

CHANGE IN THE FUNCTIONAL FAMILY SUPPORT SYSTEM
FOR MARRIED WOMEN RETURNING TO HIGHER
EDUCATION AT SELECTED NORTHEASTERN
OKLAHOMA TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

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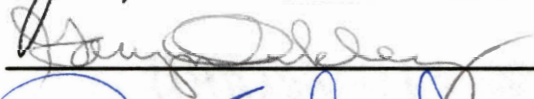
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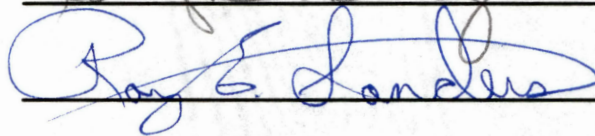
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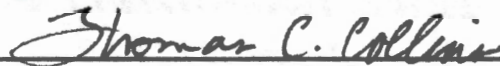
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Women are returning to college in ever increasing numbers. Statistics have shown that 40 percent of all students in degree programs are over age 25 and, of those, 56 percent are women (Patterson, 1988). It has also been projected that by the year 2000, one half of all undergraduate females will be of nontraditional age (Hammer-Higgins, 1987). Counselors and career planners must be sensitive to needs of that large and growing population.

Personal changes, as well as changes within society, have literally forced women to re-evaluate their stereotypical roles (Smith, 1980). Leavitt (1989) referred to this as a temporary state of turmoil, in which women attempt to make a new sense of self while still clinging to the former self for stability. Technology has given women new freedom and, therefore, more time. With modern conveniences that her mother could only dream about, today's woman spends fewer hours on housework. Children also go to school sooner and tend to stay longer, therefore leaving more leisure time for their mothers (Cross, 1981).

Being a wife is no longer a lifelong role, either. Divorce has changed the make-up of many families. The Bureau of the Census of the U. S. Department of Commerce figures show that in 1989, 10,890,000 households were headed by women. Research studies have

shown that preparation for employment and access to a better job are primary reasons women cite for returning to education (Stephenson, 1976; Weilert & VanDusseldorp, 1983).

Many women have found that their skills are technologically obsolete. After leaving the job market to devote years to marriage and children they find they must either re-enter at a lower level than when they left or retrain (Stephenson, 1976).

Leavitt (1989) has referred to re-entry women as the pioneers of today. They are seeking an expansion of identity and personal growth while, at the same time, remaining within the boundaries of the family. As these changes take place, roles inevitably must change within the family.

Statement of the Problem

There is a need to explore the change in the family support system that re-entry women experience upon their return to school because of that population's high drop out rate.

Purpose of the Study

Scott (1980) identified that re-entry women constitute the highest rate, at 48 percent, of college students who drop out of school. Therefore, to insure successful matriculation of this group, the purpose of this study was to explore the family support changes that may or may not take place upon their return to school and to assist re-entry students, their families, and the institutions involved better understand, counsel, and cope with these changes,

if indeed there are any. Hammer-Higgins made the recommendation in her 1987 study that community college re-entry students be studied, hence the decision to target this group.

Objectives

In order to satisfy the purpose of this research study, the following objectives were developed:

1. To identify what functional family support the married female received after returning to college.
2. To compare the differences between functional family support received before and after returning to college.
3. To determine the differences in functional family support among females with varying college workloads.
4. To identify the differences in functional family support among students in different college locations.
5. To compare the differences in functional family support based upon spouse's occupation.

Assumptions and Limitations

This research study proceeded under the assumption that all respondents answered truthfully and to the best of their abilities. It was further assumed that these respondents were a true representation of their population. The study was limited, however, by the fact that small sample of the population was examined and that a limited geographic area was canvassed.

Definitions

The following definitions were used for the purposes of this study:

Disabled: An individual whose normal physical or mental abilities have been weakened or destroyed (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1975).

Functional Support: Division of household tasks between spouse, children (if any), and student (Huston-Hoburg & Strange, 1986).

Management Occupation: For the purposes of this study, persons who are involved in day-to-day decision making that has an effect on a business or company.

Metropolitan Community: For the purposes of this study, a major city in a region and the populated areas that surrounds it, with a combined population of over 250,000. Tulsa Junior College, Tulsa, Oklahoma, was the selected metropolitan college.

Professional Occupation: For the purposes of this study, an occupation that requires at least a college degree and, possibly, further education.

Re-entry women: Females, enrolled for academic credit, who have interrupted their formal education for a number of years before returning to school (Hammer-Higgins, 1987).

Roles: The behaviors expected of an individual (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1975).

Rural Community: For the purposes of this study, a town with a population of not more than 15,000, surrounded by agricultural areas that are sparsely populated. Northeastern Oklahoma A & M, Miami,

Oklahoma, was the selected rural college.

Self-employed: For the purposes of this study, an individual who owns and operates his/her own business.

Skilled Occupation: For the purposes of this study, workers involved in production.

Suburban Community: For the purposes of this study, a residential town, with a population between 15,000 and 40,000, that is on the perimeter of a major city. Rogers State College, Claremore, Oklahoma, was the selected suburban college.

Tasks: A segment of work assigned as part of one's duties (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1975).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature produced some conflicting results, as well as some that were in complete agreement. This chapter will provide information in two basic sections. The first section will identify the re-entry woman. The second section will provide information on support from within the family, both emotional and functional. There will also be a summary at the conclusion of the chapter.

Re-entry Women

Demographics

One all-encompassing definition of the re-entry woman does not exist. MacKinnon-Slaney, Barber, and Slaney (1988) best summed up the demographics of re-entry women when they said, "Re-entry women as a group are characterized by their diversity" (p. 327).

The age when one becomes a re-entry woman is a rather ambiguous area. Patterson and Blank (1984) used, in their study on the profile of the mature woman student, females past the traditional (18-22) college age. However, in another part of the report, national statistics are quoted as saying ". . . 40 percent of students enrolled in degree programs are over 25 and 56 percent of these adult learners are women" (p. 1). There was somewhat a lack of

consistency even within that one particular paper. Others, such as MacKinnon-Slaney et al. (1988) and Hammer-Higgins (1987), used women over the age of 25 for their research. Read, Elliott, Escobar, and Slaney (1988) clearly define the re-entry woman as being over the age of 25. Leavitt (1989) states no definition for age requirements for the re-entry woman, but used women ages 28 to 48 in her study. Likewise, Huston-Hoburg and Strange (1986) stated no age guidelines, but used, in their research, returning women college students who were "older than average age" (p. 142). It appeared as if the required entrance age into this population was not definitely stated in most of the research in concrete terms, but where it was, 25 appeared to be mentioned most frequently.

Beyond age, not much else was categorically explainable. Re-entry women were from all socioeconomic groups, possessed different levels of education, were of various marital situations, and might or might not have children (Weilert & Van Dusseldorp, 1983; Hammer-Higgins, 1987; Leavitt, 1989).

Role Conflicts

Re-entry women generally suffered from role conflicts. Many struggled in an attempt to become a "super-person," and to keep family routine and home life on an even keel (Smith, 1980). They seemed to have a deep-seated fear of discord from within the family, both with the marriage and with the children, if any drastic disruption in the normal flow of events took place. Huston-Hoburg and Strange (1986) found that women faced a much greater direct

challenge to traditional role classifications, as contrasted to men, when they re-enter the educational setting. In fact, they postulated that the woman's return may eventually cause great adjustments to the working order of the family.

Patterson and Blank (1988) developed a theory which encompassed role conflict that was rooted within re-entry women. They stated that nurturing responsibilities were in direct opposition with personal ambition and intellectual desire. Patterson and Blank suggest it surfaced as a problem of time management. They went on to say that attempting to accomplish the additional requirements of class work while still maintaining family duties can foster conflicting feelings of role responsibility.

