

Female Subjects

Career orientations—A 1980 study by Haber (18) was conducted to determine the family and career plans of fifty college female seniors. Information pertaining to the mother's work history and the attitude towards working was collected. Based on the questionnaire and an interview, the young women were placed in four groups. These groups were: a) innovative occupation—career oriented, b) innovative occupation—non-career oriented, c) traditional occupation—career oriented and d) traditional occupation—non-career oriented. The attitudes and beliefs of all the subjects were consistent with the beliefs they reported for their parents. The major finding of this study was that parental encouragement was a critical factor in determining the
daughter's career choice and career commitment. Maternal employment was not directly related, although it was suggested that the employed mother might generate a greater number of choices and attitudes that would be passed to the daughter.

Komarovsky (21) focused on the correlates of female career salience in a study of 232 college freshman women. The findings suggested that neither the occupational status nor the employment history of the mother had any bearing on the daughter's career salience. The author suggested that the homogeneity of the sample was responsible for the zero correlation (21). The author stressed that the scale used to measure career salience failed to register qualitative differences. Perhaps a better sampling method would have yielded more differentiated results (21). The author suggested that using the mothers' attitude as a variable would also strengthen the study (21).

In Lueptow's study (23), 21 percent of the high school senior females reported that their mother was the most influential person on their post high school plans. The highest level of maternal influence was seen on daughters whose mothers had more education than the fathers. More education was interpreted by the author to mean more competence in decision-making.

Two recent studies (32, 41) have revealed a relationship between maternal employment and daughter's educational
and career goals. The first of these two studies, conducted by Ridgeway (32) attempted to determine the differences between mother-identified and father-identified adolescent (college) women. Mother-identified subjects define career interests as more appropriately feminine than do most people. Father-identified females easily relate to some aspects of the male work role. The author reported that for the mother-identified women, the higher the career orientation level, the more extensive was the maternal work history. The author also concluded that mother-identified career women had more favorable attitudes towards their own achievement efforts and more self-confidence. The father-identified career women had the advantage of feeling the approval of male colleagues (32). In the second of these two studies, Zuckerman (41) hypothesized that mothers non-traditional careers predict children's non-traditional responses on a sex-role orientation questionnaire. Findings indicated a relationship between mother's and daughter's non-traditional career choices.

Sex-role orientations - Brogan and Kutner (9) found that female undergraduates whose mothers had been employed one or more of the subjects school years were more non-traditional in sex-role orientation than those whose mothers had not worked or who had worked less than one year. The
difference was not statistically significant. A significant relationship between the mother's educational level and a more non-traditional sex-role orientation was reported. The higher the educational level of the mother, the more non-traditional was the mother's attitude. This attitude was transmitted to the daughters. More evidence to support this relationship was found in an attitudinal study of seventy-four pairs of mothers and daughters (33). The results indicated that the maternal attitudes were a most important predictor of the daughters' attitudes. College educated mothers were more in agreement with their daughters than mothers with no college education. This finding was explained in terms of the mother's position as a role model to her daughter, since the two did not necessarily have liberal views on sex-roles. The authors also suggested that college educated mothers might communicate with their daughters more and on a level that would facilitate the transmission of attitudes towards sex-roles. The authors suggested that because of the sample size and homogeneity of the sample that the results be treated as tentative and more research to carried out to validate the findings (33).

Bernard (6) reports on research at the University of Michigan on sex-role transcendence. Sex-role transcendence is similar to androgyny in that it means that individual behavior and emotional choice is based on the full range of
possible human characteristics. The university personnel studied two groups, named the Pioneers and Traditionalists. The Pioneer women were ones who did not conform to feminine behavior on five survey items. They had argued with a teacher, wanted administrative responsibility, wanted to be an authority in their field, wanted not to be obligated to anyone and believed large families should be discouraged. The Traditionals were chosen because they gave evidence of conforming to traditional sex-stereotyped role conceptions. They wanted to marry within five years, wanted to raise a family and believed that a woman's place is in the home. There were almost ten times as many women in the Traditionals as in the Pioneer group. About 60 percent of the Traditionals had homemaker mothers. Forty-seven percent of the Pioneers had homemaker mothers. There was no difference in the occupational level of the Pioneers' mothers. Given the percentages of employed mothers (40 percent of the Traditionals' mothers vs. 53 percent of the Pioneers' mothers), it is shown that the employment status of the mother somewhat influenced the daughter's sex-role orientation (6).

The studies related to the effects of maternal employment that have been carried out over the past ten year period have indicated conflicting results. Three of the ten studies reviewed above indicated a relationship between maternal employment and the sons' and daughters' sex-role
orientations. Evidence exists that, "the career salience of college women is quite probably a direct manifestation of flexible sex-role ideology. That such career salience is positively associated with whether a woman's mother had worked has proven to be critical information" (8, p. 251). Two of the above studies (32, 41) directly link the mothers employment status to the daughters' non-traditional career orientation. Haber (18) indicated that the mothers' attitude towards employment had a positive effect on daughters' plans for working outside the home. Lueptow (23) stated that when the mothers' educational level was higher the daughters' sex-role orientation was more non-traditional.

Summary

The research concerned with the effects of maternal employment on children has shifted focus and purpose over the last three decades. No longer are researchers concerned that maternal employment might have a harmful effect on children, as was the concern during the early 1950's (25). Research has not compared the personality characteristics and intellectual skills of the children of employed and non-employed mothers during this past decade. The most recently asked questions have been: "What are the effects of maternal employment on adolescent career plans and goals?" "What are the effects of maternal employment on the adolescent's sex-role orientation?" Variables such as the mother's educational
level and attitude towards employment have been controlled. An effort has been made by researchers to more closely define the subjects. While the results are inconclusive at this point, the questions asked by contemporary researchers are valid in terms of rapidly changing views toward sex roles (25, 31).
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample for this study was obtained by administering the instrument to randomly selected groups of 515 senior students in attendance at Plano Senior High School and Plano East Senior High School in Plano, Texas. The 352 students who qualified for the study were divided into two groups. Group I were those students who indicated full-time employment of their mothers and Group II were those students who indicated that their mothers were full-time homemakers. Many mothers didn't fit into either of these categories so that these students were not included in the study.

Sampling Technique

Approximately one-third of the total senior population in Plano Independent School District was randomly selected to participate in this study. To select the subjects, all names of the English teachers and their class periods were written on pieces of paper and placed in a box. Twenty names were drawn with each name being replaced after each draw. The average class size was approximately thirty students. The instruments were administered to the students of
selected teachers during the class period that corresponded to the number on the piece of paper.

