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## Employed Mothers: Job Satisfaction and Self-Esteem

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### Abstract

The goal of this research is to examine how certain demographic variables (e.g., occupation, age of children) affect job satisfaction and self-esteem in a sample of 138 employed mothers from a major city in the U.S. The results indicate that age, race, and employment status (part-time versus full-time) were significantly related to job satisfaction and self-esteem. At the same time, education level, number and age of children, and marital status were not significantly related to job satisfaction and self-esteem. Mothers were not more satisfied with one occupation over another, but they did indicate discrepancies in their satisfaction with their pay and opportunities for promotion. In summary, these women's occupational choice based on their motherhood status did not lead to higher levels of job satisfaction. Implications for counselling are discussed.

### Résumé

Cette étude menée dans une ville importante aux États-Unis porte sur l'influence de certains facteurs démographiques (telles que l'emploi et l'âge des enfants) sur la satisfaction au travail et l'estime de soi de 138 mères qui travaillent à l'extérieur de la maison. Les résultats indiquent que l'âge, la race, et le statut d'emploi (à temps partiel ou à temps plein) ont un impact significatif sur la satisfaction au travail et sur l'estime de soi. En même temps, le niveau d'éducation, le nombre et l'âge des enfants, ainsi que l'état civil, n'ont pas un impact significatif sur la satisfaction au travail, ni sur l'estime de soi. Bien que les mères n'affichent pas plus de satisfaction avec un emploi qu'avec un autre, elles ont indiqué des différences quant au niveau de satisfaction avec leur rémunération et les possibilités d'avancement. En résumé, les choix d'emploi qu'ont fait ces femmes, qui ont de plus choisi d'être mère, n'ont pas amené des niveaux plus élevés de satisfaction au travail. Certaines implications en découlent pour la pratique en orientation.

Fitzgerald and Betz (1983), in a strong critique of vocational behaviour theory, argue that the literature lacks any systematic explanation of the role of contextual variables (i.e., gender, race, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation), structural factors (e.g., the interface between home and work, and discrimination), and cultural constraints (e.g. sex role socialization and the "motherhood mandate" [Etaugh & Poertner, 1991]), all of which, it is hypothesized, impact vocational behaviour in important, systematic, and predictable ways. The dominant intellectual tradition is one that has typically dichotomized the concerns of work and family despite the existence of a large body of data indicating the critical importance of the interface between work and family considerations to women's vocational satisfaction (Fitzgerald & Rounds, 1994). Moreover, theories of work adjustment, such as the Theory of Work Adjustment (arguably the most empirically powerful of such models currently available) focus purposely and solely upon individual characteristics as determinative of an individual's working life, going so far as to conceive

environment solely in terms of its relation to a set of individualistic psychological variables—again ignoring contextual variables, structural factors and cultural constraints theorized to be important to women (Fitzgerald & Rounds, 1994).

Research on employed women has begun to address some of these contextual variables, structural factors, and cultural constraints. Most of this research has focused predominately on organizational factors that affect women's advancement and career development such as the opportunities women have to advance within a particular career and/or organization, and the discrimination women face in the work place (Morrison & Glinow, 1990; Russell, 1995). However, it has focused predominately on women in general without particular attention to the variety of situations in which women find themselves, and most notably, those related to motherhood. This research is intended to remedy this omission by considering the possible relationship between job satisfaction and motherhood, with particular attention given to the cultural constraint of the "motherhood mandate."

In popular thought there is a great deal of discussion on how mothers "should" make career choices (Etaugh & Poertner, 1991). It is not uncommon to hear that "women should be teachers or nurses because these are good jobs for women with children," or that "mothers with young children should work part-time." Women are encouraged to make career decisions based on the ages of their children versus their own career development. Etaugh and Poertner (1991) call this the "motherhood mandate." Research indicates that employed mothers of a young child are often rated as "less dedicated to her family, less sensitive to the needs of other people, less affectionate, and more selfish than a mother who has chosen not to work or who has reduced her work hours following the birth of a child" (Etaugh & Poertner, 1991, p. 346; see also Etaugh & Folger, 1990; Etaugh & Nekolny, 1990; and Etaugh & Study, 1989). However, despite the prevalence of the "motherhood mandate," more and more women with children are entering the paid work force (Betz, 1995). Thus, this research set out to examine the effects of following the "motherhood mandate" on job satisfaction.