Family Support

Functional Support

As defined in Chapter I, functional support involves the division of household tasks between the student, spouse, and children (if any). Conflicting results were reported in research in this area, also. Hammer-Higgins (1987) and Patterson and Blank (1988) report the findings of their respective research studies to show that there is little additional help or re-assignment of duties with regard to household tasks. Leavitt (1989) concluded that few changes were reported as far as division of household tasks were concerned. Many of the women in her study preferred to add the extra burden to their own load rather than ask their spouse for help. Conversely, Stephenson (1976) found that 74.3 percent of re-entry women reported that their husbands were more willing to assist and were

particularly more helpful with breakfast preparation, grocery shopping, and helping children with homework. The same study also revealed that 60.3 percent of the women felt their children helped more. Could these dissimilar findings by Stephenson somehow be affected by the fact that they were collected in the mid-1970's?

Scott and King (1985) simply reported that women in their study perceived their husbands as not willing to help them with household duties. They further state that perhaps husbands do not believe that their wives are suffering from role strain as long as everything is running well within the household. Smith (1980) similarly reported that wives appear to be unable to ask for help.

Emotional Support

Approval and encouragement of the students' educational goals constitute emotional support and several studies have shown just how important spousal and family support is to the re-entry woman (Smith, 1980; Huston-Hoburg & Strange, 1986). In a study of older women (over 50 years of age) conducted by Hildreth, Dilworth-Anderson, and Rabe (1983) many women said that they would have never earned a degree without the support of their spouse and children. Less stress is also reported by women who enjoy full family support (Farmer, 1978). In studies conducted where marital status is a factor, married women receive more emotional support from their families than do their separated or divorced counterparts (Read et al., 1988).

Many times for the husband, the acceptance of change was the hardest aspect to accept of his wife's return to college. He

harbored feelings of abandonment and vulnerability (Smith, 1980). Research by Scott and King (1985) revealed that as long as the woman continued to meet all or even part of her family's needs, she would receive strong support from him. This parallels the findings of Leavitt (1939) that revealed husbands feel it is fine to go back to school, as long as everything goes on as usual in the home.

Smith (1980) conducted research on the levels of education and occupation for the husband. It was determined that the higher levels of each, the more supportive he was toward his re-entry spouse.

In a comparative study of male and female married re-entry students, Huston-Hoburg and Strange (1986) found that wives were more supportive of their husbands' return to college than vice versa. This could be tied into the traditional male/female role stereotypes.

As opposed to functional support, most women in a study conducted by Patterson and Blank (1988) reported that the majority of the support they received from their spouse was emotional.

Summary

As a group, the demographics of re-entry women are quite heterogeneous. This population incorporates women of varying marital status, socio-economic groupings, race, educational and occupational backgrounds, and age. Virtually all the literature agreed that the one characteristic common to women in this group was the fact that she had been away from the academic setting for a number of years. Entrance age for this growing and increasingly important population varied, but generally age 25 has been accepted as re-entry status.

Family support is an important ingredient needed for the academic success of re-entry women. Functional support is defined as the division of household tasks between spouse, children, and student. Some research has shown the husband and children do indeed pitch in and assume more household responsibility, while other research indicated the exact opposite. Re-entry women have often experienced role conflict as they struggle with familial responsibilities and a desire to expand their own personal experience.

Emotional support from the spouse and family, which is approval or encouragement for educational goals, has proved to be a major factor in the student's academic success. Unfortunately, many women felt that this support needed to be earned and they only received it when the household ran the same as it did before her return. In other words, it is perfectly acceptable to return to school as long as nothing changes within the family or household. Husbands with higher educational and occupational status offer more support to their wives.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

This chapter will report the procedures used in the collection of the data for the study. It will cover the population and scope of the study, information about the instrument, the conduct of the study, and the analysis of the data.

This research study was designed to identify the changes in functional spousal and family support that the married female student does or does not experience after returning to the educational community as a student.

Population and Scope of Study

Population

The population surveyed were married women, over the age of 25, who attended one of three northeastern Oklahoma two-year colleges: Northeastern A & M College, Miami, Oklahoma; Rogers State College, Claremore, Oklahoma; or Tulsa Junior College, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Women separated from their husbands were included in the study because, on that particular day, they still met the qualification of being married. The sample consisted of 50 randomly selected individuals accessible to the researcher on an average academic day.

The breakdown of participants was as follows: Northeastern A & M College - 19, Rogers State College - 16, and Tulsa Junior College - 15.

Scope of the Study

The data for the study were collected by the researcher in February, 1992. The sites, listed above, include one rural community college, Northeastern A & M College; one suburban community college, Rogers State College; and one metropolitan community college, Tulsa Junior College.

Early in the month of February, 1992, the researcher contacted the Student Affairs Office at each site and arranged for an appointment, at their convenience, to discuss the project. Each person contacted was extremely helpful and arrangements were made for the researcher to personally conduct a survey at each institution. One day was spent at each location.

Methods of meeting with the target population varied slightly at each institution. For example, at Northeastern A & M, the researcher visited on a day that the adult students were having a group meeting. A short introduction was made by the researcher. Qualifications were explained and volunteers were asked to fill out a questionnaire. No further instructions were given and no further questions pertaining to the instrument were answered. Confidentiality was stressed, in fact, no identifying marks of any type were used on the instrument.

At Rogers State College, the researcher visited random classes, repeated the introductory procedure, and again asked for volunteers.

For data collection at Tulsa Junior College, the researcher approached subjects in the campus cafeteria, explained the study, and asked for volunteers.

Participants were very helpful at all three locations. At Northeastern A & M College, in particular, interest in the results was extremely high. Also, of all the eligible women approached, no one declined to complete a questionnaire.

The researcher promised to deliver the findings to each interested institution upon completion.

Instrument

The instrument used to gather the data for this study was developed by Huston-Hoburg in 1984, as reported in Tripp (1988). Since the original questionnaire measured adult spouse support for both males and females and also studied other areas of support, in addition to functional, it had to be modified somewhat by the current researcher. The first part of the questionnaire asked for background information from the participants. Following that was a question about specific household chores that used a Likert-type rating scale. Several other questions followed that required specific answers. At the conclusion of the questionnaire, participants were thanked and asked to make general comments, if they so desired. A copy of the modified questionnaire appears in Appendix A.

Reliability

The reliability of the instrument was established by Tripp (1988). She first determined the internal consistency of the

instrument. To do that, she calculated alpha scores by means of the Statistical Analysis System. The division of household tasks scale had an 0.44 alpha coefficient and an 0.06 average correlation. The adjustments to change scale, which included four items, had an 0.20 alpha coefficient and an 0.06 average correlation. She also determined the stability of the instrument by use of the test/retest method. For the division of household tasks, the Pearson Product-Moment r coefficient was .75 and the observed significance level (hereafter known as OSL) was .09. In the adjustments to change category, the r coefficient was .79 and the OSL was .06. Tripp (1988) found that various statisticians offered different readings to these figures, but determined after studying the works of several research authorities, that these findings had significantly high correlations for basic research.

Validity

Validity for the original Huston-Hoburg instrument was not reported (Tripp, 1988). Tripp did, however, test construct and external validity. Although exact statistics were not reported, Tripp did conclude the Huston-Hoburg instrument was valid.

Analysis of the Data

Basic descriptive statistics of percentages and means were employed in this study. Respondents were categorized four different ways: by location, age group, credit hours, and spouse occupation. Mean responses were used to describe the characteristics of the

respondents and in analyzing various household tasks according to different variables. Chi square calculations were computed where appropriate.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine the change in the functional family support system for married women over the age of 25 who have returned to higher education at selected northeastern Oklahoma two-year colleges. A sample of 50 women was randomly selected in February of 1992 from one of three institutions: Northeastern Oklahoma A & M College, Miami, Oklahoma; Rogers State College, Claremore, Oklahoma; and Tulsa Junior College, Tulsa, Oklahoma. As an adjunct to the study, location of the institution and spouse occupation was added to the mix to determine if either of those factors had an effect on functional family support. This chapter will present the findings of the study.

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics of the 50 respondents were broken down into three age groups, as shown in Table I: 25 to 30 years of age ($n = 14$), 31 to 40 years of age ($n = 21$), and 44+ years of age ($n = 15$). Table I displays questions numbered 1, 2, 4, 5, and 11 in the questionnaire (See Appendix A).

