

MOTHER'S SATISFACTION WITH WORK, CHILD'S
PERCEPTION OF MOTHER'S WORK, AND
CHILD'S SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The full-time working woman is becoming an accepted role for many mothers. Hoffman and Nye (1974, p. 13) reported that "the proportion of employed married women living with their husbands increased from 14.7 to 42 per cent from 1940 to 1972." Among married women living with their husbands in 1975, nearly two-fifths of those with children under six years of age are workers and more than half of those with school-age children are workers (U. S. Department of Labor, 1975). There was an increase of 152 per cent of mothers with school-age children and 158 per cent of mothers with preschool children who have entered the labor force between 1948 and 1965 (Hoffman and Nye, 1974). The U. S. Department of Labor (1975) showed a 23 per cent increase from 1950 to 1975 of mothers with children between 6 and 17 years of age who were in the labor force. There was a 25.3 per cent increase between 1950 and 1975 of mothers with children under six.

Etaugh (1974, p. 71) indicated that "in 1960, 18.6 per cent of mothers with preschool children and 39.0 per cent of mothers with school-age children worked, and in 1971, 29.6 per cent of mothers with preschool children and 49.4 per cent with school-age children worked."

The U. S. Department of Labor (1975) stated that almost 27 million children in the United States--or 42 per cent of those under the age of 18--had mothers who were working or seeking work in March, 1974. About

1 out of 4 of those children (6.1 million) was below regular school-age.

Black (1974) lists several factors which have influenced the increase in maternal employment:

1. Almost 1 person in every 100 is a female who is working and raising a family alone.
2. Women are more likely to be working if their husband is unemployed.
3. With the rising cost of living, families may need more income.
4. Women are gaining a sense of satisfaction from their work.
5. There are fewer social and family pressures against their working (p. 51).

Through her extensive research, Hoffman (1973) arrived at several conclusions concerning the effects of maternal employment:

1. A working mother provides a different role model than a nonworking mother.
2. Employment affects the mother's emotional state and this influences the mother-child interaction.
3. There are different situational demands as well as the emotional state of working mothers which will affect child-rearing practices (p. 1).

Hoffman and Nye (1974) believe that it would be more beneficial to study certain conditions of maternal employment rather than studying it as a whole. The effect of maternal employment could depend on the nature of employment, the attitude of the mother, family circumstances and many other conditions.

Kligler (1954) interviewed 100 couples with at least one child under 13 years of age. Significantly more women who worked because they wanted to felt that there was an improvement in their child's behavior as a result of their working. According to Kligler (1954, p. 138), "They explain that they themselves are more content as persons when

they work and that their favorable attitudes improve all their relationships."

Kappel and Lambert (Hoffman and Nye, 1974) studied 9-16 year-old daughters of full-time working mothers. They found that if the mother was working for self-oriented reasons, the daughter had higher self-esteem and she evaluated her parents more highly than the daughters of mothers who worked for family-oriented reasons. In this study, the measures of the mother's motives for working and the children's data were obtained independently.

Woods (1972) studied fifth graders in a lower-class, predominantly black urban area, where almost all the mothers were employed. She found that if the mother had a positive attitude toward her work her child showed good social and personal adjustment on the California Test of Personality.

Purposes

The main purpose of this study was to determine working mothers' attitudes toward work, their children's perceptions of their work, and the children's adjustment at school.

The specific purposes of this study were:

1. To determine a selected group of mothers' attitudes toward their work.
2. To determine the relationship between the mothers' attitudes toward their work and:
 - a. education
 - b. percentage of contribution to the total family income
 - c. length of time working

- d. reason for working
 - e. enjoyment of work
 - f. relationship with their 4-year-old child
3. To determine preschool children's degree of positive or negative feelings about their mothers' work.
 4. To determine the relationship between the mothers' attitudes toward their work and the children's positive, negative, or neutral feelings about their mothers' work.
 5. To determine the relationship between the mothers' attitudes toward their work and their children's adjustment in school.
 6. To determine the working mothers' children's adjustment to school in the following areas:
 - a. shows friendliness with adults,
 - b. appears happy,
 - c. is able to work independently,
 - d. is able to take turns,
 - e. shares willingly
 - f. displays patience with peers
 - g. has good peer relations,
 - h. appears comfortable with adults.

The following hypotheses were examined:

1. There is no significant relationship between the mothers' attitudes toward work and each of the following:
 - a. education
 - b. percentage of contribution to the total family income
 - c. length of time working

- d. reason for working
 - e. enjoyment of work
 - f. relationship with 4-year-old child
2. There is no significant relationship between the mothers' attitudes toward work and their children's feelings toward their work.
 3. There is no significant relationship between the mothers' attitudes toward work and their children's adjustment to school.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Most of the research concerning working mothers compare them to non-working mothers. Hoffman (1963a) and Shea, Sookan and Roderick (Hoffman and Nye, 1974) studied factors that influence the mother's reason for working. Both Hoffman (1963c) and Yarrow (1961) compared the attitudes of working and nonworking mothers toward their present occupation.