While research has indicated the importance of the interface between work and family considerations to women's vocational satisfaction (Fitzgerald & Rounds 1994) the focus of most existing research on mothers employed outside the home has been upon the effect of that interface upon their career development (e.g. Fassinger, 1990; Greenglass, 1990), the impact that a mother's employment has on young children and adolescents (e.g. Armistead, Wierson & Forehand, 1990; Galambos & Maggs, 1990; Hojat, 1990), and the issue of role strain (Anderson-Kulman & Paludi, 1986; Gray, 1983; Hardesty & Betz, 1980).

It is noteworthy that of these three, only the role strain research has consistently investigated the direct effect of employment upon mothers themselves versus its effect on their family and children, or upon their career development as an isolated phenomenon.

This failure to consider the needs and effects of employment upon mothers represents not only a failure to value them as unique individuals, it equally fails to recognize that career, psychological well-being, and family are not separate, isolated domains, since one often spills over into the other. For example, the research on role strain reveals that the difficulty employed mothers have in relation to their role within a social system usually arises out of the difficulty of integrating work and child-rearing roles (Gray, 1983; Hardesty & Betz, 1980). Anderson-Kulman and Paludi (1986) found that job satisfaction among employed mothers was positively related to, and predictive of, cohesiveness in their families, and that higher levels of job satisfaction were associated with lower levels of role strain (Anderson-Kulman & Paludi, 1986). Hemmelgarn and Laing (1991) examined the relationship between situational factors and perceived role strain in mothers returning to work following the birth of their first child. They found that maternal identity, "the confidence and comfort a woman experiences in the maternal role," was correlated with and the best predictor of role strain and that higher maternal identity scores and job satisfaction were both related to lower role strain scores. Finally, McIntyre (1990) found that women in non-traditional jobs indicated that work had a more positive effect on their home life than did those employed in traditional jobs, while both groups reported difficulty in combining work and family responsibilities.

In addition to the foregoing role strain research, a limited number of studies have examined the impact of employment upon the well-being and life satisfaction of the mother. Pugliesi's (1988) study indicated that employment characteristics such as autonomy and complexity have a positive effect on social support which in turn increases a sense of well-being in women. Similarly, Pietromonaco, Manis, and Frohardt-Lane's (1986) results indicate that women with multiple roles have higher levels of self-esteem and job satisfaction. They conclude that the multiple roles women have enhances their psychological well-being. On the other hand, Sekaran (1989) examined how self-esteem and sense of competence affected the relationship between discretionary time, job satisfaction, career salience, and job involvement for spouses in dual career families, and found that women reported lower levels of satisfaction when more of their discretionary time was spent at work.

Finally, a limited number of studies have attempted to compare the effects of maternal employment by studying employed and non-employed mothers. These findings indicate that choice may have some

effect. For example, a study of mothers of 12-month-old infants indicated that women who preferred to work but remained at home reported higher levels of depression than those women who returned to work. In addition, these mothers held conflicting views of their maternal role, separation from their infants, careers and employment (Hock & DeMeis, 1990). However, in Weaver and Matthews' (1990) study examining the differences in women who were employed full-time outside of the home and those who were full-time homemakers, the results generally indicated greater work satisfaction among women who work outside the home.

The aforementioned research supports the idea that for women there is a relationship between job satisfaction, self-esteem and the number of roles they have, in particular the family role. It also suggests that for women who are mothers, choice of whether or not to be employed outside the home affects job satisfaction. If occupation and choice are both considered important variables with regard to women's job satisfaction and self-esteem, it would follow that these would be particularly salient variables with respect to a mother's career development. That is, if women are being encouraged to make occupational choices based on their present or prospective motherhood status it is important to assess the relationship between job satisfaction and occupation in light of motherhood. This is the first goal of this research.

At the same time, one problem endemic to much of the existing research on employed mothers is that it treats them as a completely homogeneous group, with limited attention being paid to the number of children, occupation, race, and income level of the mothers. For example, this omission can be seen in Callahan and Kidd's (1986) recommendation that the relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem needs to be examined in regard to women's occupations and socio-economic status. It is also inferred from the general critique of vocational behaviour theory made by Fitzgerald and Betz (1983). Therefore, the second goal of this research is to examine a number of significant variables (e.g., income level, age, number of children, race, and occupation) in relation to job satisfaction and self-esteem with a sample of employed mothers.

#### METHOD

Two hundred and fifty surveys were distributed to employed women from the New York metropolitan area. A convenience sample of participants was solicited through advertisements at community organizations, churches, and businesses in order to recruit women who were employed in a variety of occupations. A 55% return rate was obtained resulting in a sample size of 138 employed mothers.