In the 25 to 30 age group, the mean age was 27.6 years. Twelve in that group were married and two were separated from their husbands. The mean number of children was 1.8. As far as grade

TABLE I
CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE GROUP

Characteristics	Age Group in Years			Total N = 50
	25 - 30 n = 14	31 - 40 n = 21	41+ n = 15	
<u>Mean Age</u>	27.6	34.1	46.7	36.0*
<u>Marital Status</u>				
Married	12	18	14	44
Separated	2	3	1	6
<u>Number of Children</u>				
Mean Number	1.8	2.0	2.6	2.1*
<u>College Grade Classification</u>				
Freshman	12	11	5	28
Sophomore	2	8	8	18
Other		2	2	4
<u>Employment Status Before Returning</u>				
full-time employed	6	10	5	21
part-time employed	2	2	0	4
full-time homemaker	6	9	8	23
other	0	0	2	2

*Figures may not agree due to rounding error

classification, there were 12 freshman and two sophomores.

Concerning employment status before returning to school, six had full-time jobs, two worked part-time, and six were full-time homemakers.

In the 31 to 40 age group, the mean age was 34.1 years. Eighteen were married and three were separated. The mean number of children was 2.0. Eleven were classified as freshman, eight were classified as sophomores, and two checked the Other category (this included a no response answer and "already degreed--just taking class for fun"). The employment status for these women prior to their return to school included ten full-time responses, two part-time responses, and nine full-time homemaker responses.

Finally, for the 41+ age group, the mean age was 46.7 years. The marital status for this group included 14 who were married and one who was separated. The mean number of children was 2.6, the largest of the three age groups. Freshman in the group numbered five, sophomores numbered eight, and there were two Other responses (this included two no response answers). Five women were full-time employees before their return to school, none were employed part-time, eight were full-time homemakers, and two responded in the Other category. Of the two Other responses, one indicated that she owned her own business prior to returning to school and the other stated that for one-half of those years she was a full-time homemaker and for the other one-half of those years she was employed full-time.

For the entire 50 responses, the mean age was 36.0 years. Forty-four of the respondents were married and six were separated.

The mean number of children was 2.1. Freshman numbered 28, sophomores numbered 18, and there were four categorized as Other. A total of 21 were employed full-time before the return to school, four were employed part-time, 23 were full-time homemakers, and two categorized themselves as Other.

Table II records the reasons for returning to school, which was question number 12, by employment status of the respondents prior to the return. Career advancement was by far the most popular reason chosen by the respondents in all employment categories for returning to the educational community.

For women who were employed full-time prior to their return ($n = 21$), ten cited career advancement, seven cited career change, two each cited personal growth and update education for future needs, and zero cited meet new people and extra time to fill.

Of those who were employed part-time prior to their return ($n = 4$), no one selected the categories of: meet new people, career change, extra time to fill, or personal growth. Three wanted career advancement and one desired to update education for future needs.

Full-time homemakers, the largest group ($n = 23$), checked career advancement nine times, personal growth seven times, extra time to fill three times, update education for future two times, and meet new people and career change one each.

Looking at this table using percentages, of those employed full-time prior to their return, 48 percent were looking for career advancement.

TABLE II
REASONS FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

Reasons for Return to School	Employment Status								Total N = 50
	Employed full-time		Employed part-time		Full-time homemaker		Other		
	n = 21		n = 4		n = 23		n = 2		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Meet New People	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	1
Career Advance	10	48.0	3	75.0	9	39.0	0	0	22
Career Change	7	33.0	0	0	1	4.0	1	50.0	9
Extra Time to Fill	0	0	0	0	3	13.0	0	0	3
Personal Growth	2	10.0	0	0	7	30.0	0	0	9
Update Education for Future	2	10.0	1	25.0	2	9.0	1	50.0	6

*Note that due to rounding, all percentages may not add up to 100%.

Age Groups

Question Number 13 on the data gathering instrument listed 12 different household activities, or tasks. The respondents were asked to rate each one using a Likert type scale of 1 to 5, with 1 denoting that the female student took significantly greater responsibility for tasks since becoming a student to 5 rated as spouse took significantly greater responsibility for tasks.

The mean response to household activities by marital status and age group is displayed in Table III. The range of scores for each task is as follows: cooking (1.0-2.8), kitchen clean-up (1.0-2.9), minor household repair (1.0-3.8), laundry (1.0-2.5), grocery shopping (1.0-2.4), lawn care (2.0-4.0), taking out trash (2.0-3.8), housecleaning (1.0-2.7), car repairs (1.0-4.4), driving children (1.0-3.2), paying bills and keeping the checkbook (2.0-2.5), and contributing to family income (1.0-4.5).

Table IV shows, by age group, the results of Question 14a on the questionnaire which asked the change in task assignments after the student returned to school. For the response "I perform fewer tasks since I began school . . . some things don't get done", there were six responses in the 25 to 30 age group, ten in the 31 to 40 age group, and five in the 41+ age group. "I do just as much as I did when I was not in school", found four responses in the 25 to 30 age group, five in the 31 to 40 age group, and seven in the 41+ age group. In answer to "I spend less time on each task now", there were three responses in the 25 to 30 age group, two in the 31 to 40 age group, and none in the 41+ group. "I have others do things for me,

TABLE III
 MEAN RESPONSE TO PERFORMANCE OF HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES BY
 MARITAL STATUS AND AGE GROUP
 (N = 50)

Task	Marital Status						Total \bar{X}
	<u>Married</u>			<u>Separated</u>			
	<u>Age Group</u>			<u>Age Group</u>			
	<u>25-30</u>	<u>31-40</u>	<u>41+</u>	<u>25-30</u>	<u>31-40</u>	<u>41+</u>	
	n=12	n=18	n=14	n=2	n=3	n=1	
	\bar{X} response on scale of 1-5			\bar{X} response on scale of 1-5			
Cooking	2.3	2.2	2.8	2.0	1.7	1.0	2.0
Kitchen Clean-up	2.6	2.4	2.9	2.5	1.7	1.0	2.2
Minor Household Repair	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.5	2.3	1.0	2.8
Laundry	2.3	2.5	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0
Grocery Shopping	2.4	2.1	2.4	2.0	1.7	1.0	2.0
Lawn care	4.0	3.9	3.1	3.0	2.0	3.0	3.2
Taking Out Trash	3.5	3.3	3.8	2.5	2.0	3.0	3.0
House- cleaning	2.4	2.7	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.1
Car Repairs	4.4	4.0	3.9	3.0	3.7	1.0	3.3
Driving Children	2.9	2.4*	3.2**	2.0	1.7	1.0	2.2
Paying bills/ keeping checkbook	2.5	2.4	3.0	2.0	2.3	3.0	2.6

TABLE III (Continued)

Task	Marital Status						Total \bar{X}
	<u>Married</u>			<u>Separated</u>			
	<u>Age Group</u>			<u>Age Group</u>			
	<u>25-30</u>	<u>31-40</u>	<u>41+</u>	<u>25-30</u>	<u>31-40</u>	<u>41+</u>	
	n=12	n=18	n=14	n=2	n=3	n=1	
	\bar{X} response on scale of 1-5			\bar{X} response on scale of 1-5			
Contributing to family income	4.0	4.2	4.5	2.5	2.0	1.0	3.0

* Adjusted for N/A responses n = 14

** Adjusted for N/A responses n = 12

Mean scores were tabulated using a Likert scale of 1-5 with 1 rated as female student taking significantly greater responsibility to 5 rated as spouse taking significantly greater responsibility.

TABLE IV
CHANGE IN TASK ASSIGNMENTS AFTER RETURNING TO
SCHOOL BY AGE GROUP OF RESPONDENTS
(N = 50)

Task Assignment	Age Group			Total
	<u>25 - 30</u> n = 14	<u>31 - 40</u> n = 21	<u>41+</u> n = 15	
A. I perform fewer tasks some things do not get done.	6	10	5	21
B. I do just as much as when I was not in school.	4	5	7	16
C. I spend less time on each task now.	3	2	0	5
D. I have others do things for me, so I do less now.	1	3	3	7
Other	0	1	0	1

so I am doing less now", showed one response in the 25 to 30 group and three each in the 31 to 40 and 41+ groups. There was also one response in the Other category for the 31 to 40 age group. The respondent wrote that since she became a student the house was her sole responsibility. Prior to her return, her husband shared the responsibility. Overall it appeared that the large majority of women were either doing as much now as before or doing less, with certain tasks simply not being performed.