Instrument I

The first instrument used was the Sex-Role Orientation Scale (SRO) developed by Brogan and Kutner (1) in 1974-75. The scale was developed to update existing scales meant to measure sex-role orientations. It was first administered to college freshmen women, approximately the same age as the subjects of the present study. The SRO scale consists of thirty-six Likert type attitude statements that reflect male and female options in the following areas of sex-roles:

1. Attitudes toward the traditional sex-based division of labor in marriage: the notion that a wife's place is in the home while the husband's place is in the outside world of work;

2. Attitudes toward the traditional sex-based power structure: the notion that men should be in positions of authority over women in the work world and in the family;

3. Attitudes toward traditional and non-traditional employment of women and men;

4. Attitudes toward traditional and non-traditional political status of women;

5. Attitudes toward appropriate sex-role socialization of male and female children;

6. Attitudes toward existing stereotypes of appropriate sex-role behavior not covered by above areas (standards of dress, morals) (1).

Reliability and Validity

Brogan and Kutner (1) tested the reliability by the split-half method, using alternate questions to construct
the two halves. The split-half reliability coefficient is .95.

Brogan and Kutner (1) tested internal validity by constructing two questions that were closely related (#10 and #15) and checking the consistency of the subjects responses. The construct validity was checked by examining several relationships for which support has been found by previous researchers on factors related to sex-role orientations (1). These factors were sex and educational status, age, religious affiliation and child-rearing ideology of the subjects. Predicted relationships were found between SRO scores and all of the above measured factors (1).

**Scoring of the Scale**

The subjects answered each item on the scale selecting from the following responses: strongly agree, moderately agree, slightly agree, disagree slightly, moderately disagree, strongly disagree. The responses were coded using numbers one through six. The non-traditional questions, indicated by an asterisk, were scored from 1 point for a strongly disagree response to 6 points for a strongly agree response. The traditional questions were scored in the opposite direction with strongly agree as 1 point and strongly disagree as 6 points. The students' total number score was calculated and fell in a range between 36, indicating the most traditional response, and 216, indicating the most non-traditional response.
Instrument II

The second instrument to be used for this study was designed to measure adolescent perceptions of sex-appropriate distribution of household work. The students were asked to mark on the questionnaire who should have the major responsibility for household tasks in two age and employment situations:

1. an employed couple in their twenties;

2. a couple in their twenties in which the wife stays at home and the husband is employed;

The student answered that either the husband or wife should have the major responsibility or that the responsibility should be equal (3).

Reliability and Validity

This instrument was assessed to have face validity by a panel of experts. Nine home economists completed the questionnaire. All marked the same responses, indicating which jobs were traditionally male and traditionally female. It has been used in studies conducted with adolescents and retired adults, as well as with a group of Wisconsin housewives. The results of the studies with adolescents and retired persons have been published by Keith and Brubaker (2, 3). The results of the studies with retired persons are included in a book released by Sage Publishing Company in the Fall of 1982. The above information was obtained from Brubaker and is in the letter found in the appendix.
Scoring of the Questionnaire

Each of the ten items on the questionnaire was answered by selecting from the following responses: Husband (1), Wife (2), or Equal Responsibility (3). The score could range from 17 to 30. A score of thirty indicates the most non-traditional response while a score of 17 indicates the most traditional response.

Analysis of Data

An analysis of variance and a t-test were used to determine differences in the scores of the subjects, on both instruments.

Demographic Information

The demographic information obtained from each subject included the living arrangement of the student, the educational level of the mother, the employment history of the subject's mother and the type of job held by the subject's mother. The subjects of the employed mothers were asked to report their perception of the mother's happiness with her job. All subjects were asked to report their sex, which senior high school they attended, and whether or not they were enrolled in the family living course. A copy of the demographic information that was obtained from each student is included with a copy of the instruments in the appendix.
Administration

After receiving permission to administer the instruments, from respective curriculum directors, the instrument was administered by the regular classroom teachers during the selected classroom period. All students in each class participated. The classroom teacher read the purpose of the instrument and the instructions aloud to promote accuracy and consistency. The students completed the questionnaire in 30 minutes. The teachers reported that the questionnaire stimulated a lively discussion.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to investigate adolescents' attitudes towards adult sex roles and to determine if a difference existed between the sex role attitudes of male and female senior high school students using maternal employment status as the independent variable. The general hypothesis was that adolescents of employed mothers would have a more liberal attitude towards adult sex roles than would adolescents of homemaker mothers. It was hypothesized that adolescent females would generally have a more liberal attitude towards sex roles than adolescent males regardless of the maternal employment status. There was also an effort made to determine if the maternal attitude towards employment affected the adolescent child's sex-role orientation.

The instrument used to measure adolescent sex role attitudes consisted of three parts. Demographic information was collected in Part I. General attitudes were measured by the Sex Role Orientation Scale developed by Brogan and Kutner (1) in 1975. Attitudes towards household tasks were measured using a scale developed by Keith and Brubaker (2) that measured the subjects' responses to ten household tasks based on who should perform each task in the home. The
questionnaire was administered during the first month of the fall semester of the 1982-83 school year to 515 senior students, randomly selected via classes from the two senior high schools in Plano, Texas. The data were compiled from these questionnaires and 352 subjects qualified for the study because their mother was either full-time employed or full-time homemaker. Twenty-eight percent of the sample was collected from Plano East Senior High School, while 72 percent of the sample attended Plano Senior High School. These percentages are proportional to the total population of the respective schools. The sample was composed of 192 (54.5%) male and 160 (45.5%) female students.

Demographic Characteristics of Subjects

An analysis of the employment status of the students' mothers revealed 24 percent were homemaker mothers. The sons and daughters reported that these mothers had not been employed outside the home for the past two years. Forty-five percent of the mothers were reported to be full-time employed mothers. Students who reported that their mothers worked when the children were younger than tenth grade, who presently work part-time or who have worked at intermittent times during the past two years were not included in the study. This group (149) comprised approximately 30 percent of the total sample. However, when the part-time employed mothers and full-time employed mothers who have been employed for less than two years are considered (125) approximately 70 percent are
currently employed. The maternal employment status of the subject's mothers in this study is presented in Table I.