Hoffman (1963a) has done extensive research in the area of working mothers and the effect their work has on their children. Hoffman says that it is necessary to understand why a mother works and how she feels about her work in order to understand the effects her work might have on her family. A mother may decide to work because she is bored or because she does not enjoy leisure time. Hoffman (1963a) also found that between 55 and 90 per cent of the women say they work for money.

If the respondent is encouraged to elaborate on her answer, she will come forth with additional reasons. She will often talk about boredom, having insufficient work in the home, being 'nervous' at home and about the positive aspects of the job (p. 22).

A mother can work for money in order to have extra spending money or to pay debts, to maintain her standard of living or to raise her standard of living. Siegel (1961) supports the fact that women will usually say that they are working for money before they give other reasons for working.

Another reason many women choose to work is because the image of a housewife has little prestige. It fails to give a feeling of achievement. "The educational system and cultural values have tied feelings of achievement to success in the business world. These have been intimately linked to money The housewife has none of these rewards" (Hoffman, 1963a, p. 26).

Hoffman (1963a) shows that some women do not enjoy working because they cannot manage the dual roles of homemaker and worker. These mothers tend to expect more out of their family and they spend very little relaxed leisure time with the children. Some women work in order to use their abilities to the fullest. They are motivated by the desire for social mobility, freedom, independence and more social contacts. Some women simply do not enjoy the housewife-mother role.

Hoffman and Nye (1974) conclude that the reason a woman works can be related to her education, marital status, husband's income, number of children she has and their ages, her place of residence, race and ethnic background. They compiled consensus data from 1900 to 1970. Statistics showed that education plays a significant role in the increase of women in the labor force. Also, more women have moved into the white collar occupations. Hoffman and Nye (1974) found that the husband's income can determine a wife's motivation to work; however, other factors are involved in lower income levels. When all incomes in addition to the husband's income are considered, there is a decline in the employment of women as other incomes increase. The more children a mother has, the less likely she is to work. More married women with less than three children will work than married women with three or more children. There has been a substantial increase in the employment

of minority women. According to Hoffman and Nye (1974, p. 21) "54 per cent of minority women presently or previously married are employed compared with 41 per cent of never-married white women." Hoffman and Nye (1974) summarize that

. . . the largest proportion of women in the labor force have completed their education, have not yet had their first child, and are between 20 and 24 years of age. There is a major decrease in employment while there are children of preschool age in the family, then a return to a high level while children are of school age and the mothers are 35 to 54 years of age (p. 23).

Yarrow (1961) studied both working and non-working mothers, categorizing those satisfied with their present status (employed or not) and those dissatisfied with it. She found that

. . . if mothers are in their preferred work or nonwork role, working or not working makes little difference. Satisfied non-working mothers tend to have somewhat higher ratings in sensitivity to their children's needs; also, they have slightly higher scores on adequacy of mothering than satisfied working mothers. However, when dissatisfied working and non-working mothers are compared, differences appear in areas of control, emotional satisfaction, confidence in childrearing and adequacy of mothering (pp. 225-226).

Stolz (1960) reported no significant relationship in the length of time of the mother's employment to the child's adjustment. However, there was some indication that the child's adjustment becomes better as the mother works longer.

Shea, Sookan, and Roderick (Hoffman and Nye, 1974) indicated that there was a relationship between the mother's education and her attitude toward working. According to these researchers,

For white women, the more education, the more favorable the response to maternal employment. The relationship was linear and favorable attitudes were held by 17 per cent of the women with fewer than nine years of school and 30 per cent of those with college degrees. With the black women, 38 per cent of those with fewer than nine years of school were favorable and 38 per cent of the college graduates were also favorable (p. 58).

Woods (1972) studied 108 fifth grade children of employed mothers. Ninety-five per cent of them were black. She administered four tests which showed the mother's relationship to the child in terms of acceptance, child-centeredness, possessiveness, control, positive involvement, intrusiveness and inconsistent discipline. The teachers were given an adjective checklist to fill out for each child. Woods (1972) concluded that:

1. There is a positive relationship between the mothers' attitudes toward their work and their children's achievement, intelligence and personality.
2. There is a positive relationship between the mothers' attitudes toward their child care roles and the child's achievement, intelligence and personality.
3. There is a positive relationship between the quality of the mother-child relationships and the child's achievement, intelligence and personality (p. 16).

Hoffman (1963c) expected to find a difference in the mother-child relationship when the working mother enjoyed her work. She selected 88 working-mother families and 88 nonworking-mother families. The data were gathered from questionnaires filled out by the children, interviews with the mothers, teacher ratings and a classroom sociometric. The mothers were categorized by positive or negative attitudes toward their work. Sixty-five of the mothers liked work and thirty-five disliked it.