A Chi Square Analysis was performed on the question posed on Table V. The results revealed that Chi Square equaled 6.076. The table value of Chi Square at $p .05$ with 6 df equaled 12.5916. Since Chi Square was smaller than the critical value, it was concluded that the results of this question were as expected.

Adjustments made by the spouse after the woman's return to school was Question 14b on the questionnaire. Table VI reveals the results to this by students' age group.

In the 25 to 30 age group, one reported that he assumed major responsibility for household tasks, five reported he helped much, four reported he helped some, three said he rarely or never helped, and one checked the Other response. For the 31 to 40 age group, zero said he assumed major responsibility, four said he helped much, 11 said he helped some, four stated he rarely or never helped, and there were two Other responses. Responses in the 41+ category showed that two men assumed major responsibility, three helped much, five helped some, and five rarely or never helped. Overall, this data showed that the greatest number of men helped some with household tasks.

TABLE V
CHI SQUARE CONTINGENCY TABLE FOR CHANGE IN TASK ASSIGNMENTS
AFTER RETURNING TO SCHOOL BY AGE GROUP
(N = 49)

Task Assignment	Age Group			Total
	25 - 30 n = 14	31 - 40 n = 21	41+ n = 15	
A. I perform fewer tasks some things do not get done.	0 - 6 E - 6	0 - 10 E - 8.6	0 - 5 E - 6.4	21
B. I do just as much as when I was not in school.	0 - 4 E - 4.6	0 - 5 E - 6.5	0 - 7 E - 4.9	16
C. I spend less time on each task now.	0 - 3 E - 1.4	0 - 0 E - 1.5	0 - 0 E - 1.5	5
D. I have others do things for me, so I do less now.	0 - 1 E - 2.0	0 - 3 E - 2.9	0 - 3 E - 2.1	7
Total	14	20	15	49

Table value of Chi Square at p .05 with 6 df = 12.5916

Chi Square = 6.076

*NOTE: Question E on Table IV did not have an adequate number of responses to be considered in this table.

TABLE VI
ADJUSTMENTS MADE BY SPOUSE ACCORDING TO
STUDENT'S AGE GROUP
(N = 50)

Adjustments	Age Group			Total
	<u>25 - 30</u> n = 14	<u>31 - 40</u> n = 21	<u>41+</u> n = 15	
A. Spouse assumes major responsibility	1	0	2	3
B. Spouse helps much	5	4	3	12
C. Spouse helps some	4	11	5	20
D. Spouse rarely or never helps	3	4	5	12
E. Other	1	2	0	3

Table VII displays the results of a Chi Square analysis that was done on the question in Table VI. Chi Square proved to have a value of 7.337. The table value of Chi Square at $p .05$ with 8 df equaled 15.5073. Since 7.337 is less than 15.5073, it was concluded that the results were again as expected.

Question 14c on the questionnaire asked what adjustments were made by the children of the returning women. Table VIII shows this data by age group of student. There was an Other option in this question and there were enough written responses in it to show as separate categories.

In the 25 to 30 age group, one said that her children helped a great deal, six said they helped some, two each reported no change, N/A (no children) or children help each other more now, one reported children too young to help, and zero reported that children were grown and gone. In the 31 to 40 division, none reported their children helped a great deal, 12 said they helped some, two each reported the children helped each other more now or there was no change, one each stated either grown and gone or too young to help, and three said N/A. In the 41+ age group, there were no responses in children help a great deal, children help each other more now, too young to help, and N/A. There were seven responses each in the children help some and grown and gone categories. Finally, there was one response in the no change category. By inspection of the frequencies, 50 percent responded that children helped some and only one woman responded that children help a great deal.

TABLE VII

CHI SQUARE CONTINGENCY TABLE FOR ADJUSTMENTS MADE BY SPOUSE
IN TASK ASSIGNMENTS BY AGE GROUP OF FEMALE RESPONDENTS
(N = 49)

Adjustments	Age Group			Total
	25 - 30 n = 14	31 - 40 n = 21	41+ n = 15	
A. Spouse assumes major responsibility	0 - 1 E - .84	0 - 0 E - 1.26	0 - 2 E - .90	3
B. Spouse helps much	0 - 5 E - 3.36	0 - 4 E - 5.04	0 - 3 E - 3.06	12
C. Spouse helps some	0 - 4 E - 5.6	0 - 11 E - 8.04	0 - 5 E - 6.00	20
D. Spouse rarely or never helps	0 - 3 E - 3.36	0 - 4 E - 5.04	0 - 5 E - 3.6	12
E. Other	0 - 1 E - .84	0 - 2 E - 1.26	0 - 0 E - .90	3
Total	14	21	15	50

Table value of Chi Square at p .05 with 8 df = 15.5073
Chi Square = 7.337

TABLE VIII
ADJUSTMENTS MADE BY CHILDREN ACCORDING TO
STUDENT'S AGE GROUP
(N = 50)

Adjustment	Age Group			Total
	<u>25 - 30</u> n = 14	<u>31 - 40</u> n = 21	<u>41+</u> n = 15	
Children help a great deal	1	0	0	1
Children help some	6	12	7	25
Children help each other more now	2	2	0	4
No change	2	2	1	5
Grown & gone	0	1	7	8
Too young to help	1	1	0	2
N/A no children	2	3	0	5

Table value of Chi Square p .05 with 8 df = 15.5073
Chi Square = 7.337

College Workload

The student's college workload was next examined. Table IX shows the mean response for tasks, Question 13, and college workload. A Likert scale of 1 to 5 was used, with 1 denoting that the student took significantly greater responsibility for tasks and 5 denoting that the spouse took major responsibility. The college workload was broken down as follows: 0-3 credit hours (n = 8), 4 to 6 hours (n = 9) and 7+ credit hours (n = 33).

Following is the range of scores for each task: cooking (1.9-3.1), kitchen clean-up (2.2-3.1), minor household repair (3.1-3.7), laundry (1.9-2.9), grocery shopping (1.9-3.0), lawn care (3.4-4.0), taking out trash (3.4-3.4), housecleaning (2.2-2.78), car repairs (3.9-4.0), driving children (2.5-3.8), paying bills/keeping checkbook (2.4-3.0), and contributing to family income (3.7-4.1). In areas where there were little or no shifts, repairs and maintenance, it is important to note that these are primarily male functions and are not necessarily due to the woman's return to school.

Table X shows the task adjustments after returning to school by respondent's college workload. Five women in the 0-3 credit hour category, two in the 4-6 category and 14 in the 7+ category reported that they perform fewer tasks since returning and some things just do not get done. Two in the 0-3 group, five in the 4-6 group, and nine in the 7+ group reported that they do just as much as they did when they were not in school. As for spending less time on each task now, one each in the 0-3 and 4-6 credit hour groups responded and three responded in the 7+ group. No one in the 0-3 credit hour

TABLE IX
 MEAN LEVEL OF TASK PERFORMANCE OF RESPONDENTS BY COLLEGE
 WORKLOAD AND HOUSEHOLD HELP
 (N = 50)

Tasks \bar{X}	Credit Hours		
	0 - 3 n = 8	4 - 6 n = 9	7 + n = 33
Cooking	3.0	3.1	1.9
Kitchen Clean-up	3.0	3.1	2.2
Minor Household Repair	3.1	3.7	3.4
Laundry	2.8	2.9	1.9
Grocery Shopping	2.8	3.0	1.9
Lawn Care	3.8	4.0	3.4
Taking Out Trash	3.4	3.4	3.4
Housecleaning	2.6	2.8	2.2
Car Repairs	4.0	3.9	3.9
Driving Children	3.8*	2.8**	2.5***
Paying Bills/ Keeping Checkbook	3.0	2.9	2.4
Contributing to Family Income	4.0	3.7	4.1

*Adjusted for N/A response n = 4

**Adjusted for N/A response n = 8

***Adjusted for N/A response n = 31

Mean scores were tabulated from a Likert scale of 1 - 5 with 1 rated as female student taking significantly greater responsibility to 5 rated as spouse taking significantly greater responsibility.