**TABLE I**

MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker for at least 2 years</td>
<td>122&gt;</td>
<td>23.7&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= 352</td>
<td>= 68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time employed for at least 2 years</td>
<td>230&gt;</td>
<td>44.7&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents not included in study</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the students (65.1%) reported an intact family living arrangement. Approximately 17.6 percent presently live in a blended family. Approximately 3 percent of the students reported living with only the mother. Over 11 percent of the students reported some other type of living arrangement. No students reported living with only their father. In Table II the living arrangement of the subjects for this study is presented.

An analysis of the educational level of the subjects' mothers revealed that the majority (62.2%) had either a high school diploma or some college education. A college degree was reported for 20.5 percent of the subjects' mothers, while a total of 8.5 percent reported post-graduate work or
TABLE II
LIVING ARRANGEMENT OF SUBJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living Arrangement</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother, father and siblings</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One step-parent, one parent and siblings (Blended family)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother only</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other living arrangement</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a graduate degree as the mother's highest level of education. Only 6 percent of the respondents reported their mother's educational level less than high school. There was no difference in the maternal educational level of male and female students. The educational levels of subjects' mothers in this study are presented in Table III.

The students of employed mothers were asked to report the type of career or job held by their mothers. An analysis of this data indicated that 23.5 percent were employed as secretaries and 16.5 percent held professional business positions. Retail sales jobs were held by 8.7 percent, 10 percent were teachers and 6.5 percent were nurses. Jobs
TABLE III
MATERNAL EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Level of Completed Education</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Degree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Graduate Courses</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters Degree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

such as health service, food service, and factory workers, were held by 7.4 percent of mothers. Many students did not report their mothers employment position, which suggests that more categories of jobs should have been offered on the questionnaire. The employment positions of the subjects' mothers in this study are presented in Table IV.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

The statistical techniques used for analysis were a two-way analyses of variance using the ANOVA program and the t-test. Overall significance was accepted at the .05 level.
### TABLE VI
MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT POSITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Sales</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Service</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>230</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypotheses one through six investigated the effect of maternal employment status on the general sex-role orientation of the adolescent. The sex-role orientation of the subjects was determined through the administration of the Sex-Role Orientation Scale developed by Brogan and Kutner in 1975 (1). This thirty-six question Likert scale measured six dimensions of the sex-role orientation. A very liberal sex-role orientation was indicated as the score approached 216. Thirty-six indicated the most traditional sex-role
orientation. The statistical data for the sex-role inventory, are presented in Table V and Table VI by groups and employment status of mothers.

**TABLE V**

**ANALYSIS OF SEX-ROLE ORIENTATION (SRO) USING ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number In Group</th>
<th>Degrees Freedom</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>F Score</th>
<th>Significance Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males and females of employed mothers</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>151.73</td>
<td>18.075</td>
<td>.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males and females of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>133.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 1 was: The male and female seniors of full-time homemaker mothers will have a more traditional sex-role orientation than the male and female seniors with full-time employed mothers.

A two-way analyses of variance was used to test this hypothesis for both main effects and interaction effects. The interaction effects determined no significant difference. Using the main effects figures, a highly significant difference at a level less than .0001 existed between males and females whose mothers are employed and males and females
who have full-time homemaker mothers, for the sex-role orientation scale. The mean score of 133.88 for the males and females of homemaker mothers is significantly lower than the 151.73 mean score of the males and females of full-time employed mothers. According to the statistical results, there was a highly significant difference between the scores; Hypothesis 1 was retained.

Hypothesis 2 was: The female seniors of full-time homemaker mothers will have a more traditional sex-role orientation than those female seniors with full-time employed mothers.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 were analyzed using a t-test because clearer results would be obtained with this test. A highly significant difference at the .001 level existed between the females of full-time homemaker mothers and female seniors of full-time employed mothers for the SRO score. As can be seen in Table VI, the mean score for the females of homemaker mothers was 148.53 while the mean score for females of employed mothers was 172. According to the statistical results, a significant difference existed between the scores; therefore, Hypothesis 2 was retained.

Hypothesis 3 was: The male seniors with full-time homemaker mothers will have a more traditional sex-role orientation than those male seniors with full-time employed mothers.
Again, using the t-test, a significant difference existed at the .04 level between the males of homemaker mothers and males of employed mothers. As can be seen in Table VI, the scores of 123.35 and 133.47 respectively, indicated a more traditional sex-role orientation for the males of homemaker mothers than for males of employed mothers. According to the statistical results, a significant difference existed between the scores; Hypothesis 3 was retained.

**TABLE VI**

ANALYSIS OF SEX-ROLE ORIENTATION USING T-TEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number in Group</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females of employed mothers</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>172.00</td>
<td>-3.54</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>148.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males of employed mothers</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>133.47</td>
<td>-2.02</td>
<td>.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>123.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 4 was: The female seniors with full-time homemaker mothers will have a less traditional sex-role
orientation than male seniors with full-time employed mothers.

An analysis of variance revealed no significant difference using the interaction effects. When using the main effects, a highly significant difference of less than .0001 existed between the sex-role orientations of females of fulltime homemaker mothers and males of full-time employed mothers. The mean score of 148.5 for the females of full-time homemakers was significantly higher than the mean score of 133.47 for males of employed mothers. According to the statistical results, a highly significant difference existed between the scores of females of homemaker mothers and males of employed mothers; Hypothesis 4 was retained.

Hypothesis 5 was: The female seniors with full-time employed mothers will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than male seniors with full-time employed mothers.

Again, the analyses of variance determined no statistical significance when using the interaction effects but the main effects determined a highly significant difference at a level of less than .0001 to exist between the females and males of employed mothers. As reported above, the mean score for females of full-time employed mothers was 172 and for males of employed mothers, the mean score was 133.47. According to the statistical results, a significant difference existed between the females with full-time employed mothers and males with full-time employed mothers; Hypothesis 5 was retained.
Hypothesis 6 was: The female seniors with full-time homemaker mothers will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than male seniors of full-time homemaker mothers.

This hypothesis compared the sex-role orientation of the males and females of full-time homemaker mothers. An analyses of variance revealed no significant difference using the interaction effects. A significant difference of less than .0001 existed between these two groups when the main effect was used. The mean score for the females of full-time homemaker mothers was 148.5 and the mean score for the males of full-time homemaker mothers was 123.3. The difference in these scores was determined to be statistically significant; Hypothesis 6 was retained.

