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The Impact of Dual-Career Marriage on Role Conflict and Marital Satisfaction

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University of Portland

Capstone

In partial fulfillment of the Master of Science (M.S.) in Management Communication degree

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Abstract

This study explores the influence of a dual-career marriage on role conflict and marital satisfaction. The investigator proposed eight research questions regarding role conflict and marital satisfaction, and their respective relationships with the number and age of children in the family; educational level; and economic status in dual-career marriages. Forty-one participants, currently in dual-career marriages with children, were asked to evaluate their family, married, and work life through a questionnaire survey. Two significant quantitative results were determined. First, an Independent Samples T-Test found that there are significant differences between the number of children (one versus more than one child) and role conflict in a dual-career marriage. Second, a Pearson bivariate correlation determined that there is a significant relationship between economic status and role conflict in a dual-career marriage. Multiple themes also emerged from the open-ended questions in the survey regarding family-work and work-family conflict, marital communication strategies and techniques, and marital satisfaction. The discussion and conclusion provide possible explanations, theoretical frameworks, limitations, and future research in response to these findings.

Keywords: Dual-Career Marriage; Role Conflict; Work-Family Conflict; Family-Work Conflict; Marital Satisfaction; Marital Quality; Dual-Career Marriage and Work-Family Conflict; Dual-Career Marriage and Marital Satisfaction

Introduction

Throughout the past 30 years, the concept of a dual-career marriage, a marriage in which the husband and wife are actively pursuing professional working careers, has been widely explored in the research literature (Bedeian, Burke, & Moffett, 1988; Cherpas, 1985; Netemeyer, McMurrian, & Boles, 1996; Mitchelson, 2009; Perrone & Worthington, 2001; Tribble, 1987; and others). In part, this is due to a dramatic increase in the number of dual-career marriages from the 1950's to the 1980's, and between the 1980's to the present day, which has resulted in a diversity of family and marriage life structures (Bedeian, et al., 1988; Cherpas, 1985; Mitchelson, 2009; Netemeyer, et al., 1996; Perrone & Worthington, 2001). The number of dual-career marriages rose from 9.3 million in 1950, to 13.4 million in 1960, to 28.8 million in 1987 (Bedeian et al., 1987). In the last three decades, a family with a father and mother in working careers has easily become "the most common family pattern in the United States" (Perrone & Worthington, 2001, pg. 3).

As Netemeyer et al. (1996) acknowledged, the two most significant focal points of adult life are work and family. With a rapid increase in dual-career marriages, how do spouses learn to negotiate and balance work and family life roles, especially if they become parents of their own children? How does a dual-career marriage, in which the spouses are also parents of children, impact the spouse's satisfaction within the marriage? The interrelationship between career and family role domains is especially tangible for dual-career families as both spouses may feel responsible and committed to each domain: work and family (Lewis & Cooper, 1987). The role expectations of these two domains are generally not compatible, causing conflict and a constant negotiation between family and work life roles (Netemeyer et al., 1996). For husbands and wives with the dual roles of work and family, their quality of marriage, family life, and working careers

are significantly impacted by these two conflicting domains (Bedeian et al, 1988; Cherpas, 1985; Netemeyer et al., 1996; Mitchelson, 2009; Perrone & Worthington, 2001; Tribble, 1987).

The purpose of this study is to examine dual-career marriage and its impact on role conflict and marital satisfaction when spouses are parents of their own children. This study will first explore the history, context, and typologies of dual-career marriages; second, the effect of dual-career marriage on role conflict, and more specifically work-family and family-work conflict; and thirdly, the consequences and influence of dual-career marriage on marital quality and satisfaction. While dual-career marriage and its effect on role conflict and marital satisfaction is prevalent in the scholarly research, less is known in the research literature about dual-career marriage in the context of parents with younger children. The significance of this investigation is that it explores the impact of dual-career marriages on work-family conflict, marital satisfaction, and family life when children are at different ages in the family unit.

Literature Review

Dual-Career Marriage

Although dual-career and dual-earner marriages have several similarities, the concept of “dual-career marriage” is distinguished by the academic preparation, motivation to have a full-time career, and level of career devotion of both spouses (Thomas, Albrecht, & White, 1984).

Between the 1950’s to 1980’s, the American society saw a significant increase in both the number of dual-earner and dual-career marriages (Bedeian, et al., 1988; Cherpas, 1985). This rise in dual-career marriages was largely due to the proportion of married women in the workforce more than doubling from 1950 to 1980 (21.6 percent to 50.2 percent) (Thomas et al., 1984).

In recent years, families with two heads of household, in which both spouses pursue full-time careers, has become the most common family unit in the American society (Perrone &

Worthington, 2001). The role expectations and boundaries between family and career are not always congruent, developing conflicts and issues between work and family life (Netemeyer et al., 1996). In fact, the spillover of family and work demands is bidirectional, meaning that family demands can spill over and negatively impact work life, and work demands can spill over and negatively affect family life (Galvin, Byland, & Brommel, 2001).

While dual-career marriages have mixed implications in the research literature, Thomas et al. (1984) claimed that a two-professional marriage is one with a high level of risk. The marriage of two highly educated individuals with distinct professional and personal goals, strong achievement needs, rigorous work schedules, and several role responsibilities, demands considerable skills in addressing conflicts and negotiating compromises. If parenting roles and responsibilities are added, further complications can negatively impact the overall quality and satisfaction of the marriage (Thomas et al., 1984).

Types of Dual-Career Marriages. Cherpas's (1985) study identified four primary types of dual-career couples: accommodators, adversaries, allies, and acrobats. First, in an accommodator dual-career marriage, one spouse is generally high in career involvement and low in family home involvement, and the other spouse is low in career involvement and high in family home involvement (Cherpas, 1985). Secondly, for adversary spouses, both partners are usually highly involved in their careers, and not very involved with family, home, or partner support roles (Cherpas, 1985). Thirdly, in an ally marriage relationship, both partners are generally involved with either career or family and home roles, but not highly involved with both roles simultaneously (Cherpas, 1985). Fourthly, for acrobat spouses, both partners are highly involved in family and work roles (Cherpas, 1985). These mothers and fathers typically believe that their relationship and family roles are of the same importance to their career lives (Cherpas, 1985).