TABLE X
 TASK ADJUSTMENTS AFTER RETURNING TO SCHOOL
 BY RESPONDENT'S COLLEGE WORKLOAD
 (N = 50)

Task Adjustment	Credit Hours		
	<u>0 - 3</u> n = 8	<u>4 - 6</u> n = 9	<u>7+</u> n = 33
I perform fewer tasks some things do not get done	5	2	14
I do just as much as when I was not in school	2	5	9
I spend less time on each task now	1	1	3
I have others do things for me, so I do less now	0	1	6
Other-Spouse shared tasks before, now he does not	0	0	1

group, one in the 4-6 credit hour group, and six in the 7+ credit hour group responded that they have others do things for them, so they do less now. There was also one Other response in the 7+ credit hour group.

Table XI shows task adjustments of spouse after female returns to school by college workload. One in the 0-3 category and two in the 7+ category indicated their husbands assumed major responsibility for tasks they previously did. None in the 4-6 credit hour category responded to that option. Eight in the 7+ credit hour category and two each, in the 0-3 and 4-6 credit hour groups, said their husbands helped much. The largest number of responses came in the spouse helps some category. Thirteen in the 7+ group, four in the 4-6 group, and three in the 0-3 group chose this response. Seven women in the 7+ credit hour category said their husbands rarely or never helped, as well as, three in the 4-6 category, and two in the 0-3 category. There were also three Other responses in the 7+ category chosen.

Also by college workload, task adjustments of the children were examined. Table XII displays the results. Only one individual reported that the children help a great deal and that was from a 7+ credit hour respondent. The largest number said their children helped some. There were 17 from the 7+ group, six from the 4-6 group, and two from the 0-3 group. Children help each other more was the choice of three from the 7+ group and one from the 0-3 group. In the Other category, which includes no change, children too young, and children grown and gone, there were ten responses from the 7+ group,

TABLE XI
 TASK ADJUSTMENTS OF SPOUSE AFTER FEMALE RETURNS
 TO SCHOOL BY COLLEGE WORKLOAD
 (N = 50)

Task Adjustments by Spouse	Credit Hours		
	<u>0 - 3</u> n = 8	<u>4 - 6</u> n = 9	<u>7+</u> n = 33
Spouse assumes major responsibility	1	0	2
Spouse helps much	2	2	8
Spouse helps some	3	4	13
Spouse rarely or never helps	2	3	7
Other	0	0	3

TABLE XII
 TASK ADJUSTMENTS OF CHILDREN AFTER FEMALE RETURNS
 TO SCHOOL BY COLLEGE WORKLOAD
 (N = 50)

Task Adjustment by Children	Credit Hours		
	<u>0 - 3</u> n = 8	<u>4 - 6</u> n = 9	<u>7+</u> n = 33
Children help great deal	0	0	1
Children help some	2	6	17
Children help each other more	1	0	3
Other-no change	1	1	3
Other-too young	0	0	2
Other-grown, gone	3	0	5
N/A-no children	1	2	2

four from the 0-3 group, and one from the 4-6 group. Those with no children numbered two each from the 4-6 and 7+ groups and one from the 0-3 credit hour group.

College Location

College location was the next factor considered. Northeastern Oklahoma A & M College (hereafter known as NEO) at Miami, Oklahoma (n = 19), was the rural institution. Rogers State College (hereafter known as RSC) at Claremore, Oklahoma (n = 16), was the suburban institution. Tulsa Junior College (hereafter known as TJC) at Tulsa, Oklahoma (n = 15) was the metropolitan institution.

Table XIII shows the mean response to the 12 tasks listed in Question 13 in relation to college location. A Likert scale of 1 to 5 was used with 1 rated as female student took significantly greater responsibility for tasks to 5 rated as spouse took significantly greater responsibility for tasks.

The mean response for each task is as follows: cooking (2.1-2.7), kitchen clean-up (2.3-2.7), minor household repair (3.2-3.7), laundry (2.0-2.5), grocery shopping (2.2-2.3), lawn care (3.3-3.9), taking out trash (3.1-3.6), housecleaning (2.2-2.60), car repairs (3.7-4.3), driving children (2.5-2.9), paying bills/keeping checkbook (2.3-2.9), and contributing to family income (3.9-4.1).

Task adjustments of student after returning to school by college location is shown in Table XIV. At each school, the highest number of responses, NEO - eight, RSC - six, and TJC - seven, was in the category of student performs fewer tasks, some just don't get done.

TABLE XIII
 MEAN LEVEL OF TASK RESPONSIBILITY AFTER RETURNING TO
 SCHOOL BY COLLEGE LOCATION
 (N = 50)

Task \bar{X}	Location		
	#1 n = 19	#2 n = 16	#3 n = 15
Cooking	2.1	2.3	2.7
Kitchen Clean-up	2.3	2.6	2.7
Minor Household Repair	3.4	3.7	3.2
Laundry	2.0	2.5	2.4
Grocery Shopping	2.2	2.2	2.3
Lawn Care	3.3	3.9	3.5
Taking Out Trash	3.6	3.3	3.1
Housecleaning	2.2	2.4	2.6
Car Repairs	3.8	4.3	3.7
Driving Children	2.6	2.5*	2.9**
Paying Bills/Keeping Checkbook	2.3	2.7	2.9
Contributing to Family Income	4.0	3.9	4.1

* Adjusted for N/A response n = 11

** Adjusted for N/A response n = 13

Mean scores were tabulated from a Likert scale of 1 - 5 with 1 rated as female student taking significantly greater responsibility to 5 rated as spouse taking significantly greater responsibility.

TABLE XIV
 TASK ADJUSTMENTS OF STUDENT AFTER RETURNING TO
 SCHOOL BY COLLEGE LOCATION
 (N = 50)

Task Adjustment by Student	Location		
	#1 n = 19	#2 n = 16	#3 n = 15
I perform fewer tasks, some just do not get done	8	6	7
I do just as much as I did when I was not in school	6	5	5
I spend less time on each task now	2	2	1
I have others do things for me, so I am doing less now	3	3	1
Other-Spouse shared tasks before, now he does not	0	0	1

The second highest number of responses, NEO - six, RSC - five, and TJC - five, was in the category that student did just as much as before the return to school. Two respondents each from NEO and RSC, and one from TJC, stated that they spend less time on each task now. As far as having others do things for the student now, so she does less, three each from NEO and RSC, and one from TJC, checked this response. One respondent from TJC checked the Other category.

Using the data from Table XIV, a Chi Square analysis was performed and is shown in Table XV. Chi Square proved to be 1.298. The table value of Chi Square at $p .05$ 6df equaled 12.5916. Chi Square, 1.298 is less than the critical value of 12.5916, so it was concluded that these results were as expected.

Task adjustments of spouse after female returns to school is shown in Table XVI by location. Two respondents from NEO, zero from RSC, and one from TJC said their spouse assumed major responsibility for tasks that she previously did before her return to school. Four from NEO, five from RSC, and three from TJC reported their spouse helped much with tasks she did prior to her return. The largest number of responses was in the category that the spouse helped some with tasks. There were five responses from NEO, seven from RSC, and eight from TJC in that area. Five respondents from NEO, four from RSC, and three from TJC reported that their spouse rarely or never helped with tasks. From NEO, there were three Other responses.

Percentage-wise, the rural population had the greatest number of women who responded that their spouse assumed major responsibility, but they also had the greatest percentage of those who rarely or never helped. The largest cell was spouse, helps some.

TABLE XV

CHI SQUARE CONTINGENCY TABLE FOR CHANGE IN TASK ASSIGNMENTS
AFTER RETURNING TO SCHOOL BY AGE GROUP
(N = 49)

Task Adjustment by Student	Location			Total
	#1 n = 19	#2 n = 16	#3 n = 15	
I perform fewer tasks, some just do not get done	0 - 8 E - 8.14	0 - 6 E - 6.86	0 - 7 E - 6.0	21
I do just as much as I did when I was not in school	0 - 6 E - 6.2	0 - 5 E - 5.22	0 - 5 E - 4.57	16
I spend less time on each task now	0 - 2 E - 1.94	0 - 2 E - 1.63	0 - 1 E - 1.43	5
I have others do things for me, so I am doing less now	0 - 3 E - 2.71	0 - 3 E - 2.29	0 - 1 E - 2.0	7
Total	13	16	14	49

Table value of Chi Square at p .05 with 6df = 12.5916
Chi Square = 1.298

NOTE: Question E from Table XIV was not used, due to insufficient responses.