Hypotheses seven, eight and nine investigated the effect of the mothers' attitude towards employment on the sex-role orientation of male and female adolescents. Only the sons and daughters of employed mothers were analyzed for these hypotheses. About 95 percent of males and females reported their mother was happy working or enjoyed her job but worked because she needs the money. The statistics for the groups of subjects who reported their mothers to be happy and unhappy with their employment status are reported in Table VII.
### TABLE VII

**ANALYSIS OF SEX-ROLE ORIENTATION SCORES (SRO)**

**FOR MATERNAL HAPPINESS USING T-TEST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number in Group</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males and females of happy employed mothers</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>155.69</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males and females of unhappy employed mothers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>149.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females with happy employed mothers</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>172.54</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females with unhappy employed mothers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>158.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males with happy employed mothers</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>138.48</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males with unhappy employed mothers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>141.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number</td>
<td>230</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 7 was: The male and female seniors who report that their employed mothers are happy with their
working situation will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than those male and female seniors who report that their mother is not happy working.

Using a t-test for the statistical analysis, no significant difference existed between the male and female adolescents of happy and unhappy employed mothers. The sex-role orientation mean score for the males and females of happy employed mothers was 155.69 and the mean score for the males and females of unhappy employed mothers was 149.90. It is important to realize that regardless of the reasons why the mother is working, 95 percent of the males and females reported that their mother was happy working. The scores for the total group of males and females of employed mothers (151.73) is close to the scores for both groups of happy and unhappy employed mothers. The fact that their mothers are perceived as happy or unhappy with employment outside the home does not seem to have any bearing on the sex-role attitudes of these adolescent males and females. These scores indicated no statistical significant difference; Hypothesis 7 was not retained.

Hypothesis 8 was: The female seniors who report that their employed mothers are happy with their working situations will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than those female seniors who report that their mothers are not happy working.
Although the scores approached a significant level of difference, no significant difference existed between the females who report their mothers to be happy working and the females who report their mothers to be unhappy working. The mean score for the group of adolescent females reporting happy mothers was 172.54 while the mean score for the group of adolescent females reporting unhappy mothers was 158.00. The score for the total group of females with employed mothers was 172, which is very close to the score for the females of happy working mothers. This is logical since 95 percent reported their mothers to be happy working. When the score for females of unhappy working mothers (158.00) was compared to the score for females of homemaker mothers (148.33), there was still some difference between the groups. This indicates that even when the mother is employed but not happy working outside the home, her daughter may still have a broader definition of sex roles than the daughter of a homemaker mother. According to the statistical results, there was no significant difference between the scores for the groups of female adolescents with happy and unhappy employed mothers; Hypothesis 8 was not retained.

Hypothesis 9 was: The male seniors who report that their employed mothers are happy with their working situations will have a less traditional sex-role orientation than those male seniors who report that their mothers are not happy working.
The results of the t-test indicated that no significant difference existed between the males of happy employed mothers and the males of unhappy employed mothers. The mean scores for the groups were, respectively, 138.48 and 141.80. Evidently the perceived happiness or unhappiness of the employed mother doesn't alter the sons' sex-role orientation in the same manner that the daughters' sex-role orientation seems to be affected. According to the statistical results, there was no significant difference in the scores of these groups; Hypothesis 9 was not retained.

The hypotheses above seem to indicate the mother's happiness has no effect on the sex-role orientation of adolescent males and females. These results could possibly have been affected by the wording on the instrument and the grouping of the responses for analysis. If the respondent checked either response 1, 2, or 3 they were grouped as reporting maternal happiness with employment. Perhaps the instrument should be reworded for clarity. Another factor affecting the results is that the subjects were asked to rate their mother's happiness, therefore the responses indicate maternal happiness as perceived by the adolescent. It is possible that if the mother had rated her own happiness the analysis would have been more accurate.

Hypotheses ten, eleven and twelve investigated the male and female attitudes toward the division of household
tasks. The instrument used for this part of the study was developed by Keith and Brubaker (2) and has been used in several studies. The subjects were asked to complete two simple inventories of ten household tasks by indicating who (husband, wife or both) should be responsible for each task. The subjects completed this inventory for two work situations. The first situation (Inventory One) was for a couple in their twenties when both the husband and wife were employed. The second situation (Inventory Two) was for a couple in their twenties, when the husband was employed and the wife was not employed outside the home. A score of 30 indicated an egalitarian attitude toward the division of household tasks. As the score approached 17, a more traditional attitude was indicated. It should be noted that even though a statistically significant difference existed between several sets of scores, none of the groups indicated a totally shared responsibility (score of 30) of household tasks. It is necessary to examine the scores of each inventory, so that the results may be reported accurately. An analysis of the data used for these hypotheses is presented in Tables VIII and IX.

Hypothesis 10 was: The male and female seniors with full-time employed mothers will have a more egalitarian view in regard to the division of household tasks than will the male and female seniors of full-time homemaker mothers.
TABLE VIII
ANALYSIS OF HOUSEHOLD TASK SCORES WHEN HUSBAND AND WIFE ARE BOTH EMPLOYED (INVENTORY I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number in Group</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males and females of employed mothers</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>21.44</td>
<td>-4.21</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males and females of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>19.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females of employed mothers</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>23.13</td>
<td>-3.01</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males of employed mothers</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>19.89</td>
<td>-2.68</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>17.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A highly significant difference at a level less than .001 existed between the males and females of full-time employed mothers and the males and females of full-time homemaker mothers.
## TABLE IX

**ANALYSIS OF HOUSEHOLD TASK SCORES WHEN HUSBAND IS EMPLOYED WIFE NOT EMPLOYED**

*(INVENTORY II)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number in Group</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males and females of employed mothers</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>19.59</td>
<td>-1.95</td>
<td>.051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males and females of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>19.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females of employed mothers</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>19.91</td>
<td>-1.77</td>
<td>.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>19.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males of employed mothers</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>19.29</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>.354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males of homemaker mothers</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Homemaker mothers for Inventory I (husband and wife both employed). The mean score for the males and females of employed mothers was 21.44, indicating that males and females
of employed mothers stated on the instrument that household tasks should have a more shared responsibility of the husband and wife, rather than assigned as the wife's or husband's job. The mean score for the males and females of homemaker mothers was 19.15, indicating that the subjects stated on the instrument that a more traditional husband/wife division of household tasks was appropriate even when the husband and wife are employed. According to the statistical results there was a significant difference in the scores; Hypothesis 10 was retained for Inventory I.

When Inventory II was considered (husband employed, wife not employed), no significant difference existed between the males and females of employed mothers and the males and females of non-employed mothers. The mean score for the males and females of full-time employed mothers was 19.59, while the mean score for the males and females of full-time homemaker mothers was 19.10. Both scores indicated a more traditional division of household tasks. It seems most likely that the wife was assigned more responsibility because she was not "bringing in money."