Marital Quality and Satisfaction

Early scholarly research referred to marital quality as the happiness, contentment, quality, and satisfaction within the marriage (Knoblauch, 2008). More specifically, marital quality was considered the health, well-being, and stability of the marriage (Knoblauch, 2008). According to Perrone and Worthington (2001), marital quality has significant impacts on the overall health and happiness of any individual committed to a life-long partner.

More recently, scholarly researchers have used the term “marital satisfaction” instead of “marital quality” in the research literature (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1997). Li and Fung (2011) conceptualized marital satisfaction as “people’s global subjective evaluation about the quality of their marriage” (pg. 246). The term “marital satisfaction” is preferred to “marital quality” because it focuses on the subjective nature of this concept (Li & Fung, 2011). As Li and Fung (2011) asserted, marital satisfaction is a broader definition because it focuses on satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment level in the current relationship. Commitment level can be considered the most significant determinant of marital stability, and consistently correlates highly with marital satisfaction (Li & Fung, 2011). Dedication commitment, which is the personal willingness to maintain the ongoing relationship, maintains the highest correlation with marital satisfaction (Li & Fung, 2011).

Marital and Lifestyle Satisfaction Variables. In Thomas et al.’s (1984) thorough examination of the determinants of marital quality and satisfaction, these scholars found several lifestyle satisfaction variables that directly contributed to marital quality and satisfaction. First, socioeconomic adequacy of the family’s situation correlated positively with the predicted marital quality between the spouses (Thomas et al., 1984). The second lifestyle satisfaction variable included the husband’s satisfaction with the wife having a full-time professional career when

children are part of the household (Thomas et al., 1984). As of the early 1980's, the divorce rate for women with five or more years of college exceeded that for women at every other educational level except for those women who had not earned a high school degree (Thomas et al., 1984). Thirdly, when the household arrangement of roles and responsibilities is perceived as ideal for both spouses, the marital quality is generally higher (Thomas et al., 1984). Dual-career couples in higher quality marriages normally had older children including teenagers or young adults, while dual-career couples in lower quality marriages typically had younger children (Thomas et al., 1984). Lastly, when the couple is most extensively immersed and active in the local community, the marital quality significantly increased (Thomas et al., 1984).

Marital Goals. Li and Fung (2011) asserted that marital goals, the goals that spouses hope and strive to reach for in their marriage, significantly contributed to marital satisfaction. Marital goals are considered one of the key elements in the dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction (Li & Fung, 2011). When prioritized marital goals are achieved, the married couple is more likely to feel satisfied within their marriage (Li & Fung, 2011). Married couples typically have three goals: companionship goals, personal growth goals, and instrumental goals (Li & Fung, 2011). Companionship goals are focused on people's needs for belongingness and relatedness in the marriage. Personal growth goals emphasize a spouse's desire to develop, grow, or actualize oneself within the marriage. Instrumental goals center on the practical nature of the marriage including sharing household labor and responsibilities with each other, such as housework, managing family finances, and raising children (Li & Fung, 2011). In general, younger married couples focus on personal growth goals, middle-aged couples emphasize instrumental goals, and older couples strive to reach companionship goals (Li & Fung, 2011).

Spousal Interaction Variables. Similar to Li & Fung's (2011) emphasis on marital goals, Thomas et al. (1984) reported that several spousal interaction variables were positively correlated with marital satisfaction. The higher the positive regard between the spouses, the greater the marital quality. Positive regard for spouses is characterized as perceived similarities, attractiveness to each other, agreement in core values, and validation and affirmation of oneself by a spouse (Lewis & Spanier, 1979). When the emotional gratification between the spouses is higher, then the marital quality is generally greater (Thomas et al., 1984). Emotional gratification is defined as expressions of affection, encouragement, and support of personal growth, sexual satisfaction, and a feeling of consistency between the "ideal" and "actual" spouse (Thomas et al., 1984).

Thomas et al. (1984) also stressed the importance of effective communication between spouses, observing that more effective and quality communication directly correlates with marital quality. Marital communication is conceptualized as self-disclosure, empathy, and frequency of communication (Thomas et al., 1984). As Thomas et al. (1984) asserted, when the role-fit is greater within the marriage, then the marital quality is typically higher. Lewis and Spanier (1979) described role-fit as the absence of role conflict and included role sharing and role harmony within the marriage. Finally, when more social and emotional interactions took place within the marriage, then marital quality was significantly higher (Thomas et al., 1984). Interactions are considered shared activities and companionship, which are demonstrated through recreational activities and social intimacy (Thomas et al., 1984).

Social Role Theory and Predictors of Marital Quality. The Social Role Theory explains that people meet personal and relational needs through establishing roles with role partners such as a supportive and loving relationship (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Kashiwagi and

Hirayama (2003) contended that love is considered the most important predictor of marital quality in dual-career couples. An absence of love in a dual-career marriage is one of the most cited reasons for marital dissatisfaction (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Sexual satisfaction and affection are significant contributors to marital quality (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Social support, or the amount of available support and social resources, affects how both married partners address conflicts at home and work (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Underlying social support and love is effective communication, which is consistently recognized by scholarly researchers as a highly important predictor of marital quality (Thomas et al., 1984; Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Effective communication between married spouses increases the likelihood that each spouse will fulfill his or her spouse's needs in the relationship (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Role strain, a type of role conflict in which role pressures from the job and family are considered incompatible, have a negative correlation with marital quality (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Dual-career lifestyle satisfaction provides an intermediary between job-family role strain and marital quality (Li & Fung, 2011; Perrone & Worthington, 2001).

Role Conflict and Work-Family Conflict (WFC)

The ability to achieve an appropriate balance between work and family commitments is a growing concern for present-day spouses, parents, employees, and organizations, with increasing evidence linking work-family conflict to decreased health and well-being (Kalliath, Kalliath, & Singh, 2011). The most widely used definition of work-family conflict in scholarly research is as follows:

A form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role (Kalliath, et al., 2011).

Netemeyer et al. (1996) expanded on this definition by stating that work-family conflict is a type of inter-role conflict in which the demands of time dedicated to work and family, and role strain developed by the family inhibit the spouse from performing work-related responsibilities. Role types become challenging when they fail to meet the needs of one of the spouses or when they cause an excessive amount of demands, and ultimately lead to role strain (Perrone & Worthington, 2001).