Hoffman (1963c) found that the working mother who enjoys her work shows the child more affection and uses milder discipline. The working mother who does not enjoy her work shows a tendency toward mild discipline; however, this does not include affection and sympathy toward the child. There seems to be less involvement between mother and child when the mother does not enjoy her work. The data supported the hypothesis that children of working mothers who have positive attitudes toward employment would be nonhostile, nonassertive and possibly withdrawn, but that the children of working women who do not like work would be assertive and hostile.

McCord, McCord and Thurber (1963) observed 149 boys over a five-year period to observe differences between the children of working and nonworking mothers. They found no reliable differences between the mother's affection for her son, her control, her technique of discipline and the family expectations on the child. The differences in child-rearing indicated that working mothers were less punitive and less often over protective which provided less frustration for their child. This finding agrees with Hoffman's results which indicated that employed women who had positive attitudes toward their work were less severe in discipline and more affectionate than were unemployed mothers who had positive attitudes toward being housewives.

Hoffman (1963b) stated that the age of the child would be an important factor in the child's adjustment to the mothers working since psychologists feel that the child needs his mother at home during the first five years. At this stage the mother is more likely to work because of financial necessity. According to Hoffman, "The effects of maternal employment should therefore be more dramatic, possibly more

detrimental, but certainly different when there are young children in the family" (p. 199).

These studies show that a mother's reason for working, her husband's income, the age of her children, and her education can greatly influence her attitude toward her work. Most women will say that they work for financial reasons. However, there are likely to be other reasons why she works. A mother may work for additional spending money or she may be motivated by freedom, independence or a feeling of achievement. Also, Hoffman (1963c) and Yarrow (1961) showed that a mother's attitude toward her status (employed or not) can have a significant effect on her child's behavior.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Subjects

Both working mothers and children of working mothers served as subjects for this study. During the school year 1976-77 in the Early Childhood Development Center of the Tulsa Public Schools, there were enrolled 107 4-year-old children whose mothers were working full-time and 73 children whose mothers were not working. These children were predominantly Black. Their families' incomes were classified as middle to low income, in order to meet the school requirements that 90 per cent of the families must have an income of \$7,000 or below and 10 per cent could have an income above \$7,000.

The Early Childhood Development Center is a Title I project, funded by Community Development and the Tulsa Public Schools. The teachers, early childhood educators, conduct many inservice training programs for student teachers, day care and preschool teachers, and kindergarten teachers. The center was originally designed as a pilot program for the Tulsa Public Schools and now serves as a permanent resource center for early childhood educators.

A questionnaire for mothers was sent home from school with all children whose mothers were listed in the school records as working mothers. The teachers were consulted by the investigator in order to

check for additional mothers who had started working since school started. Questionnaires were returned by 46 mothers who were working full-time. These mothers served as the subjects of this study. Data were obtained from all 107 children who were enrolled in the Early Childhood Development Center and whose mothers were known to be working.

Development of Instruments and Research Procedures

A questionnaire was devised by the author to obtain information from working mothers. Items were included to yield information about the mother, a description of her work and some of the ways her work had an impact on her family, and the mother's feelings about her work (Appendix A). Research shows that there are many factors which may influence a mother's attitude toward her work. The research of Hoffman (1963a), Hoffman and Nye (1974), and Wallston (1973) was used as a basis for developing the questionnaire items. The authors reported that a woman's attitude toward her work can be influenced by her education, husband's income, number of children and their ages, and the length of time the mother had been working. Hoffman (1973), Hoffman (1974) and Kappel and Lambert (Hoffman and Nye, 1974) showed three main factors which greatly influence a mother's attitude toward her work--her relationship with her child, her relationship with her family and her reasons for working. These three factors also served as a basis for items in the instrument.

The instrument was submitted to a panel of seven judges (with master's degrees or above), who rated each statement according to the following criteria: (1) is the item clear? (2) does the item need to

be more specific? (3) is it relevant? (4) do you think of any other item that needs to be covered? Minor editorial changes were made on the basis of the judges evaluations. The questionnaire was then given to 10 working mothers in order to check its clarity. They completed the questionnaire and were asked to indicate any questions which were not clear. On the basis of their evaluation, all items were retained. The final questionnaire, with a letter of explanation about the project (Appendix A) was sent home from school with 107 working mothers' children for the mother to complete. They could return it either by sending it with their child or by bringing it when they came to their parent conferences regularly scheduled by the teachers. The mothers' support and cooperation had been sought at a parents' meeting, where the investigator, who was a teacher in the program, explained that she was interested in finding out how working mothers feel about their jobs. The director of the Early Childhood Development Center also supported the study and encouraged the mothers to return the questionnaire. Following the parent meeting, an introductory letter was sent to all working mothers explaining this study and the purpose of the questionnaire, which would be sent to them in a week. The letter encouraged their participation in this study. Three days prior to the regularly scheduled parent conferences, a final note was sent home to any mother who had not returned the questionnaire.