### *Participants*

Each participant filled out: (a) a demographic information sheet; (b) the Job Descriptive Index (Smith, Kendall, & Hullin, 1969; 1975); and (c) the Four Component Self-Esteem Scale (Hampilos, 1988). Although the self-esteem measure has four components, only the external competence and internal worth scales were used in this analysis because some of the participants only received two scales of the FCSS. Thus, there is incomplete data for the internal competence and external self-worth scales. Fortunately, since the four scales are independent, statistical analysis can be performed on the remaining two scales: external competence and internal self-worth.

The participants in the study were 138 employed mothers between ages of 21 and 40, of which 112 were White and 26 were Nonwhite (15 African American; 8 Hispanic; and 3 Other). Most of the mothers in the sample were married ( $n = 117$ ), with 14 divorced and 7 in committed relationships. Of the mothers in committed relationships, 72 were married or in their relationship for over 10 years, with 29 for 5 to 10 years and 21 for 0 to 5 years. The education level of the participants ranged from high school graduate to doctorate (high school,  $n = 36$ ; associate,  $n = 16$ ; bachelor,  $n = 47$ ; master,  $n = 27$ ; doctorate,  $n = 10$ ). With regard to employment status, 95 of the mothers worked full-time, 39 worked part-time, and 4 freelanced. The majority of mothers had worked for more than 10 years ( $n = 41$ ), with 32 working 5-10 years, 22 working 2-5 years, and 31 working less than 2 years (12 participants did not answer the question). Finally, the occupations participants were involved in were: academic ( $n = 26$ ); clerical ( $n = 31$ ); managerial ( $n = 33$ ); official (i.e., program director, vice-president, state official;  $n = 6$ ); professional (i.e., psychologist, attorney, accountant, nurse;  $n = 33$ ); and sales (i.e., marketing rep, insurance;  $n = 9$ ).

### INSTRUMENTATION

#### *Four Component Self-Esteem Scale*

The Four Component Self-Esteem Scale (FCSS) was developed by J. Hampilos (1988). The scale purports to measure four components of self-esteem: (a) Inner Worth—arises from within oneself and is one's wish to value oneself; (b) Inner Competence—arises from within oneself and depends on one's judgment of one's sense of competence; (c) External Worth—results from one's evaluation of the opinions and attitudes held by others; and (d) External Competence—results from one's evaluation of the opinions and attitudes held by others regarding one's competence.

The FCSS was chosen as opposed to a more popular self-esteem measure because: (a) it is relatively easy to administer and score; (b)

it measures four separate aspects of self-esteem as opposed to a global self-esteem which is measured by the more popular scales; and (c) it measures both internal and external expectations which are important components in the assessment of job satisfaction; and (d) research indicates it is reliable (coefficient alpha .90) and valid (Hampilos, 1988).

### *Job Descriptive Index*

The Job Descriptive Index (JDI), developed by Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969), and revised in 1985 (Balzer, Smith, Kravitz, Lovell, Paul, Reilly, & Reilly; 1990), is a carefully constructed and widely used instrument designed to operationally define five separate components of job satisfaction. Thus, the scale measures satisfaction with one's: (a) Work on Present Job; (b) Present Pay; (c) Opportunities for Promotion; (d) Supervision on Present Job; (e) People on Present Job; and (f) Job in General.

The JDI was selected because: (a) it is relatively easy to administer and score; (b) it measures five specific aspects of satisfaction as opposed to global or general satisfaction; and (c) research indicates that the JDI is both a reliable and valid measure (Balzer et al., 1990; Smith et al., 1975). Smith et al. (1975) reported an average reliability coefficient for the five scales of .79 for split-half estimates. Higher internal consistency reliabilities were found for each of the scales: work (.84); pay (.80); promotion (.86); and co-workers (People on Present Job) (.88).

## RESULTS

### *Self-Esteem*

Eleven MANOVAs were performed to determine the effects of the demographic variables (race, marital status, age, employment status [part-time or full-time], years on the job, years married, occupation, education level, income, age of children, and number of children) on the external competence and internal self-worth scales of the FCSS.

Four of the MANOVAs were significant, namely, race, age of mother, ages of children, and employment status. At the same time, marital status, occupation, education level, income, age of children, and number of children were not significant, contrary to the predictions based on the "motherhood mandate." The significant findings will be reported below.

*Race.* For the Race variable, a MANOVA was performed with two levels of race (White, Nonwhite) as the between-subjects factor and the two scales of the FCSS as the dependent variables. There was a main effect for race ( $F = 4.01$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Nonwhite mothers were found to have higher levels of both internal worth ( $M = 80.40$ ,  $SD = 9.76$ ) and external competence ( $M = 83.00$ ,  $SD = 6.27$ ) than White women (internal worth,  $M = 69.45$ ,  $SD = 12.87$ ; external competence,  $M = 79.49$ ,  $SD = 10.51$ ). Bonferroni post-hoc tests of significance found that Nonwhite mothers

had significantly higher levels of internal worth than White mothers ( $p < .05$ ), while there was no significant difference between White mothers and Nonwhite mothers in the area of external competence.