Role Strain Theory and Spillover Theory. According to Kalliath et al. (2011), Role Strain Theory contends that social structures consist of multiple roles and individuals are sometimes unable to meet the demands of all roles and responsibilities. Married couples must consistently negotiate unsatisfied roles in an attempt to adapt to the demands placed on them from multiple role responsibilities. Role strain has been correlated with the tension, disharmony, and conflict between members of dual-career marriages (Perrone & Worthington, 2001).

Kalliath et al. (2011) directly connected role strain with the Spillover Theory. The Spillover Theory is described as emotions and behaviors in one setting (i.e., family) spilling over into the other sphere (i.e., work) (Kalliath et al., 2011). Although physical and temporal boundaries generally exist between work and family, the carryover of emotions and behaviors is common in dual-career marriages, in which spouses are both committed to a professional career and a family life (Bedeian, et al., 1988; Kalliath et al., 2011; Netemeyer et al., 1996; Perrone & Worthington, 2001; and others).

Women and Work-Family Conflict. Married mothers in professional careers generally experience a much higher level of work-family pressures than fathers (Lewis & Cooper, 1987). Kalliath et al. (2011) contended that if a professional working woman and mother is perceived as being ambitious and driven about her career goals, then she carries the risk of being blamed for

neglecting her primary role responsibility of caring for her family. Married mothers encounter the burden of commitment to their professional work roles, while at the same time, giving priority to their family role responsibility (Kalliath et al., 2011). Additionally, many pregnant women who plan to work after a short 'career break' often feel ambivalent and uncertain about this decision (Lewis & Cooper, 1987).

The presence of spousal support is considered an important contributor of the well-being of career working women (Kalliath et al., 2011). Mothers, more often than fathers, of young children typically are vulnerable to impaired mental health and decreased life satisfaction (Lewis & Cooper, 1987). When a family move takes place, more wives than husbands reported that their careers had suffered in moving to support their husband's career (Cherapas, 1985). Additionally, wives stated concerns about a lack of personal time significantly more often than their husbands (Cherapas, 1985).

Men and Work-Family Conflict. Although both men and women are subject to the consequences of stress within a dual-career marriage, men with children generally feel a greater amount of self-actualization within the marriage and family life (Bedeian et al., 1988). The sense of fatherhood typically leads to men having a personal evaluation of reaching success, according to the traditional male provider role in the American culture (Bedeian et al., 1988). However, before a husband can offer emotional or practical support to his wife in a dual-career marriage, he needs to have a positive sense of self and feel successful in his personal and professional life (Cherapas, 1985).

The Impacts and Consequences of Work-Family Conflict in Dual-Career Marriages. Both mothers and fathers similarly identified more work-family pressure than non-parents (Lewis & Cooper, 1987). Work-family conflict has served as a correlation between work-related

role stress and marital satisfaction (Bedeian et al., 1988). The most common pressures for dual-career spouses, who are also mothers and fathers of children, include overload and role conflict as a result of multiple demanding roles (Lewis & Cooper, 1987). Work-family conflict and family-work conflict are both positively linked with career burnout, job tension, career role conflict, and job role uncertainty (Netemeyer et al., 1996).

When examining several organizations and employers in the American culture, social commentators and scholarly researchers have discussed growing concerns about the extent to which work and family roles have increasingly overlapped (Kalliath et al., 2011). In order to balance work-family roles, an organization and employers must promote the value of work-family balance in the organizational culture, and provide greater flexibility for family conflicts that arise when employees are at work (Kalliath et al., 2011).

Work-family conflict can result in psychological strain, reduced job satisfaction, lessened family satisfaction, and decreased marital satisfaction (Kalliath et al., 2011). Empirical evidence supported the notion that increased levels of work-family conflict leads to greater psychological strain (Kalliath et al., 2011). Conflicts between competing family and work roles have caused reduced role performance, lessened verbal communication, poor marital adjustment, and other negative impacts for mothers and fathers in professional careers (Bedeian et al., 1988). In sum, work-family conflict has been shown to have many negative consequences for mothers and fathers in their career professions, family, and married life.

Rationale

Scholarly research has shown that dual-career marriages have significant impacts and consequences on work-family conflict and marital satisfaction. However, less is known about the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction. Some research literature has

found mixed implications on the impact of work-family conflict on satisfaction within the marriage (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Wong & Goodwin, 2009). According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), work-family conflict can cause time and strain-based conflict within the marriage. Additionally, this type of role conflict may result in a spillover of work and family demands into the marriage (Kalliath et al., 2011). However, Wong and Goodwin (2009) asserted that dual-career marriages and work-family conflict can have a positive impact by relieving some of the financial burdens and stresses that are caused by only one spouse holding a full-time job.

With the supporting evidence above, the following research question is posed:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction in a dual-career marriage?

The age of the parents and children in a family unit can significantly impact a parent's work-family interface across six family life stages (before children, transition to parenthood, youngest child in preschool-age, youngest child in school-age, youngest child as an adolescent, and an empty nest) (Erikson, Martinengo, & Hill, 2010). Families with young children must learn to adapt to a marital system that will make space for children; join together in raising children, household and financial tasks; in addition to negotiating relationships with extended family to include parenting and grand parenting (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005). According to Galvin et al. (2011), first-time parents are at a much higher risk for personal and marital distress that generally lasts until a child is two years old. Families with children in preschool (two to five years old) typically experience less pressure compared to the time period when the child is newborn to two years (Galvin et al., 2011). Thus, the following research question is proposed:

RQ2: Is there a relationship between the age of a child (or children) and work-family conflict in a dual-career marriage?

Carter and McGoldrick (2005) claimed that spouses and families are influenced by children at all four stages of the family life cycle involving children (families with young children, families with adolescents, launching children and moving on for the parents, and families in later life). For example, parents and spouses must negotiate roles and responsibilities, adjust the marital system, shift the parent-to-child relationships, and renegotiate the marital system as a dyad when children become adults and leave the household (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005; Galvin et al., 2011). When children are at different ages, it may have a direct impact on the satisfaction of the parents' marriage (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005; Galvin et al., 2011).

Therefore, the following research question is proposed for additional exploration:

RQ3: Are the age of a child or children and marital satisfaction related in a dual-career marriage?