A 10-item scale was included in the questionnaire in order to determine the mother's attitude toward work. The mother was asked to circle the answer that best indicated her feeling toward the statement. Each statement was followed by strongly agree (SA), agree (A), neutral (N), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD) for the subject to circle.

In order to determine the mother's attitude toward work (ATW) score, each "SA" response was given five points, each "A" response was given four points, each "N" response was given three points, each "D" response was given two points, and each "SD" response was given one point. This scoring was reversed for item eight due to the wording of the statement. The maximum ATW score was 50 points and the minimum ATW score was 10 points.

A list of affective skills was developed by psychological consultants to the Tulsa, Oklahoma public schools for an evaluation of the children's adjustment at the Early Childhood Development Center. The list of behavior characteristics reflecting affective skills was organized as the "Child's Behavior Rating Scale" and included the following: (1) shows friendliness with adults, (2) appears happy, (3) is able to work independently, (4) is able to take turns, (5) shares willingly, (6) displays patience with peers, (7) has good peer relations, and (8) appears comfortable with adults. A copy may be found in Appendix B. Each teacher ranked every child in her class either in the upper 25 per cent, middle 50 per cent, or lower 25 per cent of the class for each characteristic. Every child was evaluated so that the teachers would not intentionally score the working mothers' children differently. Also, the teachers were not aware of the specific purposes of the behavior rating scale. The child's behavioral adjustment in each category was determined from the teacher's rankings. This scale was used as an indication of the child's adjustment to school.

A third instrument was devised by the investigator to test a child's positive, negative, or neutral feelings toward his/her mother's working. Four pictures (Appendix C), prepared by the author, were

shown individually to each child. The first picture showed the mother getting ready for work and the child getting ready for school. The second picture showed a child watching out the window while his/her mother was leaving for work. The third picture showed a child getting on the school bus after his/her mother had left for work. The fourth picture showed the mother coming home after having been at work all day. A brief story was read about each picture. After each story, the child was asked to point to one of three facial expressions (happy, sad, neutral) which showed how the child felt about his/her mother going to work. All interviews were conducted individually by the investigator in an area near the child's classroom.

The child's attitude toward his/her mother's working score was determined from the child's responses to each story. A sample score sheet may be found in Appendix C. Every positive response (the happy face) was given a +1 score, every negative response (the sad face) was given a -1 score, and every neutral response (the neutral face) was given a "0" score. All of the child's responses were totaled. The most positive score possible was a +4 and the most negative score possible was a -4. To determine the child's overall attitude toward his/her mother's working, any positive total score was categorized as a positive attitude, any negative total score was categorized as a negative attitude, and a "0" total score was categorized as a neutral attitude.

Analysis of Data

The median test was used to test the significance of the relationship between the mother's attitude toward working (ATW) and each of the

following: (1) education, (2) length of time working, (3) reason for working, (4) enjoyment of work, and (5) relationship with her 4-year-old child.

The chi-square test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between (1) the mother's ATW and her percentage of contribution to the total family income and (2) the mother's ATW and the child's positive, negative, or neutral attitude toward his/her mother's work.

The binomial test was used to test the significance of the relationship between the mother's attitude toward her work and her child's adjustment to school.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to determine the feelings of a selected group of mothers toward their work, a questionnaire (Appendix A) including a 10-item attitude scale (ATW) was distributed to 107 full-time working mothers who had a child enrolled at the Early Childhood Development Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The children of all of these working mothers were interviewed by the author in order to determine their feelings toward their mothers' work. Each teacher of the children filled out a behavioral rating scale (Appendix B) for each child in her class. This information was used to determine the child's adjustment at school. This chapter will present findings related to: mother's attitude toward work (ATW) and mother's ATW scores related to her education, income, length of time working, reason for working, job satisfaction, mother-child relationship, child's feelings toward mother's work, and child's adjustment to school.

Analysis of Data

Mother's Attitude Toward Work (ATW)

A total of 49 mothers' questionnaires were returned, indicating a 45 per cent of return. Three of the returned questionnaires were incomplete and not useable. A total of 46 questionnaires were used in

the analysis of the data. The 10-item ATW scale was scored by assigning a value of 1-5 for each item with "1" for the least positive and "5" for the most positive. The mothers' attitude scores ranged from 44 to 16 points. The median score was 35 points and the mean was 33.87 points. For the purpose of data analysis, those scores ranging from 35 to 44 were considered as reflecting positive attitudes toward work and those scores ranging from 16 to 34 were considered as reflecting negative attitudes toward work.