Since an item analysis of each task was not performed for this study, this cannot be statistically determined. Since no significant difference was revealed by the statistical results, Hypothesis 10 was not retained for Inventory II.
Hypothesis 11 was: The female seniors with full-time employed mothers will have a more egalitarian view in regard to the division of household tasks than will the female seniors of full-time homemaker mothers.

A significant difference at the .003 level existed between females of full-time employed mothers and females of full-time homemaker mothers for Inventory I. The mean score for females of employed mothers was 23.13, while the females of homemaker mothers mean score was 20.82. Hypothesis 11 was retained on the basis of Inventory I.

No significant difference between females of employed mothers and females of homemaker mothers existed, for Inventory II (husband is working and wife is homemaker). Furthermore, the scores of 19.25 for females of homemaker mothers and 19.91 for females of employed mothers, indicated a more traditional view towards the division of household tasks for both groups when the wife was not employed. The female adolescent population for this study seems to indicate by the reported scores that if a wife is not working outside the home, then she should have more of the responsibility for the household operation. However, when the wife has outside employment, the husband should share more of the household responsibilities. According to the statistical results, no significant difference occurred; Hypothesis 11 was not retained based on the results of Inventory II.
Hypothesis 12 was: The male seniors with full-time employed mothers will have a more egalitarian view in regard to the division of household tasks than will the male seniors of full-time homemaker mothers.

The mean scores for the males indicated no significant difference for the males of employed mothers (19.89) and the males of homemaker mothers (17.92), for Inventory I. The mean scores for Inventory II also indicated no significant difference (19.29 = males of employed mothers, 19.00 = males of homemaker mothers) for the groups of males. Since the statistical results indicated no significant difference, Hypothesis 12 was not retained.

**Discussion and Summary of Findings**

There is evidence that the sex-role orientation of males and females in their senior year of high school is affected by the maternal employment status. A rank ordering of the Sex-Role Orientation Scale mean scores for all four groups in this study shows females of employed mothers scored the highest (172), and the females of homemaker mothers scored second highest (148.5). The males of employed mothers ranked third on the sex-role orientation scale, with a mean score of 133.5, while the mean score for the males of homemaker mothers was 123.4. The scores could possibly range from 36, the most traditional scoring to 216, the most non-traditional scoring. The range of scores for this sample was from 61 to 216. The results indicated by
these scores support hypotheses one through six. The first six hypotheses explored the relationship between maternal employment status and the sex-role orientation of high school males and females. The hypotheses allowed for the scores to be compared to determine differences between maternal employment status and the sex-role orientation of high school seniors as a total group. The hypotheses also allowed for the scores to be compared to determine differences between male and female responses. A statistical difference existed when the scores for all of these groups were compared, thus hypotheses one through six are all retained for this study. It should be noted that although the difference in scores is highly significant statistically, all of the scores do indicate a more liberal view of sex-roles than the very traditional view of women in the home or in traditional female occupations and the man as the wage-earner. It is quite likely that the sex-role attitudes of the present generation of adolescents have been affected by factors other than the employment status of their mothers and the changes that their employment has brought to the home. About 95 percent of the males and females of working mothers reported that their mothers were happy working. Less than 5 percent reported that their mothers were unhappy and would rather be at home. The subjects also indicated that their mothers worked outside the home mainly because they needed the money.
When comparing the group of males and females who reported happy employed mothers to those who reported their mothers not happy with employment, there was no statistically significant difference in the sex-role orientation scale mean scores. However, the most interesting comparison is that the group who reported that their mothers were unhappy working still had a higher mean score (149.90) than the total group of males and females with homemaker mothers (133.8) in this study. The mean scores on the sex-role orientation scale were highest for females of happily employed mothers (172.54). The females of unhappy employed mothers had a mean score of 158.0. The mean score for the males of happy employed mothers was 138.48, while the mean score for the males of unhappy employed mothers was 141.80. Even though the statistical results are not significant, the difference in mean scores does indicate that female sex-role attitudes are influenced by the maternal happiness with employment, while the male sex-role attitudes do not seem to be influenced by the maternal happiness with employment.

When the division of household tasks is considered separately from the overall sex-role attitude, the females of employed mothers scored higher (23.13) than any other group in this study and, once again, the males of homemaker mothers scored lowest (17.92) of all four groups. This finding indicates that the females in this study reported more often that household tasks should be shared between
husband and wife when both husband and wife are employed, while the males reported that the household responsibility belongs to the wife.

However, when the results of the two inventories are compared, different outcomes for the total groups and for the females of both employed and homemaker mothers were found. The males of employed and homemaker mothers seemed to have the same view (responsibility is the wife's) of the division of household tasks in both employment situations. Inventory II asked the subjects to rate who should have the responsibility of each of ten household tasks, when the husband is full-time employed and the wife is not employed. The scores for each group were much closer, with no significant difference between any of the compared groups. Most male and female adolescents in the study seem to agree that if the wife is not earning income then most of the responsibility for the household should belong to her. A closer examination of the scores reveals that the females seem to agree that if the wife isn't working then she should take responsibility for the household, but when employed, the wife should share the responsibility with her husband. The males in this study seem to be stating that regardless of the employment status of the wife, the household operation is her responsibility.

The results of this study revealed an attitude that the responsibility of the home rests more on the wife
if she was not employed. The subjects were not asked to rate the division of household tasks, given the husband was unemployed and the wife employed. The results of this study do not indicate that the subjects prefer an equal distribution of work, even though twenty-five respondents did have the highest score possible (30) on the Inventory I.

This study can best be summarized by stating that the sex-role orientation of adolescents does seem to be influenced by the maternal employment status. The females of employed mothers are most influenced. These adolescent females seem to hold a more liberated view of sex-roles in society and in the home. The males of employed mothers seem to be influenced in their views but not to the extent that the females are influenced. However, the females of homemaker mothers still scored higher than the males of employed and homemaker mothers. This finding seems to indicate that for some reason, females have a more liberated view of themselves in relation to society on the whole and in the home, as determined by a more sharing attitude towards household tasks, more shared power among husband and wife, a broader range of jobs acceptable for females and more acceptance of the females in the political arena. The results of this study also seem to indicate that the mother's perceived happiness or unhappiness with employment does not seem to influence the male or female sex-role orientation. Although asking the mother to rank her relative happiness with
employment was beyond the scope of this study, if the mothers were asked more statistically correct information might be obtained.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study investigated adolescents' attitudes towards adult sex roles. The purpose of the study was to determine if maternal employment or the maternal happiness with employment had an effect on the sex-role orientation of high school seniors. The study compared a group of male and female seniors with full-time employed mothers to a group of male and female seniors with full-time homemaker mothers to determine:

1. If the maternal employment status had an effect on the overall adolescent sex-role orientation.
2. If the maternal employment status influenced the adolescent attitude toward the division of household tasks.
3. If the maternal attitude as perceived by their sons and daughters toward employment had an effect on the overall sex-role orientation of adolescents. Male and female subjects were also grouped separately to determine if differences existed between the sexes.