Family role stressors, family involvement, family social support, and family characteristics, including the family climate, are all considered determinants of work-family conflict in a dual-career marriage (Michel et al., 2010). The number and age of children are both important family characteristics to consider in a dual-career marriage and in its impact on work-family conflict (Michel et al., 2010). Parental role pressure is often the greatest predictor of stress outcomes for parents of young children (Lewis & Cooper, 1987). Additionally, increased conflicts between work and family roles have been shown to correlate with insufficient role performance, decreased verbal communication, and poor marital adjustment (Bedeian, et al., 1988). Higher levels of work-family conflict and family-work conflict often results in psychological strain, reduced marital quality, and family satisfaction (Kalliath et al., 2011).

Given the information above, the following research question is proposed:

RQ4: Is there a significant difference in work-family conflict between parents with one child and parents with two or more children in a dual-career marriage?

The number of children in a family is associated with marital stability and satisfaction (Orathinkal & Vansteenwagen, 2007; Wendorf et al., 2011). According to Wendorf et al. (2011), scholarly research has indicated that children generally stabilize a marriage, but decrease marital satisfaction. Orathinkal and Vansteenwagen (2007) found that the age, number of children, and length of marriage are all positively correlated to sexual adjustment within the marriage. Thus, it can be inferred that the age and number of children have an indirect impact on marital satisfaction (Orathinkal & Vansteenwagen, 2007). More scholarly research is needed to determine the connection between the number of children and marital satisfaction. Given the evidence above and the need for further exploration, the following research question is offered:

RQ5: Are the number of children and marital satisfaction related in a dual-career marriage?

According to Shahrabak and D'Souza (2010), educational level and marital satisfaction have a direct correlation. In a study that focused on married couples, spouses with higher education levels also had greater marital satisfaction than husbands and wives with lower educational levels (Shahrabak & D'Souza, 2010). Orathinkal and Vansteenwagen (2007) determined that the level of educational attainment was positively correlated with length of marriage. Additionally, the length of marriage is significantly associated with marital satisfaction (Orathinkal & Vansteenwagen, 2007). Based on this evidence, the research question is given below:

RQ6: Are marital satisfaction and educational level related in a dual-career marriage?

Socioeconomic status has been connected with work-family conflict, especially in low income households (Trachtenberg, Anderson, & Sabatelli, 2009; & Wallen, 2002). As Larson, Wilson, and Beley (1994) acknowledged, families encountering family stresses are more likely to be susceptible to family problems and work-home conflict. In terms of marital satisfaction,

Thomas, et al. (1984) contended that a higher socioeconomic adequacy of the family results in greater marital quality between the two spouses. While research literature has focused on socioeconomic status and work-family conflict within the family, less scholarly research has specifically examined the correlation between socioeconomic status and work-family role conflict in a dual-career marriage. Thus, the following exploratory research question is proposed:

RQ7: Are economic status and work-family conflict related in a dual-career marriage?

One of the most significant sources of happiness for any individual is freedom from financial worries (Borooah, 2006). While freedom from financial stress is important for one's personal satisfaction, Schmitt, Kliegel, and Shapiro (2007) asserted that socio-economic status was a minor factor in determining marital satisfaction. Yip and Fung (2005) argued that effective communication is a more significant determinant of marital satisfaction than sociological factors including economic status, occupational status, and parental responsibilities. Nevertheless, Thomas et al. (1984) asserted that socioeconomic adequacy of the family's situation correlated positively with marital quality and satisfaction. With the evidence above and need for further exploration in the research literature, the following research question arises:

RQ8: Does economic status influence marital satisfaction in a dual-career marriage?

Methods

Participants

The participants of this study included 41 married individuals who identified themselves as being currently married and in a working career. The age of participants ranged from 18-55 years and older, with the greatest number of respondents categorized between 25-34 years of age. The sample was 56 percent female and 44 percent male. About 68 percent of the survey sample

identified their annual household income as above \$100,000. Approximately 51 percent of the respondents had earned a master's, doctorate or PhD degree, and only 15 percent had not earned a four-year college degree. The respondents reported that they had 0-5 children, with the most cited response being two children (56 percent).

Procedures

Prior to conducting the research study, the methodology, survey materials, advertising postings, and research questions were approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Portland. The participants of this study were recruited through electronic mail, Facebook, and personal connections of the primary researcher. The researcher posted the survey on Qualtrics, a web-based survey tool. The electronic survey included an Informed Consent Form that served as a gatekeeper to the survey. After clicking their consent, respondents read instructions about the survey items. The survey included measures of the respondents' experiences related to a dual-career marriage in which the husband and wife are also parents of children.

Measurement Scales

Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict, and Role Conflict.

Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict, and Role Conflict were operationalized using three different scales: a 5-item Work-Family Conflict measure developed by Netemeyer, McMurrian, and Boles (1996); a 5-item Family-Work Conflict measure also created by Netemeyer et al. (1996); and a 12-item Dual-Career Family Scale designed by Pendleton, Poloma, and Garland (1980). These scales measure the following aspects of work-family and role conflict: home and family-related demands, job strain, family strain, spillover from job to family, spillover from family to job, and other related factors (Netemeyer et al., 1996); domestic

responsibility, satisfaction in merging both roles, and career salience (Pendleton et al., 1980). For all of the survey items, respondents used a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Most of the statements in this measure were not modified nor adapted.

The researcher conducted a reliability test prior to launching the final survey. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the reliability test were .84 for Work-Family and Role Conflict, which demonstrated a relatively high degree of reliability.

Marital Satisfaction.

Marital Satisfaction was operationalized utilizing a Marital Satisfaction measure developed by Roach, Frazier, and Bowden (1981). This measurement scale is a 48-item instrument that has respondents report their satisfaction and quality of marriage; expectations of balance between family and work; the amount of support and encouragement they receive from their spouse; contentment, happiness, and ability to get along with their spouse; respectfulness, communication effectiveness, conflicts within their marriage, and other related factors (Roach et al., 1981). For all of the survey items, respondents used a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Approximately 10 items were removed from this measure, but the majority of the other statements were not altered nor adapted. The researcher decided to remove about 10 survey items because they were more useful for marriage counseling and therapy, and may have caused emotional distress for the participants in this study.

The primary investigator conducted a reliability test prior to sending out the final survey to respondents. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the reliability test were .80 for Marital Satisfaction, which the researcher deemed as a fairly high level of reliability.

Demographic Information and Identifying Characteristics.