Mother's ATW and Her Education

The median test was used to examine whether the mother's ATW was significantly associated with her level of education. Data related to the mother's ATW and her level of education are in Table I. Results of the median test were not significant, indicating that the mother's ATW was not significantly associated with her level of education. Of the total group of mothers, 53.3 per cent had attended college, 33.3 per cent had graduated from high school, and 13.3 per cent had not graduated from high school.

Hoffman and Nye (1974) stated that a woman's education can effect the reason a woman may work. This research showed that over half of these low to middle income mothers had some college education. Shea, Sooker and Roderick (Hoffman and Nye, 1974) found a relationship between the mother's education and her attitude toward working. They also stated that 38 per cent of the black college graduates had favorable work attitudes, while 76.9 per cent of the college graduates (the majority being black) in this study had favorable work attitudes.

TABLE I
 THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MOTHER'S ATTITUDE
 TOWARD WORK AND HER LEVEL OF
 EDUCATION
 (N=45)

Education Level	Attitude Toward Work Score	
	Median and Above (N=25)	Below Median (N=20)
Below high school	-	1
High school, but didn't graduate	4	1
Graduated from high school	6	9
Attended college, but didn't graduate	5	6
Graduated from college	6	3
Completed graduate work	4	-

Mother's ATW and Income

Data related to mother's ATW and income level are shown in Table II. Using the chi-square test, no significant difference was found between those mothers who scored at the median or above on the attitude scale and those mothers who scored below the median as to the percentage of their contribution to the total family income. More than half of those mothers who scored below the median on the attitude scale contributed to 75 per cent or more of the total family income.

Hoffman and Nye (1974) stated that when all incomes are considered, there is a decline in the employment of women as other family incomes increase. In this study, Table II indicates that approximately half (N=23) of all subjects contributed to half or less of the family income and the other half (N=22) contributed to more than half of the family income.

TABLE II
THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MOTHER'S ATTITUDE
TOWARD WORK AND HER CONTRIBUTION TO
THE TOTAL FAMILY'S INCOME
(N=45)

Income Level	Attitude Toward Work Score	
	Median and Above (N=24)	Below Median (N=21)
Less than one-half	5	3
One-half of family income	11	4
Three-fourths of family income	3	2
All of family income	5	12

Mother's ATW and Length of Time Working

The median test indicated that there was no significant association between the length of time the mother had worked (less than one year to over five years) and her positive or negative attitude toward her work.

The results are shown in Table III. A comparison of the total sample of working mothers showed that 45.4 per cent had worked continuously for over five years, 31.8 per cent had worked for 3-5 years, 15.9 per cent had worked for 1-2 years and 7.0 per cent had worked for less than 1 year. These data show that 77.2 per cent of the mothers had worked continuously for at least three years or more. Since all of the subjects' children are between four and five years old, most of the mothers had worked all or most of their children's lives.

TABLE III

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MOTHER'S ATTITUDE
TOWARD HER WORK AND LENGTH
OF TIME WORKING
(N=44)

Length of Time Working	Attitude Toward Work Score	
	Median and Above (N=23)	Below Median (N=21)
Less than one year	2	1
1 to 2 years	6	1
3 to 5 years	5	9
Over 5 years	10	10

Mother's ATW and Reason for Working

On the questionnaire (Appendix A, question 10), the mothers were asked to check one or more reasons they were working. If there was more than one reason, they were asked to mark their first, second and third choice. The following choices were given: (1) personal satisfaction, (2) feeling of achievement, (3) financial, (4) desire for interests outside of the home, (5) social contacts and (6) other. The median test indicated that there was no significant difference between the mothers who scored at the median or above on the attitude scale and those who scored below the median as to their reasons for working. These data are shown in Table IV. However, the reason "financial" was given as their first choice more often than all the reasons combined ($p < .01$).

TABLE IV

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MOTHER'S ATTITUDE
TOWARD WORK AND HER REASON FOR WORKING
(N=45)

Reason for Working	Attitude Toward Work Score	
	Median and Above (N=24)	Below Median (N=21)
Personal satisfaction	3	3
Feeling of achievement	2	2
Financial	17	15
Desire for interests outside of home	2	1
Social contacts	-	-
Other	-	-

Hoffman (1963a) stated that a mother's reason for working can affect her family. She also stated that between 55 and 90 per cent of the women will say they work for money. These findings support her conclusion.

Mother's ATW and Job Satisfaction

The mothers were asked to rate their job satisfaction on a five-point scale, with five representing the greatest satisfaction and one representing the least amount of satisfaction. Results are shown in Table V. The median test indicated that there was no significant difference in the satisfaction scores between those who scored at the median and above on ATW and those scored below the median on ATW. The mean satisfaction ratings for the total group of working mothers was 3.75. The mean satisfaction ratings for those mothers who scored at the median and above on ATW was 4.04 and the mean satisfaction ratings for those mothers who scored below the median on ATW was 3.42. The mean satisfaction ratings showed that those mothers who scored at the median and above on ATW was higher than those mothers who scored below the median on ATW.