The data were collected from a random sample of 352 male and female seniors in the Plano Independent School District in Plano, Texas. The numbers of males and females were
nearly equal for this study. All of the students were
between the ages of 16 and 19, with the majority being
either 17 or 18.

Of the subjects included in this study, 45 percent
stated that their mothers had worked continuously for at
least the past two years. These mothers were considered to
be full-time employed status for this study. Twenty-four
percent qualified for the status of homemaker mother,
because it was reported that they had not been employed
outside the home for the past two years.

The demographic data revealed that about 65 percent of
the sample lived with their mother and father, while the
remaining 35 percent lived in blended, single parent, or
other type household. About 62 percent of the mothers had
graduated high school and 20.5 percent had college degrees.
Of those who reported on their maternal employment position
the majority of the mothers (90%) held white collar, pro-
fessional but traditionally female positions.

The instrument was administered by the classroom
teachers during the regularly scheduled English classes of
the 1982-83 Fall semester. The students were encouraged to
complete the instrument, but not pressured into doing so.
The sex-role attitudes of the subjects were measured by a
three-part questionnaire. The first section of the three-
part questionnaire consisted of ten background questions.
These questions were designed to reveal information about the students' background and the maternal employment history. Part two of the questionnaire was a thirty-six question Likert-type attitude scale developed by Brogan and Kutner (1) in 1974-75 to measure the sex-role orientation in six areas of adult life. The third part of the questionnaire was a list of ten household tasks in which the student was asked to check who should be responsible for each task when the husband and wife were both employed and when only the husband was employed. This instrument was obtained from Brubaker and Keith (4) at Miami of Ohio University who had previously used the instrument in several studies with various age groups.

**Findings**

Three significant findings resulted from this study:

1. Based on the statistics for this study, there is evidence that the sex-role orientation of seniors in high school is affected by the maternal employment status. When students of full-time employed mothers are compared to students of full-time homemaker mothers, a significant difference exists at a level less than .001 in the sex-role inventory scores. Females scored higher than males regardless of the maternal employment status.

These same conclusions were found by Tomeh (7) in the 1978 study of adolescent sex-role orientations. The women
in Tomeh's study also tended to have the broadest sex-role orientation regardless of maternal employment status and history. The sons of employed mothers were influenced more than the sons of unemployed mothers, but none of the sons were influenced to the degree that daughters' sex-role attitudes seemed to be influenced. Etaugh's (2) review indicated similar results for adolescent sex-role perceptions. Although sons' and daughters' attitudes toward sex appropriate personality traits were all positively influenced, the daughters of employed mothers thought that more androgynous traits were acceptable for women.

The findings for the female students are consistent with those of Brogan and Kutner (1) in the original study using this instrument. Although a statistically significant difference was not found between female undergraduate students of employed and unemployed mothers, the subjects of employed mothers did score higher on the SRO scale. Haber (3) also suggested that the employed mother might generate more liberal attitudes towards sex-roles in the daughter, although in the study maternal employment was not found to be directly related to broader sex-role attitudes.

2. Based on the statistics for this study, there is no evidence that the maternal attitude towards employment affects either the adolescent daughters' or sons' sex-role orientation. Ninety-five percent of the subjects reported
that their mothers were happy with employment or worked because they needed the money, but enjoy working outside the home and 5 percent reported that their mothers were employed because they needed the money, but would rather not be employed outside the home. A t-test determined no significance between the males and females of happy employed mothers and the males and females of unhappy employed mothers. When the females of happy employed mothers were compared to the females of unhappy employed mothers, no significance existed between the groups. No significant difference was found between the males of happy and unhappy employed mothers.

Although there were no statistically significant findings in this study when researching the relationship between maternal happiness with employment and male and female sex-role orientation, perhaps the results would have been more meaningful if the questionnaire would have been worded differently and grouped differently for statistical analysis. As it was done, all those respondents who stated that their "mother works because she needs the money, but enjoys her job," were grouped with those who stated that their "mother loves her job" or "mother is happy working." Perhaps "enjoys" is not the same as "happy."

Although no studies that were reviewed in Chapter II researched maternal attitude towards employment and its
effect on adolescent sex-role orientations, several authors (5, 8) of previous studies have suggested that perhaps the mother's attitude or an analysis of her work history might yield clearer, more defined differences in sex-role orientations of adolescents. Haber (3) did suggest that the maternal attitudes toward sex-roles might have influenced the females choice to work outside her own home. However, the relationship between the mother's attitude and the mother's work status was not investigated.

3. Based on the statistics for this study, there is some evidence that maternal employment has an effect on the adolescents attitude toward the division of household tasks. When the adolescent males and females were asked to rate ten household tasks according to who should be responsible for each task when the husband and wife were both employed outside the home, the group of males and females with full-time employed mothers had a score of 21.44 (30 being the most egalitarian) and the males and females of homemaker mothers had a score of 19.15 (17 indicating the most traditional division). A highly significant difference at a level less than .001 existed between the groups. A significant difference at the .003 level was indicated when the females of employed and homemaker mothers were compared, but no difference existed between the males of employed and homemaker mothers. The males and females were also asked to rate who
should be responsible for each task when the husband was employed, but the wife was not employed. No significant difference for any of the groups existed, given this employment situation.

No previous studies have related maternal employment to the adolescent attitudes towards household tasks, but the Keith and Brubaker (4) study did determine that adolescents do seem to have a more positive attitude towards sharing household tasks than did previous generations. The results for the Keith and Brubaker (4) study indicated that yard and car work was still the husband's responsibility and the laundry was still assigned to the wife. Females perceived a more equal distribution of household tasks than the males in this study. The results of Tangri's (6) study indicated that the higher the maternal job status the more the mother acted as a role-model for her daughter. This study revealed that females of homemaker mothers had a more traditional view of the division of household work, regardless of the mothers' educational level.