Participants responded to close-ended questions about their sex, age, the age and number of children, the hours the respondent and his or her spouse worked each work, ethnicity, economic status, and educational level (see Appendix A).

Open-Ended Questions: Role Conflict, Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict, Communication Strategies and Techniques, and Marital Satisfaction.

For exploratory purposes, each survey included five open-ended questions that were located after the Likert-scale questions and prior to the demographic information. The five open-ended questions focused on work-family and family-work conflict; marital communication strategies and techniques to reduce work-family conflict; and marital satisfaction themes (see Appendix 1).

Results

Primary Findings

The researcher proposed eight research questions regarding the relationship and differences between two main variables: Work-family conflict and marital satisfaction. Research questions one through three investigated the relationship between work-family conflict and, respectively: marital satisfaction, number of children, and ages of children. Pearson bivariate correlations were conducted, but no relationship was found between work family conflict and marital satisfaction, number of children or ages of children.

For further clarification regarding number of children and work family conflict, the number of children was divided into two categories: one child compared to more than one (two-five). An Independent Samples T-Test was run and found a significant difference between families with one child versus more than one child (with one child $m = 78.00$; with more than one child $m = 64.69$; $p < .034$) (See Appendix 2: Table 1).

Research questions five, six and eight, investigated marital satisfaction in dual career marriages and the relationship, respectively, to: the number of children, educational level, and economic status of the respondent. Pearson bivariate correlations revealed no significant relationships between marital satisfaction and any of these variables. With respect to economic status and work-family conflict, however (RQ 7), a small, but significant correlation was found ($r = .391$; $p < .013$) (See Appendix 2: Table 2).

Qualitative Findings

Several other themes emerged in the open-ended responses of the survey in regards to family-work conflict, work-family conflict, marital communication strategies and techniques to reduce work-family conflict, and marital satisfaction. First, respondents reported that the following three primary reasons caused tension at home because of family versus work pressure: inconsistent working hours, scheduling conflicts, and having a sick child to take care of (See Table 3 Below).

Table 3: Tension at home because of family versus work pressure

Reason	Percentage of Respondents
Inconsistent working hours	24 %
Scheduling conflicts	12 %
Sick child	9 %

Almost one quarter of those surveyed stated that tension at home was created because of inconsistent working hours. As one respondent remarked:

“The nature of my job requires some nights and weekends. This is sometimes difficult to deal with, even when things are great in all other facets of our relationship. There were some feelings of ‘choosing’ work over family because of the commitment. This is usually brought on by stress at work.”

A similar sentiment of working “long hours,” “extra hours,” or “overtime” causing tension at home, was noted by several respondents, especially those who worked more than 40 hours per week.

Secondly, those surveyed provided causes of tension at work because of work versus family pressure. The following three reasons were given by respondents: A sick child to care for, working overtime, and work travel conflict (See Table 4 below).

Table 4: Tension at work because of work versus family pressure

Reason	Percentage of respondents
Sick child	33 %
Working overtime	12 %
Work travel conflicts	6%

Approximately one third of the sample remarked that a sick child at home had caused tension at work because of work versus family pressure. One person surveyed remarked the following:

“There is a fear of judgment when having to be out of the office for sick children. There is a fear of taking vacation and time to spend with the family that people will think you aren't committed to your job or that you don't work hard. The (work) atmosphere isn't conducive to taking time off.”

Multiple respondents discussed the negative perception that developed when he or she was away from work to take care of a sick child. Others stated that it is challenging to balance work and family priorities when a child is sick, and also to determine which parent should stay at home with the ill child.

Thirdly, respondents wrote about communication strategies or techniques that they have utilized to reduce work-family conflict in their current family and work situations. Three consistent strategies or techniques were offered: Talking about stresses and conflicts, maintaining open communication, and planning and scheduling ahead (See Table 5 below).

Table 5: Communication strategies or techniques to reduce work-family conflict

Strategies or techniques	Percentage of Respondents
Talking about stresses and conflicts	29 %
Maintaining open communication	26 %
Planning and scheduling ahead	26 %

Almost 30 percent of the survey sample emphasized the importance of talking about and discussing stresses and conflicts within the marriage and family. Several respondents commented on “talking conflict out instead of letting it simmer,” using effective conflict management and resolution strategies, and determining stressors and sources of conflict. As one respondent noted,

I believe it is healthy in a marriage to talk about the good and the bad that went on every week at least. Each partner should have time to explain what he or she liked or disliked about the previous week.

The ability to maintain open communication was the second communication strategy or technique reported by 26 percent of those surveyed. Several respondents wrote about keeping “very open lines of communication,” “deal(ing) with it head on,” and realizing that “open, honest communication is key.”

Similarly, 26 percent of the survey sample stated that planning and scheduling ahead was an important communication strategy that they used within their marriage and family communication. One surveyed person stated the following about scheduling and planning ahead:

We go over calendars weekly and track events that are further out to make sure we have childcare coverage and that one or both of us will be able to attend school or extra-curricular activities.

Several others who were surveyed remarked on the importance of “scheduling a specific time to plan,” utilizing a large calendar to “write everyone’s commitments,” “creating a schedule each week,” and using a “calendar on the refrigerator” for family planning purposes.

Respondents were also asked about what would make their marriage more satisfying. Three primary themes developed in regards to bringing greater satisfaction to their marriage: More quality time together, greater financial security, and less extended family involvement/time (See Table 6 Below).

Table 6: Themes to make the marriage more satisfying

Satisfaction variable	Percentage of Respondents
More quality time together	42 %
Greater financial security	9 %
Less extended family involvement/time	6%

Approximately 42 percent of the survey sample claimed that more quality time together would enhance marital satisfaction. One respondent talked about the value of planning quality time with her spouse:

Besides more hours in the day? I believe my marriage would be more satisfying if my spouse and I planned in more frequent dates and getaways. Spontaneous is nice, but can be few and far between as life gets away from us.

Respondents provided answers that ranged from “more time to engage in conversation,” to “less work, more time together,” to “more date nights and time just for my husband and I.”

Lastly, the survey sample responded to an open-ended question about what currently brings the most satisfaction to their marriage. The respondents offered four consistent answers to this question: Sharing life and quality time together, supporting each other and the spouses’ personal growth and development, children and family, and unconditional love (See Table 7 Below).