TABLE XVI
 TASK ADJUSTMENTS OF SPOUSE AFTER FEMALE RETURNS TO
 SCHOOL BY LOCATION
 (N = 50)

Task Adjustment by Spouse	Location					
	#1		#2		#3	
	n = 19		n = 16		n = 15	
Spouse assumes major responsibility	2	11.0	0		1	7.0
Spouse helps much	4	21.0	5	31.0	3	20.0
Spouse helps some	5	26.0	7	44.0	8	53.0
Spouse rarely or never helps	5	26.0	4	25.0	3	20.0
Other	3	16.0	0		0	

Looking at the table, if an imaginary line were drawn under the spouse helps some response and percentages were added for the top three responses, 80 percent of the women from TJC were receiving help from their spouse. For RSC and NEO, the percentages of women receiving spousal help was 75 percent and 58 percent, respectively.

Table XVII reflects the task adjustments of children after the female returns to school by location. There was an option designated Other and there were enough responses to further break down that category.

Only one respondent, who was from NEO, stated that her child helped a great deal with tasks that she did prior to her return to school. The largest response came in the category that children help some with tasks. Ten from NEO, seven from RSC, and eight from TJC checked this response. Two women from NEO and one each from RSC and TJC said that their children help each other more now. Three from NEO found no change, as did one each from RSC and TJC. Too young to help was the response from one woman each at NEO and TJC, while none from RSC checked that option. Children who were grown and gone was the response selected by two respondents each at NEO and TJC and four at RSC. Not applicable - no children was the response from three at RSC, two at TJC, and zero at NEO. There appeared to be the fact that more women had children who helped some.

Spouse Occupation

The occupation of the spouse was put into categories, as determined by the researcher, and the categories were: professional (n = 4), skilled (n = 18), management (n = 10), self-employed

TABLE XVII
 TASK ADJUSTMENTS OF CHILDREN AFTER FEMALE RETURNS
 TO SCHOOL BY LOCATION
 (N = 50)

Task Ajustment by Children	Location		
	<u>#1</u> n = 19	<u>#2</u> n = 16	<u>#3</u> n = 15
Children help great deal	1	0	0
Children help some	10	7	8
Children help each other more	2	1	1
Other-no change	3	1	1
Other-too young	1	0	1
Other-grown, gone	2	4	2
N/A-no children	0	3	2

(n = 7), disabled (n = 4), and other (n = 7). The Other category included retired, unknown, and blank responses.

Table XVIII tabulates the mean response to household activities after the woman's return to school categorized by occupation of spouse. A Likert type scale of 1 to 5 was used to rate each task, with 1 denoting that the female student took significantly greater responsibility for tasks since she returned to school, to 5 denoting that the spouse took significantly greater responsibility.

The range of mean responses for the tasks in Question 13 were as follows: cooking (2.0-2.9), kitchen clean-up (2.2-3.3), minor household repairs (2.8-4.0), laundry (2.0-2.8), grocery shopping (1.6-2.8), lawn care (3.3-3.8), taking out trash (3.0-4.5), housecleaning (2.0-2.8), car repairs (3.3-4.4), driving children (1.5-4.0), paying bills/keeping checkbook (2.3-4.0), and contributing to family income (3.3-4.5). It is interesting to note that the disabled group had the highest number of mean scores.

Table XIX reflects respondents task assignments after returning to school by spouse occupation. For those who indicated that they "perform fewer tasks since they began school . . . some things don't get done," the results show that there were zero responses in the professional category, nine in the skilled, three in management, five in the self-employed, two in the disabled, and two in the Other category.

Women who felt that they did just as much as they did before their return to school, found their husbands' occupations in the following categories: professional - two, skilled - five, management

TABLE XVIII
 MEAN RESPONSE TO PERFORMANCE OF HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES BY
 SPOUSE OCCUPATION
 (N = 50)

Task	\bar{X}	Occupation					
		<u>Professional</u> n = 4	<u>Skilled</u> n = 18	<u>Mgmt.</u> n = 10	<u>Self-emp.</u> n = 7	<u>Disabled</u> n = 4	<u>Other</u> n = 7*
Cooking		2.5	2.0	2.5	2.0	2.8	2.9
Kitchen Clean-up		2.3	2.2	2.8	2.7	3.3	2.4
Minor Household Repairs		2.8	3.4	3.6	3.1	4.0	3.3
Laundry		2.0	2.0	2.6	2.4	2.8	2.3
Grocery Shopping		2.8	2.1	2.4	1.6	2.5	2.4
Lawn Care		3.8	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.3	3.3
Taking Out Trash		3.3	3.2	3.6	3.0	4.5	3.3
Housecleaning		2.0	2.2	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.4
Car Repairs		3.3	4.2	4.4	3.6	4.3	3.3
Driving Children		3.3	2.1**	3.1	2.5***	4.0	1.5+
Paying Bills/ Checkbook		4.0	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.9
Contributing to Family Income		3.8	4.2	4.2	3.9	4.5	3.3

*Other category includes retired, unknown, and blank responses

**Adjusted for N/A response n = 15

***Adjusted for N/A response n = 6

+Adjusted for N/A response n = 4

Mean scores were tabulated from a Likert scale of 1 - 5 with 1 rated as female student taking significantly greater responsibility to 5 rated as spouse taking significantly greater responsibility.

TABLE XIX
RESPONDENT'S TASK ASSIGNMENTS AFTER RETURNING TO
SCHOOL BY SPOUSE OCCUPATIONS
(N = 50)

Task Assign- ment	Occupations						N
	<u>Professional</u> n = 4	<u>Skilled</u> n = 18	<u>Mgmt.</u> n = 10	<u>Self-emp.</u> n = 7	<u>Disabled</u> n = 4	<u>Other</u> n = 7*	
I perform fewer tasks	0	9	3	5	2	2	21
I do just as much	2	5	4	0	1	4	16
I spend less time	1	3	0	1	0	0	5
I have others do things	1	0	3	1	1	1	7
Other- he shared before, now he does not	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

*Other category includes retired, unknown, and blank responses.

- four, self-employed - zero, disabled - one, and Other - four. "I spend less time on each task now" yielded zero responses in the management, disabled, and other categories, but one each in professional and self-employed, and three in skilled. "I have others do things for me, so I am doing less now" elicited zero responses in skilled, one each in professional, self-employed, disabled, and Other, and three in management. Finally, there was one Other response in the skilled category. This respondent indicated that her husband once shared household duties, but now that she has returned to school, he does not.

Table XX indicates the responses of task adjustment of spouse after female returns to school by spouse occupation. With one response each, the spouse assumed major responsibility for tasks the female previously did in the occupations of management, disabled, and Other. The response that he helped much was checked one time each in the categories of professional and management, two times each in disabled and Other, and three times each in skilled and self-employed. That he helped some was chosen the following number of times: professional - one, skilled - eight, management - six, self-employed - two, disabled - zero, and Other - three. Spouses who rarely or never help got five responses from skilled, two each from professional, management, and self-employed, one from disabled, and zero responses from the Other occupation category. Three remaining responses were tabulated in the Other task adjustment category.

The task adjustment of children after the female returns to school by spouse occupation is revealed in Table XXI. The Other

TABLE XX
 TASK ADJUSTMENT OF SPOUSE AFTER FEMALE RETURNS
 TO SCHOOL BY SPOUSE OCCUPATION
 (N = 50)

Task Adjust- ment by Spouse	Occupations						N
	<u>Professional</u> n = 4	<u>Skilled</u> n = 18	<u>Mgmt.</u> n = 10	<u>Self-emp.</u> n = 7	<u>Disabled</u> n = 4	<u>Other</u> n = 7*	
Assumes major respons- ibility	0	0	1	0	1	1	3
Helps much	1	3	1	3	2	2	12
Helps some	1	8	6	2	0	3	20
Rarely or never helps	2	5	2	2	1	0	12
Other**	0	2	0	0	0	1	3

*Other category includes retired, unknown, or blank responses.