TABLE V
 THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MOTHER'S ATTITUDE
 TOWARD WORK AND HER ENJOYMENT
 OF WORK
 (N=45)

Enjoyment of Work	Attitude Toward Work Score	
	Median and Above (N=24)	Below Median (N=21)
1	-	2
2	2	-
3	3	7
4	11	11
5	8	1

Mother's ATW and Mother-Child Relationship

The mothers were asked to rate the degree of closeness they felt they had with their 4-year-old child. On the scale, five represented the greatest degree of closeness and one represented the smallest degree of closeness. The median test indicated the degree of closeness with her child as reported by the mother was not significantly associated with ATW scores. Of all the mothers, 57.7 per cent reported that they had the greatest degree of closeness (5) with their four-year-old child. These data are shown in Table VI.

TABLE VI
 THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MOTHER'S ATTITUDE
 TOWARD WORK AND HER RELATIONSHIP
 WITH HER CHILD
 (N=45)

Relationship with Child	Attitude Toward Work Score	
	Median and Above (N=24)	Below Median (N=21)
1	-	-
2	2	1
3	1	1
4	5	9
5	16	10

This finding does not support Hoffman's (1963c) findings that there is less involvement between the mother and child when the mother does not enjoy her work. Apparently, it was possible for the majority of working mothers in this study to feel that they have a very close relationship with their preschool child.

Children's Feelings About Their

Mother's Work

The child's attitude toward his/her mother's work was determined by the use of four short experience stories with illustrations shown to each child individually. The children's feelings ranged from +4 (positive feelings) to -4 (negative feelings). The score sheet is

shown in Appendix A. For the purpose of data analysis, "0" scores were given the point value of 10 with each positive score given an additional point value (11=+1, 12=+2, up to 14 points for +4) and each negative score was given one less point value from "0" (-4 equivalent to 6 points). The range of the children's attitude scores was:

<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Revised Scores</u>	<u>N</u>
+4	14	1
+3	13	0
+2	12	3
+1	11	16
0	10	15
-1	9	11
-2	8	0
-3	7	0
-4	6	1

The median score was "0", representing a neutral feeling toward their mother working. The mean score for those children was 10.23, indicating they had no strong positive, or negative feelings about their mother's work. Those children whose mothers work full-time but did not return their questionnaires were also interviewed. The median score for these children (N=61) was "0" and the mean score was 9.68. A t-test indicated that there was no significant difference in attitudes toward their mother's work between those children whose mothers returned the questionnaire and those who did not return the questionnaire.

The researcher found it very difficult to test a 4-year-old child's feelings toward his/her mother's work. Most of the children didn't seem to have strong feelings about their mother working. Another possibility is that the instrument did not adequately reflect the child's feelings.

Mother's ATW and Child's Feelings

Toward Mother Working

For the purpose of this analysis, the children's scores on the four experience stories were recorded positive, negative or neutral. The chi-square test showed no significant association between the children's feelings about their mother's work and the mothers' attitude toward her work.

Child's Adjustment to School

Binomial tests were used to determine if there were significant differences in children's adjustment in the following areas: (1) shows friendliness with adults, (2) appears happy, (3) is able to work independently, (4) is able to take turns, (5) shares willingly, (6) displays patience with peers, (7) has good peer relations, and (8) appears comfortable with adults, according to their mother's positive or negative attitudes toward her work. Since only 3 of the 24 binomial tests were significant, these differences were probably due to chance and not a reflection of a true pattern of differences.

Eighty-two per cent of total (N=344) teachers' ratings for all areas of children's adjustment were in the upper and middle range. Since only 18 per cent of the total teachers' ratings in all areas of adjustment were in the lower range (N=64), teachers in their school rated children of working mothers very highly in terms of overall adjustment, regardless of their mothers' attitude toward work.

Woods (1972) gave a selected group of fifth grade teachers an adjective checklist to fill out for each child. One of her conclusions was that there was a positive relationship between the mother's attitude

toward her work and her child's achievement in school. Hoffman (1963c) found that the children of working mothers' who had positive attitudes toward employment were nonhostile, nonassertive and withdrawn, but the children of working mothers' who did not like their work were assertive and hostile. Data of this study do not support the findings of Woods (1972) and Hoffman (1963c).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The main purposes of this study were to determine: (1) the relationship between the mother's attitude toward working (ATW) and (a) education, (b) percentage of contribution to total family income, (c) length of time working, (d) reason for working, (e) enjoyment of work, and (f) relationship with 4-year-old child; (2) the mother's ATW and her child's feelings toward her work; (3) the mother's ATW and her child's successful adjustment to school. Also, (1) the mother's attitude toward work, (2) the child's attitude toward his/her mother's work and (3) the child's adjustment in school were determined by instruments developed by the author.