Table 7: Themes that currently make the marriage most satisfying

Satisfaction Variable	Percentage of Respondents
Sharing life and quality time together	30 %
Supporting each other, and the spouses’ personal growth and development	15 %
Focus on children and family	15 %
Unconditional love	12 %

Around 30 percent of the survey sample reported that sharing life and quality time together currently makes their marriage most satisfying. One respondent explained his contentment of sharing life with his wife and how that has brought satisfaction to the marriage relationship:

Having an incredible wife to share my life with (both the good and the bad) and the understanding that our relationship can thrive in the face of difficult situations makes me more confident in not only the relationship, but also in myself.

Several other men and women in the survey sample discussed how their marriage is currently satisfying because of “spending time together and traveling together,” “time together doing common activities,” “having someone to share time with, engage in conversation with, someone to be close with...” In short, the respondents disclosed several different reasons for why their marriage was currently satisfying, with the most significant response focusing on quality time and sharing life together.

Discussion

Dual-career marriages may have significant positive and negative implications for role conflict and marital satisfaction, depending on the circumstances and context within the marriage and family. Two significant findings were discovered in this study about dual-career marriages in which the spouses have children of their own. First, there are significant differences between the number of children (one versus more than one child) and work-family conflict in a dual-career marriage (RQ4). Second, there is a significant relationship between economic status and work-family conflict in a dual-career marriage (RQ7). For the other six other research questions, there were no significant relationships between the two variables that were analyzed.

Difference between Work-Family Conflict versus Number of Children. One possible explanation for the significant difference between the work-family conflict encountered by dual-career couples with one child versus more than one child (2-5) is due to the adjustment and transition that takes place from being a newly married couple without children, to a married couple with a new child and parenting roles and responsibilities (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005). As Lewis and Cooper (1987) contended, parental role pressure is the largest type of stressor for parents of young children. Role strain can cause tension, disharmony, and conflict among parents with one new child in their household (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). With the addition of a new child in the family, heightened conflicts may arise between work and family roles, and role strain may lead to increased work-family conflict between parents in dual-career marriages (Bedeian et al., 1988). Parents with more than one child may learn to adapt and adjust to parenthood and the parents' negotiated roles and responsibilities between work and family.

Relationship between Work-Family Conflict and Economic Status. The correlation between work-family conflict and economic status was expected in this study due to previous scholarly research. Generally, when parents and spouses feel that they have higher financial security, they are less likely to experience as much role strain and pressure, and they are ultimately less worried and concerned about providing basic needs (i.e., taking care of children, paying bills, affording housing each month, providing regular meals, spending quality time with their family members, etc.). Additionally, families with a higher economic status have access to resources and support systems such as higher quality childcare, daycare, babysitting, nannies, and housekeepers if they choose. As Trachtenberg et al. (2002) claimed, low income households may normally experience a greater amount of work-family conflict when compared to high income households. Additionally, families experiencing financial stressors are more likely to

encounter work-home conflict compared to those families that are financially secure (Larson et al., 1994).

No Relationship between Work-Family Conflict and Marital Satisfaction: As determined in the research study, no correlation was found between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction. A number of explanations may account for this. First, the finding may suggest that work-family conflict alone does not detract from marital satisfaction. Given the importance of communication in the open-ended questions, this absence of a relationship may indicate that conflict management, or how conflicts are resolved, within the family environment is more important than merely the amount of conflicts or the types of conflict that occurred. Work-family conflict can result in positive or negative outcomes depending on the conflict management style of the parents and family (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Wong & Goodwin, 2009).

Therefore, marital satisfaction may depend more strongly on the conflict management style of the married couples than the types of conflicts that are being addressed (Busby & Holman, 2009; & Gottman, 1999). John Gottman, who is renowned for his research on marital stability and relational analysis, asserted that there are three functional styles of conflict management including avoidant, volatile, and validating styles (Busby & Holman, 2009; Gottman, 1999). Avoidant couples strive to lessen and decrease potential conflicts; volatile couples are comfortable with disagreement and disharmony, and often tend to verbally fight in their relationship; and validating couples respect and listen to each other's point of view and make efforts to compromise (Gottman, 1999). According to Gottman (1999), couples can maintain a greater satisfied, stable, and regulated marriage when their conflict management styles align. Regardless of the conflicts that are experienced, married couples with the same

conflict management styles tend to disengage from destructive conflict and engage in positive interactions (Busby & Holman, 2009; Gottman, 1999).

In addition to the importance of regulated and aligning conflict management styles, Gottman and Silver (1999) discussed seven guiding principles that can lead to marital satisfaction. One of the primary principles is that positive behaviors must heavily outweigh negative behaviors in married relationships (Gottman & Silver, 1999). When a ratio of 5 to 1 positive to negative behaviors is matched or exceeded, spouses generally experience greater marital satisfaction, and a longer lasting and quality relationship (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

No Relationship between Work-Family Conflict and Age of Children. The data analysis in this research study found that there is not a relationship between work-family conflict and the age of children. A potential explanation for this finding is that parents and spouses can encounter work-family conflict at any point of the family life cycle (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005; Galvin et al., 2011). Work-family and family-work conflict is inevitable in families with young children, families with adolescents, and families with children that are going into college and preparing for adulthood (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005; Galvin et al., 2011). The spillover between family to work and work to family conflict is mostly constant for the parents when the children are any age. As Perrone and Worthington (2001) affirmed, married couples must always negotiate roles and responsibilities. In short, when children are an element of the family unit, parents will feel role strain because they must determine who is responsible for taking care of the children and parenting roles; household tasks and responsibilities; providing financial security for the family; and other significant roles and responsibilities within the family unit (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). Moreover, a larger and more diverse survey sample, of parents and their respective children, may have modified this result in the research study.

No Relationship between Marital Satisfaction and All Other Variables. As indicated by the results, there were no significant relationships that were present between marital satisfaction and the following variables respectively: age of children, number of children, educational level, and economic status of dual-career spouses. While all of these factors can indirectly influence the quality, contentment, and satisfaction of the marriage, the results demonstrated that other relational, communicative, emotional, and intangible values may be more important to the overall satisfaction of the marriage. However, a larger and more diverse survey sample may have yielded greater variation, specifically in regards to the educational level, which could have influenced the results.