**Includes trying to learn or absent from the home.

TABLE XXI
 TASK ADJUSTMENT OF CHILDREN AFTER FEMALE RETURNS TO SCHOOL
 BY SPOUSE OCCUPATION
 (N = 50)

Task Adjustment by Children	Occupations					
	<u>Professional</u> n = 4	<u>Skilled</u> n = 18	<u>Mgmt.</u> n = 10	<u>Self-emp.</u> n = 7	<u>Disabled</u> n = 4	<u>Other</u> n = 7*
Help great deal	0	1	0	0	0	0
Help some	3	10	4	4	3	1
Help each other more	0	1	3	0	0	0
Other- no change	1	2	0	0	0	1
Other- grown	0	1	1	1	1	4
Other- too young	0	0	0	1	0	1
N/A-no children	0	3	2	1	0	0

*Other category includes retired, unknown, and blank responses.

occupation category includes retired, unknown and blank responses.

Only one respondent said her children help a great deal now, and that was in the skilled category. Respondents who selected the choice that their children help some with tasks she did before show their spouses to be in the following occupations: professional and disabled, three each; skilled, ten; management and self-employed, four each; and Other, one. Only two occupations were selected under the option that the children help each other more and those were three under management and one under skilled. No change was picked by two in skilled and one each in professional and Other. Grown and gone has one each response in skilled, management, self-employed, disabled, and four responses in the Other category. Children too young to help was picked only one time each in the self-employed and Other occupation category. Finally, those who checked N/A, no children, fell into the following categories: skilled, three; management, two; and self-employed, one.

Overall Satisfaction

Question 14d on the questionnaire asked the respondents "Overall, do you agree with these arrangements made by you, your spouse and children? " Looking at the entire group of respondents together in Table XXII, 39 stated that generally "yes", they do agree with the situation. The remaining 11 stated "generally no", they were not satisfied with the situation.

TABLE XXII

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION - DO YOU AGREE WITH THESE ARRANGEMENTS
MADE BY YOU, YOUR SPOUSE AND CHILDREN?
(N = 50)

Student Response	N
Generally yes	39
Generally no	11

By location, as shown in Table XXIII, those who selected the "yes" response included 14 at NEO, 13 at RSC, and 12 at TJC. Those who chose "no" included five at NEO, three at RSC, and three at TJC.

Table XXIV shows the same question, this time crossed with spouse occupation. Those who stated "generally yes" included three each from the professional and disabled category, 14 from the skilled, eight from management, six from Other, and five from self-employed. "Generally no" was chosen by one each from the professional, disabled, and Other categories, two each from management and self-employed, and four from the skilled category.

TABLE XXIII

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION - DO YOU AGREE WITH THESE ARRANGEMENTS
MADE BY YOU, YOUR SPOUSE, AND CHILDREN? - BY LOCATION
(N = 50)

Student Response	Location		
	#1 n = 19	#2 n = 16	#3 n = 15
Generally yes	14	13	12
Generally no	5	3	3

TABLE XXIV

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION - DO YOU AGREE WITH THESE
ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY YOU, YOUR SPOUSE, AND
CHILDREN? - BY SPOUSE OCCUPATION
(N = 50)

Student Response	Occupations					
	Professional n = 4	Skilled n = 18	Mgmt. n = 10	Self-emp. n = 7	Disabled n = 4	Other n = 7*
Generally yes	3	14	8	5	3	6
Generally no	1	4	2	2	1	1

*Other category includes retired, unknown, and blank responses.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will present a summary of the findings, finalize conclusions of the study, and present recommendations for future research.

Summary

There is a need to explore the change in the family support system that adult, married women experience upon their return to selected two-year colleges in northeastern Oklahoma.

Scott (1980) has identified that re-entry women constitute the highest rate, at 48 percent, of college students who drop out of school. The purpose of this study was to explore the family support changes that may or may not take place upon their return to school. It was determined that this would assist re-entry students, their families, and the institutions involved better understand, counsel, and cope with the changes, if indeed there are any. Hammer-Higgins made a recommendation in her 1987 report that community college re-entry students be studied, hence the decision to target this group.

A review of the literature in this area yielded conflicting results. Several studies indicated that there was little re-assignment of household tasks after the female returned to

college. Another study, however, found that the husband was indeed more willing to assist and take on more household tasks. This same study concluded that the children of the family helped more, also.

In order to satisfy the purpose of this research study, the following objectives were developed:

1. To identify what functional family support the married female received after returning to college.
2. To compare the differences between functional family support received before and after returning to college.
3. To determine the differences between functional family support among females with varying college workloads.
4. To identify the differences between functional family support among students in different college locations.
5. To compare the differences between functional family support based upon spouse's occupation.

To meet these objectives, research was conducted in February, 1992 at three northeastern Oklahoma two-year colleges. The colleges were: Northeastern Oklahoma A & M, Miami, Oklahoma; Rogers State College, Claremore, Oklahoma; and Tulsa Junior College, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Each represented a college in a quite different setting. One college was located in a rural setting, one in a suburban setting, and one in a metropolitan setting.

A questionnaire, developed by Huston-Hoburg in 1984, as reported in Tripp (1988) was administered by the researcher in on-campus visits to the colleges. Two sections of the questionnaire dealing with emotional and attitudinal support were deleted in order to

concentrate solely on functional support for this study. Data was collected from 50 women who met the criteria of being over the age of 25, presently married and enrolled in a post-secondary educational program.

The mean age for the 50 respondents was 36.0. Forty-four women in this group were married and six were separated, but still legally married. The mean number of children was 2.1. Grade classification for the group included 28 freshman, 18 sophomores, and four classified as Other.

Overwhelmingly, their top reason for returning to school was for career advancement. Twenty-two women selected that response. The second most popular reason for returning to school was a tie between a desire for personal growth and to make a career change. Each garnered nine responses. The next selection, with six responses, was a wish to update education for future needs. One individual selected, as her reason to return to school, that it was a way to meet new people. Apparently, by these results, a career is high on the list of priorities for this sample group.

Conclusions

The first objective of the study was to identify the functional family support the married female received after returning to college. Looking at the sample as a whole, by examination of a list of specific task assignments, it would appear that the more things change, the more they stay the same. The tasks were rated on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 1 denoting that the female took on greater responsibility after becoming a student, to 5 denoting that

the spouse took on greater responsibility. While the range of scores was often wide (1.0-4.5), the mean (\bar{X}) indicated that there was not much change in the assignment of household tasks and when there was, the woman took on more responsibility.

The respondents reported that, as far as task adjustment goes, their spouse and children helped some and they generally agreed with those arrangements.

The second objective was to compare the differences between functional family support received before and after college. Again, viewing the sample as a whole, the number one response indicated that women perform fewer tasks now than before they returned to college and that some things just do not get done. There is no indication of extra help here. The second most popular response was that they did just as much after returning as they did prior to returning. Third was the option that the woman had others do things for them, so they were doing less now. Using this data, it can be concluded that there is less functional family support after the return to college than there was before.

The third objective of the study was to determine the differences in functional family support according to the college workloads of the students. Studying specific task assignments, the four to six credit hour category received the highest mean scores. The lowest mean scores fell in the 7+ credit hour category. This led to the conclusion that, as far as college workload is concerned, those taking more credit hours are receiving less help on specific tasks.

To identify the differences between functional family support and college location was the fourth objection. The rural college had the most number of low mean scores on specific tasks. The highest number of mean scores on specific tasks occurred at the metropolitan location. The suburban location generally was in the middle. Therefore, this study reveals that those who attended the metropolitan college received the most support, for specific tasks. Those who attended the rural location received the least support on specific tasks. The suburban college attendees fell somewhere in the middle. This leads to the conclusion that the woman from the metropolitan area receives the most help on specific tasks. Her rural counterpart receives the least help on specific tasks. Although this study does not determine why this is so, could it be that perhaps rural families are living in more traditional times, as opposed to metropolitan families who have adjusted to the changing role of the woman?