The sample was composed of 46 full-time working mothers who returned the questionnaire sent home with their child. The subjects were predominantly Black, lower to middle income mothers whose 4-year-old child attended the Early Childhood Development Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma during the 1976-77 school year. All of the 107 working mothers' children were interviewed, whether they returned the questionnaire or not. The teachers at the Early Childhood Development Center were asked to complete a behavior rating scale for every child in their classes. This allowed every child to be ranked with the entire class. These data were collected during April and May, 1977.

The questionnaire included the following: (a) a letter of explanation about the study; (b) a section to obtain background data; (c) an attitude toward working scale. A point-value system was used to determine the mother's attitude toward work.

The behavior rating scale, completed by the child's teacher, included eight areas of behavior: (1) shows friendliness with adults, (2) appears happy, (3) is able to work independently, (4) is able to take turns, (5) shares willingly, (6) displays patience with peers, (7) has good peer relations, and (8) appears comfortable with adults. The teacher ranked each child either in the upper 25 per cent, middle 50 per cent or lower 25 per cent of the class for each characteristic. A total adjustment score was not obtained because each characteristic was studied separately.

The child's attitude toward his/her mother's working was determined by the use of four short experience stories with illustrations shown to each child individually. These pictures showed: (1) the mother getting ready for work and the child getting ready for school, (2) the mother leaving for work, (3) the child leaving for school, (4) the mother coming home from work. The child responded to each picture by pointing to a happy, sad or neutral facial expression card. The child's total score was determined by giving each positive response a +1, each negative response a -1 and each neutral response a "0". The total score was categorized as positive, negative or neutral.

The median test was used to test the significance of the relationship between the mother's attitude toward working (ATW) and (1) education, (2) length of time working, (3) reason for working, (4) enjoyment of work and (5) relationship with her child.

The chi-square was used to determine the significance of the relationship between (1) the mother's ATW and her percentage of contribution to the total family income and (2) the mother's ATW and the child's positive, negative or neutral attitude toward his/her mother's work.

The binomial was used to test the significance of the relationship between the mother's attitude toward her work and her child's adjustment to school.

The following results were obtained:

1. The mothers' attitudes toward work were not significantly associated with:
 - (a) level of education
 - (b) percentage of contribution to the total family income
 - (c) length of time working
 - (d) reasons for working
 - (e) enjoyment of work
 - (f) their relationship with their children
2. The mothers' attitudes toward work were not significantly associated with their children's positive, negative or neutral feelings toward their mothers' working.
3. The mothers' attitudes toward work were not significantly associated with the children's adjustment to school.

This research found that the mother's positive or negative attitude toward work has little effect on her child. Most of the mothers have worked at least three years, most or all of their 4-year-old child's life. Also, the teacher-rated behavior scale showed that the teachers at the Early Childhood Development Center

rated a high percentage of the working mothers' children in the upper and middle per cent of the class in adjustment to school. This may indicate that the majority of these children of working mothers are very well adjusted to school.

Limitations of Study

The investigator found that the questionnaire distributed to the full-time working mothers may not have always reflected the mothers' true feelings. From the author's daily association with some of these mothers, it seems possible that the mothers may have had a tendency to rate the relationship with their 4-year-old child higher than it was. An interview or observation technique may allow researchers to obtain more accurate information concerning the mother's attitude toward her work, her job satisfaction, and her relationship with her 4-year-old child.

The author found it very difficult to determine a preschool child's feelings toward his/her mother's work. From observation during the interviews, it was noticed that some of the children pointed to the facial expression cards at random. These children may not have had a clear understanding of the story and did not relate it to their own family situation. This instrument may be more effective with older children.

The teacher-rated behavior scale indicated the teachers' feelings toward the children's adjustment at school. The technique seemed to be more effective for determining the teachers' perceptions about the children's adjustment, rather than having any relationship to their mothers' attitudes. Also, this behavior scale did not determine the

child's total adjustment to school, but it examined specific areas of adjustment. All we can really determine is that the teachers perceived their children to be well adjusted.

The sample for this study was limited to predominantly Black, low to middle income mothers with a 4-year-old child. Most of these mothers had worked for all or most of the child's life.

Suggestions for Future Research

More useful information on the effects of a mother's attitude toward her work on her child could be collected if a sample of full-time working mothers with more varied backgrounds could be used. Also, it would be interesting to use subjects of different ethnic backgrounds.

The effects on the mother's child may be more noticeable if the child were older and had experienced both his/her mother's working as well as staying home. The older child would find it easier to express his/her feelings about his/her mother's working.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Dear Mothers:

I am a teacher at the Early Childhood Development Center and I am also currently working on my master's degree at Oklahoma State University. As part of my graduate study, I have been doing some extensive research concerning working mothers. The information I receive can greatly influence all of us since the percentage of working mothers is continually rising.