Conclusions

Based on the findings for this study, the following conclusions are made:

1. Adolescent attitudes towards sex-roles are influenced by the maternal employment status. The males and females of employed mothers have a more liberal outlook of
the appropriate sex-roles for males and females in contemporary society. This could be a result of seeing more shared roles at home, since when the mother is employed, more cooperation is needed to smoothly operate the household.

2. The females whose mother is employed outside the home, have a more liberal attitude toward sex appropriate behavior for males and females in adult contemporary society, than do the males whose mother is employed. The mother possibly acts more as a role model for her daughter. Thus if the mother is employed, the daughter sees herself as being an employed adult also.

3. When females are compared on the basis of maternal employment, females of the employed mothers have a more liberal view of sex-roles in the home and in society than the females of homemaker mothers. However, females of the homemaker mothers have a more liberal view of sex-roles in society and in the home than the males of either homemaker or employed mothers. The females must be influenced by factors other than maternal employment. Perhaps they choose other women as role models.

4. When males are compared on the basis of maternal employment, the males of employed mothers have a more liberal sex-role orientation than the males of homemaker mothers. These sons may hear their mothers complain about having to do all the work around the house and not getting
help from their husbands. Perhaps the sons have determined that their future wives would be happier if they receive help.

5. When the females and males of employed mothers are compared, the females of employed mothers have a more liberal sex-role orientation than the males of employed mothers.

6. Adolescent attitudes towards sex-roles are not affected by the perceived happiness of the employed mother. Perhaps the males and females do not perceive their mother's attitude toward employment accurately.

7. Adolescent thoughts about the division of household tasks are influenced by the maternal employment status, to the extent that most adolescent males and females indicate household tasks should be shared when both the husband and wife are employed outside the home.

8. The adolescents in this study believe that the household should be mostly the wife's responsibility when she is not employed outside the home. This makes equal responsibility one earns money - one cares for home.

The conclusions of this study are pertinent to the body of research concerned with the effects of maternal employment on children. The past decade of research on maternal employment has been concerned with it's effects on the sex-role attitudes of children. With society's views of sex-roles changing so rapidly, it is quite valid that research be done to link these areas.
Over fifty percent of mothers are now employed outside the home and this figure is projected to be much greater by 1990 (8). Regardless of the reasons why mothers have worked in the past, it is more and more evident that their daughters will be employed and their sons will be married to employed wives. It is important to the self-image of individuals and to the well-being of families that these more liberal attitudes towards sex-roles be fully accepted.

Professionals concerned with family life education must be aware of the status of clients and students so that they might most effectively help people to cope with feelings and attitudes about sex-roles. The well being of the family may very well depend on the individuals ability to accept both spouses in the dual-role of homemaker and wage-earner.

**Recommendations**

On the basis of reported research and findings of this study, it is recommended that the following research be conducted to further clarify the attitudes of adolescent sex-role orientations.

1. Investigate the effects of maternal attitude towards employment and non-employment and the effects this might have on adolescent sex-role orientations. Use the maternal attitude as declared by the mother instead of as perceived by the son or daughter.

2. Compare students who have completed a Family Life Education Course with those students who have not had such a
course to determine if the course work has an effect on adolescent sex-role attitudes.

3. Further control the conditions of maternal employment and/or educational level to determine the effect on adolescent sex-role attitudes. Define employed mother as one who has been employed for 5 years or longer and homemaker mother as one who has not been employed 5 years or longer, since this might show more clearly the effect of maternal employment on sex-role attitudes.

4. Conduct an item analysis of the Sex-Role Orientation and Household Inventory Scales used for this study to determine specific areas of concern about sex-role attitudes.

5. Conduct a long-term study of adolescents to determine any changes concerning sex-role attitudes (orientation) that occur between the ages of 18 and 25, since this is the time when many people leave the family of origin and establish a household on their own.

6. Compare the young adults of employed and homemaker mothers to determine how the maternal employment status during childhood has affected their thoughts and attitudes towards the division of household tasks in their family of procreation.

7. Compare pre-adolescent children with late adolescents to determine how the age difference might affect sex-role attitudes.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


Classroom Teacher,

Please distribute the questionnaire face down. When all students have received the questionnaire, please read the following letter aloud. If any student raises an objection to completing the questionnaire, please take the questionnaire from the student and ask him/her to remain quietly seated until the students are finished.

Thank you for your help and classtime.

Dear Student,

I am presently completing a Master's Degree in Human Development at North Texas State University. To partially fulfill my graduation requirements, I have chosen to do a study of teenagers' ideas about adult roles in society.

You have been chosen to be a part of the study. Of course, you may choose not to complete this questionnaire, but it would be quite helpful to me if you would do so. Please do not write your name on the paper anywhere. All of the results will then be reported anonymously.

Thank you for your cooperation. Now, please turn your paper over and read the directions for Part I with your teacher.

Kaye E. Gardner
Plano Independent School District Faculty
Directions:

The first ten questions are multiple choice. Please circle only the one answer that most closely fits your situation. Complete each question honestly, carefully and quickly. You may start.

A. The school I attend is:
   1. Plano East Senior High
   2. Plano Senior High

B. I am enrolled in Home & Family Living:
   1. Semester 1
   2. Semester 2
   3. Not enrolled in Home & Family this year.

C. I am:
   1. Male
   2. Female

D. Which of the following most closely describes your living arrangement?
   1. I live with my mother, father and siblings.
   2. I live with my mother, step-father and siblings.
   3. I live with my step-mother, father and siblings.
   4. I live with only my mother.
   5. I live with only my father.
   6. I live with my mother and siblings.
   7. I live with my father and siblings.
   8. Other Explain

E. Which is the highest level of education that your mother has completed?
   1. Less than 12th grade
   2. High School
   3. Some college
   4. College graduate
   5. Vocational degree
   6. Post-graduate college work
   7. Master's Degree
   8. Doctorate Degree

F. Which one of the following most closely describes your mother's employment pattern since you were born?
   1. My mother has never worked outside the home.
   2. My mother started to work outside the home when I was in elementary school and has worked continuously since then.
   3. My mother was employed outside the home when I was in elementary school, but has not worked since I was in 10th/11th grade.
4. My mother never worked outside the home when I was young, but has worked continuously since I was in 10th/11th grade.
5. My mother has been employed outside the home full-time on and off since I was born.
6. My mother has been employed outside the home part-time on and off since I was born.

G. Does your mother hold a paying job, presently?  (10-13)
1. Yes
2. No

If the answer to G is Yes, please answer H, I and J.  
If the answer to G is No, please skip to Part II.