The final objective was to compare the differences between functional family support and spouse occupation. The disabled category had the highest number of mean scores for specific household tasks. The extent or nature of the disability is not known in this study, but many of the tasks they scored high on were physical activities, such as taking out the trash, car repairs, housecleaning, and others. Also, the disabled had the highest score in contributing to the family income.

The lowest number of mean scores was shared jointly by the professionals and the skilled workers. Those who were employed in a

management capacity had neither any high nor low mean scores. The self-employed had three low mean scores and Other, which included retired, unknown, and blank responses, had one high and two low mean scores. It is concluded then that the occupation of the spouse does have an effect on the functional family support that returning females receive. Why the disabled scored so high is unclear. Perhaps they are more sensitive to the needs of their spouse because they are appreciative for support they received at a difficult time from their spouse.

Recommendations

Certain questions were raised during the course of this study to generate further research. First, it should be examined why the rural college scored lowest in the area of functional family support. The attitudes and lifestyles of rural individuals could be studied so as to determine why they are different from their metropolitan counterparts. Women who attend rural colleges need just as much support as their city cohorts.

Second, a study should be conducted to investigate why the drop in functional family support when the college workload increases.

Third, a study should be conducted to ascertain why the disabled husband is more supportive of his spouse.

Fourth, in reference to the questionnaire, questions 14b and 14c each contain an option with the word "some" which is a very ambiguous word. It has varying meanings to different people. These two questions also need to have the same response wordings so they could be better compared.

Finally, there are several recommendations for practice. It would be extremely beneficial to have organized adult groups on campus. In addition to the comraderie and social benefits, common interests and problems could be discussed.

Counselors need to be attuned to the needs of this growing segment of college students and make themselves more readily available when needed. Special programs, such as chore management, could be presented by counselors, not only to adult students, but to traditional students as well.

General Discussion

There are several points that bear mention as a reflection of this study. Appendix B features the comments made by many of the women respondents as a result of the open-ended question that concluded the questionnaire. No effort was made by the researcher to edit these comments. The comments were printed exactly as they were written by the respondents. There are a number of grammatical and spelling errors in these comments. Was this due to a desire to finish the questionnaire as quickly as possible or are there basic English skills lacking in today's college students? Perhaps the length time that the student had been out of school had tarnished these skills. Whatever the answer, the fact remains that writing skills are critical for success at the college level.

Another interesting point is the fact that the disabled husbands took on such great responsibility. Are men who are in some capacity disabled more sensitive to the needs of their mate? Have they been through a traumatic experience that has caused this?

Finally, why are the rural families less willing to support the returning student? Is there some type of thinking that these individuals possess that is not up to 1990's standards? Is rural America behind national trends?

These are truly exciting questions and certainly are well beyond the scope of this study. One thing really does lead to another in research and perhaps someday these issues will be addressed.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Directions: Complete this page by placing an X in the appropriate space or by writing a short answer.

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your marital status? Married _____ Separated _____
Divorced _____
3. What is your spouse's age? _____ Job title _____
4. If you have children, what are their ages? _____
5. What is your current classification? Freshman _____ Sophomore _____
6. In how many hours are you currently enrolled? _____
7. What is your major? _____
8. Are you in a degree program? _____
9. Are you returning to college?
 _____ No, I have been continuously enrolled (except summer school) since high school.
 _____ No, I am in my first year of enrollment.
 _____ Yes, I am returning after being away _____ number of years.
10. Are you currently employed?
 _____ No
 _____ Yes, part-time (less than 40 hours per week).
 Job title: _____
 _____ Yes, full-time
 Job title: _____
11. What was your primary activity prior to your return to school?
 _____ Employed full-time
 Job title: _____
 _____ Employed part-time
 Job title: _____
 _____ Full-time homemaker
 _____ Other: _____
12. What is your primary reason for attending college?
 _____ A way to meet people
 _____ Career advancement
 _____ Career change
 _____ Extra time to fill
 _____ Personal growth and development
 _____ Updating education for future needs
 _____ Other: _____

13. How would you describe the way work gets assigned in your household since you have become a student, in regard to the following activities or tasks: (Use the scale below. Circle the appropriate response.)

- 1 = You take significantly greater responsibility
- 2 = You take somewhat greater responsibility
- 3 = About equal
- 4 = Spouse takes somewhat greater responsibility
- 5 = Spouse takes significantly greater responsibility

Activities

Cooking	1	2	3	4	5
Kitchen clean-up	1	2	3	4	5
Minor household repair	1	2	3	4	5
Laundry	1	2	3	4	5
Grocery shopping	1	2	3	4	5
Lawn care	1	2	3	4	5
Taking out trash	1	2	3	4	5
Housecleaning	1	2	3	4	5
Car repairs	1	2	3	4	5
Driving children to lessons, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
Paying bills/keeping checkbook	1	2	3	4	5
Contributing to family income	1	2	3	4	5

14. How is this assignment of tasks (that you described in question 13 different from the routine established before you returned to school? (Check which one best applies in your situation.)

a) What adjustments were made by you? (check one)

☐ I perform fewer tasks since I began school . . .
some things don't get done.

☐ I do just as much as I did when I was not in school.

☐ I spend less time on each task now.

☐ I have others do things for me, so I am doing less now.

☐ Other (Specify): _____

b) What adjustments were made by your spouse? (Check one)

☐ Spouse assumes major responsibility for tasks that I did before I began school.

☐ Spouse helps much with tasks I did before.

☐ Spouse helps some with tasks I did before.

☐ Spouse rarely or never helps with tasks that I did before I began school.

☐ Other (Specify) _____

c) What adjustments were made by your children? (Check one)

☐ Children help a great deal with tasks I did before.

☐ Children help some with tasks I did before.

☐ Children help each other more now that I am in school.

☐ Other (Specify) _____

☐ Not applicable - No children

d) Overall, do you agree with these arrangements made by you, your spouse and children?

☐ Generally Yes

☐ Generally No

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE!!!!!!

I am interested in anything else you would like to share concerning this subject or any other matter pertaining to your schooling. Please use the remaining portion of this page for your thoughts.

APPENDIX B

STUDENT COMMENTS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE

These comments were written on some the questionnaires and reflect the thoughts of the women who made up the sample. No attempt was made to correct punctuation or grammatical errors. This is exactly how they were written. These are in no particular order.

"My husbands schedule (shifts, call outs etc) make it very difficult for him to help some times. But he is very supportive and helps when he can."

"My family is proud of the fact that I am currently attending school, but I feel that they also wish that I could still do the things around the home that I had responsibility for. Instead of their helping take up the slack certain chores just don't get accomplished until I find the time to do them."

"For reference, my husbands job has always been first and has been in the way of many of his choices to do more with the family and the chores, his job carries a great deal of responsibility (sic) which he can't ignore. My husband does do as much as possible to make my life easy while I'm in school."

"My spouse has been very supportive by helping with chores, and staying out of the way when I am studing (sic)."

"I do not work, but I do babysit another child in my home. My husband has been wonderful since I've quit work and gone back to school."

"I have a thoughtful husband, that tries to help any way possible"

"Beings I don't contribute to the family income any longer I feel its the least I could do to contribute to the family."

"I feel schooling or education is important and should be pursued, for your own growth and it's future applications in your life. I feel it is possible for anyone if they want it, badly enough."

"Both my husband and little girl are behind me 100% and give as much as possible to assist me."

"My husband backs my returning to school full-time 100%. He helps out a lot because he knows it will benefit us both in the future."

"Only 1 child lives with us. 16 yr. old twins, and 1 yr. old are his by previous marriages. Husband would prefer that I did not go to college. He is jealous of other people being around me. He uses excuses to me to try and keep me from attending classes. Uses me as an excuse not to attend his own classes."

"I have always taken care of almost everything around the house, but my family supports me fully and are trying very hard to start relieving me in this area."

"My children and husband are very supporting. They back me with any situation. We are good Christians that accounts for the most of it."

VITA 2

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