The relational, communicative, emotional, and intangible values of the relationships are connected with the Social Exchange Theory. The Social Exchange Theory explains that marital satisfaction or happiness is partially based on the idea that rewards need to outweigh the costs of the marriage (Rosenbaum, 2009; Stafford, 2008). The rewards of a marriage may include such factors as love, affection, status, money, security, and friendship (Rosenbaum, 2009; Stafford, 2008). Thus, it can be inferred that while children, educational level, and economic status may impact the marriage in positive and negative ways, the overall satisfaction relies on values such as love, trust, respect, happiness, conflict management and resolution, effective communication, similar personal and family goals, and spending quality time together. Additionally, as the Equity Theory acknowledges, spouses tend to experience greater marital satisfaction when they perceive themselves to be treated equitably in terms of the roles and responsibilities of being a spouse and parent within the family (Guerrero, La Valley, & Farinelli, 2008). In sum, the findings support the notion that other relational, emotional, communicative, and intangible values more directly

influence marital satisfaction than factors such as age of children, number of children, educational level, and economic status.

Limitations

This research study has several potential limitations, with implications for future research. First, the survey sample lacked diversity, which could have negatively affected the overall significance of the results in this study. The sample did not reflect a diverse population of men and women in dual career marriages with children of varying ages. Although the sample represented a fairly equal number of women (56 percent) and men (44 percent), the economic status and educational level of the participants mostly fell into the middle and higher categories. Approximately 68 percent of the respondents reported that their annual household income was above \$100,000. A higher economic status can influence access to such external resources and support systems such as child care and daycare, and hiring outside help such as housekeepers, babysitters, and nannies. Similarly, most of the survey sample was highly educated. About 51 percent of the respondents had earned a master's, doctorate or PhD degree, and only 15 percent of those surveyed had not earned a four-year college degree. With a sample of highly educated individuals, this may mean that the married spouses and parents have developed greater knowledge and education on topics related to effective parenting, resolving work-family conflicts and issues, working towards a marriage filled with happiness and satisfaction, and being flexible in their jobs and careers.

Another potential limitation involves the size of the survey sample. A total of 41 respondents completed the survey, which may have resulted in a higher standard deviation, uncoverage bias, and voluntary response bias. When a study has a larger standard deviation, the survey sample representation is further away from the entire population. An uncoverage bias

means that some subjects did not have the opportunity to participate in this survey. This survey sample may have also experienced a voluntary response bias since only a small group of people had access to or knowledge about participating in the study. Due to the researcher analyzing multiple variables in this study, a larger sample size would have improved the data collection and enhanced the reliability of the study.

The survey design is a third possible limitation for this research study. In particular, the participants were asked to identify the quantity and ages of their children. For those surveyed who had multiple children, the mean age of their children were considered in the data analysis. For example, a parent of two children ages six and 12, the mean age of nine would be utilized in the data analysis. This survey design shortcoming may have skewed the results for both marital satisfaction and work-family conflict based on the ages of the children. Future research studies should utilize the age of the youngest or oldest child in order to create consistency among the survey respondents.

The survey sample criteria may have been another limitation. The informed consent form read that the participants in the study needed to be married men and women in working careers, who were parents of young children. However, some of the advertising postings provided by the researcher did not state the requirement that the participants needed to have children of their own to complete the survey. Instead, the advertising and publicity stated that subjects needed to currently be in a married relationship and in working careers to participate in the research study. This discrepancy may have caused the results to be skewed, in addition to inaccurate and inconsistent overall survey results.

Conclusion

The topic of dual-career marriages will likely continue to serve as an exploratory research topic in the family communication and sociological research literature in the near future due to the consistent growth and evolution of these types of marriages in the U.S. society. The concept of dual-career marriages is vastly becoming a norm in the American culture (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). The goal of this study was to examine dual-career marriage and its influence on role conflict and marital satisfaction. The researcher proposed eight research questions inquiring about the potential significant differences and correlations between role conflict and marital satisfaction. Through analyzing the data and gathering results, the investigator determined that work-family conflict shows a significant difference based on the number of children in the family and a significant relationship with economic status in dual-career marriages. Work-family conflict did not have a relationship with marital satisfaction nor the age of children in a dual-career marriage. Additionally, no significant relationships were determined between marital satisfaction and the following variables: age of children, number of children, educational level, and economic status.

In addition to the quantitative results, multiple qualitative themes were gathered from the data analysis of open-ended questions regarding family-work conflict, work-family conflict, marital communication strategies and techniques, and marital satisfaction variables. From evaluating the survey sample, the most common family-work and work-family conflicts included inconsistent working hours; scheduling conflicts; and a sick child that needed to be cared for. The three most effective communication strategies or techniques for dual-career marriages included talking about stresses and conflicts; maintaining open communication; and planning and scheduling ahead. In terms of what would make a dual-career marriage more satisfying,

greater quality time together; more financial security; and less extended family involvement and time were the three most cited responses. Lastly, in regards to what currently makes one's dual-career marriage most satisfying, the four most common answers included the following: Sharing life and quality time together; supporting each other and the spouses' personal growth and development; a focus on children and family; and unconditional love. Overall, all of the respective qualitative themes are considered recommendations for current dual-career spouses and parents with children of their own. These qualitative results are equally useful for future research surrounding the topic of dual-career marriages.

Future Research and Directions

Although this research study primarily utilized quantitative research, future research would benefit from exploring dual-career marriage and the impact on role conflict and marital satisfaction through a qualitative lens. Qualitative research may provide more honest and sincere; in depth; and concrete and tangible responses from participants in a study. Focus groups or interviews with dual-career parents of young children could serve as a more useful and effective method for gathering data for this type of research study.

While this research study examined dual-career marriages in the context of role conflict and marital satisfaction primarily of families with younger children, it did not focus directly on the marriage, family, and children at different phases of the family life cycle (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005; Galvin et al., 2011). One direction for future research could be comparing and contrasting the role conflicts and marital satisfaction of spouses at different stages of the family life cycle, including 1.) The joining of families through marriage (the new couple), 2.) Families with young children, 3.) Families with adolescents, 4.) Launching children and moving on, and 5.) Families in later life (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005; Galvin et al., 2011).

Another area of future research could be considering the effect of dual-career marriages on role conflict and marital satisfaction through a variety of other variables. A research study could explore this topic through the identity lens of gender; ethnicity, nationality, or race; culture of the family of origin; and one's socialization surrounding the marriage and family unit. Additionally, future research could examine the relationships between dual-career marriages, decision-making, and power, specifically in which both spouses are in full-time careers and earn similar salaries and benefits for their family.