H. The job that most closely describes my mother's job is:
1. Secretary
2. Teacher
3. Nurse
4. Professional Businesswoman
5. Retail Saleswoman
6. Factory Worker
7. Food Service Worker
8. Health Service Worker
9. Doctor
10. Lawyer
11. Other  Describe

I. Which of the following most closely matches your mother's average number of hours on the job per week?
1. Less than 20 hours
2. 21-30 hours
3. 31-35 hours
4. 36-40 hours
5. More than 40 hours

J. Which one of the following most closely describes your mother's feelings about working outside the home?
1. My mother loves her job and would choose to continue working at this job.
2. My mother is happy working, but would like another job.
3. My mother works because she needs the money, but enjoys her job.
4. My mother works because she needs the money, but would rather not work outside the home.
Part II

Please continue to complete this questionnaire by circling the numbers that most closely indicate the way you feel about each statement. Please circle only one response.

1 = Strongly Agree  2 = Moderately Agree
3 = Agree Somewhat More Than I Disagree
4 = Disagree Somewhat  5 = Moderately Disagree
6 = Strongly Disagree

Work quickly and answer by the first impression that you have after reading the statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Moderately Agree</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat More Than I Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Moderately Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>It is more important for a wife to help her husband's career than to have a career herself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The idea of young girls participating in Little League baseball competition is ridiculous.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The relative amounts of time and energy devoted to a career on the one hand, and to home and family on the other hand, should be determined by one's personal desires and interests rather than by one's sex.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>It is more important for a woman to keep her figure and dress becomingly than it is for a man.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The old saying that &quot;A woman's place is in the home&quot; is still basically true and should remain true.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>A woman should refrain from being too competitive with men and keep her peace, rather than show a man that he is wrong.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>A woman whose job involves contact with the public, (ex. salesperson or teacher) should not work when she is noticeably pregnant.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. The husband should take primary responsibility for major family decisions, such as the purchase of a home or car.

9. In groups that have both male and female members, it is appropriate that top leadership positions be held by males.

10. Unless it is economically necessary, married women who have school-aged children should not work outside the home.

11. If there are two candidates for a job, one a man and the other a woman, and the woman is slightly better qualified, the job should nevertheless go to the man because he is likely to have a family to support.

12. Marriage is a partnership in which the wife and husband should share the economic responsibility of supporting the family.

13. A woman should not accept a career promotion if it would require her family to move and her husband to find a new job.

14. A married woman who chooses not to have children because she prefers to pursue her career should not feel guilty.

15. Unless it is economically necessary, married women who have pre-school age children should not work outside the home.

16. It is generally better to have a man at the head of a department composed of both men and women employees.

17. A husband should not feel uncomfortable if his wife earns a larger salary than he does.
*18. It is all right for women to hold political offices.  

19. A male student and a female student are equally qualified for a scholarship; it should be awarded to the male student on the grounds that he has greater "career potential".  

*20. The use of profane or obscene language by a woman is no more objectionable than the same usage by a man.  

21. It is certainly acceptable for boys, as well as girls, to play with dolls.  

22. Girls should primarily be counseled to enter "feminine" vocations such as nursing, public school teaching, library science, etc.  

*23. Women should not feel inhibited about competing in any form of sports.  

*24. Parents should encourage just as much independence in their daughters as in their sons.  

*25. Women should be able to compete with men for jobs that have traditionally belonged to men, such as telephone lineman.  

*26. It is O.K. for a wife to retain her maiden name if she wants to.  

*27. There is no reason why a woman should not be President of the United States.  

28. Career education for boys should have higher priority with parents and teachers than career education for girls.  

29. Even though a wife works outside the home, the husband should be the main breadwinner and the wife should have the responsibility for running the household.
30. In elementary school, girls should wear dresses rather than slacks to school.  

31. It is acceptable for a woman to become a member of the church clergy.  

32. It is acceptable for women to hold important elected political offices in state and national government.  

33. It is not a good idea for a husband to stay home and care for the children while his wife is employed full-time outside the home.  

34. The only reason girls need career education is that they may not marry or remain married.  

35. There is no particular reason why a man should always offer his seat to a woman who is standing on a crowded bus.  

36. Men should be able to compete with women for jobs that have traditionally belonged to women, such as telephone operator.  

Please continue to next page.
PART III. Please read each of the following situations and circle only one response for each task.

Think of a couple in their TWENTIES, BOTH HAVING FULL TIME JOBS. Who should have the major responsibility to see that the following family activities are done? Husband, wife or equal responsibility. Circle one for each task.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household activities</th>
<th>Who should have the major responsibility?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husband</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Cooking Meals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Washing Dishes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Mowing Lawn</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Washing Clothes</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Car Maintenance</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Writing Letters</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. Family Social Events</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Getting or Earning Money</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Cleaning House</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Shopping</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Think of a couple in their TWENTIES, IN WHICH THE HUSBAND IS EMPLOYED AND THE WIFE DOES NOT WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME. Who should have the major responsibility to see that the following family activities are done? Husband, wife, or equal responsibility. Circle one for each task.

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>J. Shopping</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please turn your paper over and sit quietly until everyone is finished and the papers are collected.
Ms. Kaye Gardner  
16815 Rustic Meadows  
Dallas, Texas  75148

Dear Ms. Gardner:

Enclosed you will find the materials you requested concerning research completed on household activities. The questionnaire enclosed was used to gather information on a group of housewives in Wisconsin. These are the same questions that were used to get information from adolescents in articles published with Keith.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the chapter that will be coming out in the book published by Sage this fall. This chapter, written with Charles B. Hennon examines expectations of dual-earner and dual-retired women. You will notice that the data for the chapter are based upon the enclosed questionnaire.

I direct your attention to two papers examining adolescents' expectations published by Keith and myself. One appears in Adolescence, 1980, Volume 15, pp. 171-182. The other appears in Psychological Reports, 1977, Volume 41, pp. 15-18. If you are interested in examining attitudes held by individuals concerning male household roles in later life, I suggest that you examine a paper by Keith and myself that appears in The Family Coordinator, 1979, Volume 28, pp. 496-502.

I hope that this information is helpful to you. If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Timothy H. Brubaker  
Associate Professor

THB:mb  
enclosures
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Reports


Articles


Tomeh, Aida K., "Sex-Role Orientation and Structural Correlates," The Sociological Quarterly, XX, 3 (Summer, 1979), 333-344.


Publications of Learned Organizations


Unpublished Materials