I would like to ask your help in collecting more information. I am enclosing a questionnaire for you to fill out. All of this information is anonymous and completely confidential. The questionnaires are numbered in order to group them for each room. After you fill this out, the information can be returned with your child or you can bring it to your parent conference. I will need the information by May 13, 1977. The more responses I receive, the more complete information I will have.

Your assistance with this research project is greatly appreciated. It is through the participation of mothers like you that we can gain greater knowledge concerning working mothers.

Thank you,

Laura Voss

Mother's Questionnaire

1. Age _____

2. Educational status

_____ Below high school

_____ High school, but didn't graduate

_____ Graduated from high school

_____ Attended college, but didn't graduate

_____ Graduated from college

_____ Completed graduate work

3. Complete for each child:

Child	Age	Sex	Child's age when mother began working
-------	-----	-----	--

4. Your occupation (be specific, please)

5. Occupation of other adult family members

6. How many hours a week do you work at your job?

_____ 0-30 hours

_____ 30-40 hours

_____ over 40 hours

7. What portion of your total family income do you earn?

_____ less than half

_____ half of family income

_____ three-quarters (75%) of family income

7. (continued)

_____ all of family income

8. How long have you worked at this job?

_____ less than one year

_____ one-two years

_____ three-five years

_____ over five years

9. How long have you continuously worked outside of the home?

_____ less than one year

_____ one-two years

_____ three-five years

_____ over five years

10. Please check one or more reasons you are working. If there is more than one reason, please mark 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice.

_____ personal satisfaction

_____ feeling of achievement

_____ financial

_____ desire for interests outside of the home

_____ social contacts

_____ other (explain)

11. What are some good things about your work? (Write on back of sheet if you need more room)

12. What are some undesirable things about your work?
(Write on back of sheet if you need more room)
13. Would you like to find a more satisfying job? If so, what type of job?
14. Indicate on the following 5-point scale, your satisfaction with your job (5 represented the greatest and 1 represents the least).
- 1 2 3 4 5
15. Indicate on the following 5-point scale, the degree of closeness you feel you have with your child who goes to the Early Childhood Development Center (5 represents the greatest degree of closeness and 1 represents the smallest degree of closeness).
- 1 2 3 4 5
16. Approximately how many waking hours do you spend with your ECDC child each day?
- a. _____ less than 2
- b. _____ 2-4 hours
- c. _____ 4-6 hours
- d. _____ 6-8 hours
- e. _____ more than 8 hours

Please circle the answer that best indicates your feeling toward the statement.

SA - strongly agree
 A - agree
 N - neutral
 D - disagree
 SD - strongly disagree

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I enjoy my work. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 2. I would not look for a more satisfying job. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 3. I have a good relationship with the people I work with. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 4. My job does not interfere with my responsibilities at home. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 5. My job helps my relationship with my children. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 6. My job is important to my personal satisfaction. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 7. My job has helped me feel more confident when interacting with other people. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 8. My salary is a necessity to the family income. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 9. My family does not resent my working. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 10. I do not feel a lot of pressure from my job. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

APPENDIX B

Child's Behavior Rating Scale

Child's name _____

	Upper 25%	Middle 50%	Lower 25%
shows friendliness with adults			
appears happy			
is able to work independently			
is able to take turns			
shares willingly			
displays patience with peers			
has good peer relations			
appears comfortable with adults			

APPENDIX C

Figure 1. Instrument Used to Determine Child's
Attitude Toward Mother's Work

Introduction

I have a story about a mother who works. Does your mother work?
Look at the first picture.

Picture I

Mother is getting ready to go to work. The little boy/girl is getting ready for school. Point to the face that shows how the child feels about his/her mother going to work.

Picture II

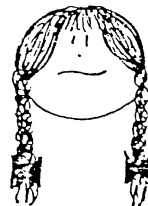
The little boy/girl is watching out the window while his/her mother is leaving. Point to the face that shows how the child feels about his/her mother going to work.

Picture III

The little boy/girl is going out to get on the school bus after his/her mother has already gone to work. Point to the face that shows how the child feels about going to get on the school bus after his/her mother has gone to work.

Picture IV




Mother is coming home after she has been working all day. Point to the face that shows how the child feels about his/her mother having been at work all day.



Child's Attitude Toward Mother's Work

Score Sheet

Child's name _____

			
Picture I			
Picture II			
Picture III			
Picture IV			

VITA²

Laura Ann Voss

Master of Science

Thesis: MOTHER'S SATISFACTION WITH WORK, CHILD'S PERCEPTION OF MOTHER'S WORK, AND CHILD'S SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT

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