Finally, scholarly research could benefit from exploring dual-career marriages through the different married relationship and couple typologies including traditional, independents, and separates (Galvin et al., 2011). According to Galvin et al. (2011), married couple types may influence levels of marital satisfaction, cohesion, consensus, affectional expression, in addition to sex roles in the marriage. Future research could examine the relationship between dual-career marriages, role conflict, and marital satisfaction through the lens of married couple types. Researchers could specifically analyze the four primary types of dual-career couples: accommodators, adversaries, allies, and acrobats, and how these dual-career marriage typologies impact role conflict and marital satisfaction (Cherpas, 1985).

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

Dual Career Marriage Survey Questionnaire

Instructions: *Thank you for taking the time to be part of this study. Please record your responses on the answer sheet provided below. Please give honest answers that truly reflect your current marriage and family life.*

For questions 1-46: *On a scale of 1 to 5, where “1” = strongly disagree, “2” = disagree, “3” = neutral, “4” = agree, and “5” = strongly agree, please circle the number that would most apply to your marriage and family life:*

1. The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1		2	3	4
				5

2. The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands my job puts on me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill family duties.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. Due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to my plans for family activities.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

7. I have to put off doing things at work because of demands on my time at home.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

8. Things I want to do at work don't get done because of the demands of my family or spouse/partner.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

9. My home life interferes with my responsibilities at work such as getting to work on time, accomplishing daily tasks, and working overtime.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

10. Family-related strain interferes with my ability to perform job-related duties.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

11. If a child were ill and needed to remain home from school, I would be (have been) more likely to stay home with him/her than my spouse.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

12. Given the structure of our society, it is important that the woman assume primary responsibility for child care.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

13. I consider my spouse to be the main breadwinner in the family.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

14. My income is as vital to the well-being of our family as is my spouse's.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

15. I would not attend a professional convention if it inconvenienced my spouse.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

16. Although my spouse may assist me, the responsibility for household tasks is primarily mine.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

17. If I feel that I am meeting my domestic responsibilities due to my career involvement, I should cut back my career demands.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

18. My career has made me a better spouse that I would have been otherwise.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

19. Married professionals have the best of two worlds: professional employment combined with a full family life.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

20. My career has made me a better parent (mother or father) than I otherwise would have been.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

21. I spend as much or more actual time with my children/or child as my non-working neighbors who are active in community affairs.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

22. I know what my spouse expects of me in our balance between family and work.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

23. My spouse could make the stress between work and family easier for me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

24. I know where I stand with my spouse.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

25. I become upset, angry, or irritable because of work-family conflict.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

26. I feel competent and fully able to handle my marriage and work.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

27. I get discouraged trying to make my work and family compromises.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

28. My spouse gives me sufficient opportunity to talk about work-family conflict.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

29. I have been able to have a successful balance between work and family so far.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

30. My spouse regards me as an equal in family house matters.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

31. My spouse inspires me to do my best at work.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

32. I am really interested in my spouse's work.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

33. I get along well with my spouse.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

34. My spouse makes unfair demands on my free time.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

35. My spouse seems unreasonable in what s/he expects around the house.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

36. My marriage helps me toward the goals I have set for myself.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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1 2 3 4 5

37. My spouse is willing to make helpful improvements in our relationship.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

38. Our relationship has conflict around matters of recreation.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

39. My spouse and I agree on our balance between work and home.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

40. My spouse and I share the same ideas about work and family balance.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

41. My spouse and I enjoy several mutually satisfying outside interests together.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

42. My spouse respects my work.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

43. Most of the time my spouse understands the way I feel about my work.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

44. My spouse listens to what I have to say when I talk about work.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

45. I frequently enjoy pleasant conversations with my spouse.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
1 2 3 4 5

46. I am satisfied with my marriage.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
1 2 3 4 5

For question 47-51: *Please respond to following statements or questions in the space provided:*

47. Please describe a time in which you experienced tension at home because of the pressure of family versus work.

48. Please describe a time in which you experienced tension at work because of the pressure of work versus family.

49. What kind of communication/communication techniques do you think would help to reduce work-family conflict?

50. What do you think would make your marriage more satisfying?

51. What currently makes your marriage most satisfying?

For Questions 52-60: *These final survey items concern demographic information. Please indicate your answer with an "x" next to the choice that applies to you. For open-ended questions, please fill in the blanks with the appropriate information.*

52. Your sex:

Male Female

53. Your age (in years): _____

54. How many children do you have?

1 3
 2 4
 5+

55. What are the current ages and sex of all of your children? Please indicate in the space provided below:

56. How many hours per week do you currently work in a job setting (on average over the last year)? _____

57. How many hours per week does your spouse currently work in a job setting (on average over the last year)? _____

58. What is your ethnicity?

_____ European American

_____ Asian Descent

_____ African American

_____ Middle Eastern

_____ Hispanic/Mexican

_____ Pacific Islander

_____ Other

59. How would you identify your family's economic status?

_____ Under \$25,000

_____ \$75,001-\$100,000

_____ \$25,001-\$50,000

_____ \$100,001-\$125,000

_____ \$50,001-\$75,000

_____ \$125,001-\$150,000

_____ \$150,001-\$175,000

60. What is your highest level of education?

_____ Some high school

_____ Earned high school diploma

_____ Some college (two or four year)

_____ Earned associate's/two-year degree

_____ Earned bachelor's degree

_____ Earned master's degree

_____ Earned doctorate or PhD degree

Appendix 2: Tables of Significant Quantitative Results

Table 1: *The difference between work-family conflict and the number of children (N= 40)*

Total Group Statistics (N= 40)

Number of Children		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Work-Family dimension 1	1	3	78.0000	3.60555	2.08167
Conflict Total	1 2	26	64.6923	10.09067	1.97894

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Work-Family Conflict Total Equal variances assumed	3.287	.081	2.236	27	.034
Equal variances not assumed			4.633	6.804	.003

Table 2: *The relationship between work-family conflict and economic status (N= 40)*

		Work-Family Conflict Total	Economic Status
Work-Family Conflict Total	Pearson Correlation	1	.391 [*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.013
	N	40	40
Economic Status	Pearson Correlation	.391 [*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013	
	N	40	40