*Age.* For the age variable, a MANOVA was performed with three levels of age (21 to 30, 31-40, over 40) as the between-subjects factor and the two scales of the FCSS as the dependent variables. There was a main effect for age ( $F = 3.03, p = .05$ ). Mothers aged 21-30 ( $M = 73.91, SD_u = 11.67$ ) appear to have higher levels of internal worth than mothers 31-40 ( $M = 71.75, SD = 12.48$ ) or mothers over 40 ( $M = 65.82, SD = 15.01$ ), while mothers aged 31-40 ( $M = 81.06, SD = 9.42$ ) had higher levels of external competence than the other two groups. Mothers over 40 had the lowest levels of internal worth ( $M = 65.82, SD = 15.01$ ). Post-hoc tests did not find these differences to be significant.

A within-subjects ANOVA was performed with race as the between-subjects factor, age as the within-subjects factor, and self-esteem as the dependent variable. There was a main effect of age by race ( $F = 6.13, p < .005$ ). Bonferroni post-hoc tests indicated a significant difference between White mothers aged 21-30 and those over 40 ( $p < .05$ ), with White mothers 21-30 having higher levels of internal worth. In the area of external competence, White mothers aged 31-40 had significantly higher levels of external competence ( $p < .05$ ) than White mothers 21-30.

With regard to the Nonwhite mothers, Bonferroni post-hoc tests indicated a significant difference in the area of internal worth ( $p = .05$ ), with Nonwhite mothers aged 21-30 having higher levels of internal worth than those 31-40. No difference was found in the area of external competence.

*Employment Status.* For the employment status variable, a MANOVA was performed with two levels of employment status (part-time, full-time) as the between-subjects factor and the two scales of the FCSS as the dependent variables. There was a main effect for employment status ( $F = 5.81, p < .05$ ). There would appear to be little difference between mothers who were employed full-time and those employed part-time in the area of internal worth. While mothers employed part-time appear to have higher levels of external competence than those employed full-time, post-hoc tests found no significant differences.

*Age of Children.* For the age of children variable, a MANOVA was performed with four levels of children's ages (infant to 5 years, 6-10, 11-15, over 16) as the between-subjects factor and the two scales of the FCSS as the dependent variables. There was a main effect for age of children ( $F = 3.30, p < .05$ ). Bonferroni post-hoc tests of significance indicated that women whose children were over 16 had higher levels of internal worth ( $p < .05$ ) than mothers whose children were between infancy and 5 years old. In order to understand these findings, it may be helpful to examine whether successfully raising a child to adulthood increases women's self-esteem.

### *Job Satisfaction*

MANOVAs were run to determine the effects of demographic variables (race, marital status, age, employment status [part-time or full-time], years on the job, years married, occupation, education level, income, age of children, and number of children) on the scales of the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) (Work on Present Job, Present Pay, Opportunities for Promotion, Supervisor, People on Present Job, Coworkers, and Job in General). Table 1 outlines the means and standard deviations for these MANOVAs.

Thus, eleven MANOVAs were performed with only three being significant, namely: age, years on the job, and occupation. Aside from these three, there were no other significant relationships between the other demographic variables and the scales of the Job Descriptive Index. Contrary to the assumption of the "motherhood mandate," age of children and employment status did not have a significant effect on job satisfaction. The significant findings will be discussed below.

*Age.* For the age variable, a MANOVA was performed with three levels of age (21-30, 31-40, over 40) as the between-subjects variable and the six scales of the JDI as the dependent variables. There was a main effect for age ( $F = 2.43, p < .01$ ). This main effect appeared to be associated with a significant univariate  $F$  for the scale, opportunities for promotion ( $F = 3.61, p < .05$ ) Table 1 shows that younger mothers aged 21-30 ( $M = 36.18$ ) were more satisfied than mothers aged 31 to 40 ( $M = 21.80$ ) and mothers over 40 ( $M = 28.12$ ).

MANOVAs were performed to examine whether years on the job, occupation, education level, employment status, age and number of children affect job satisfaction when age is controlled for. None were significant. Thus, regardless of how long individuals have been employed in a particular job, their occupation, education, and the age and number of children they have, older women report less satisfaction with opportunities for promotion than younger women.

*Years on the Job.* For the years on the job variable, a MANOVA was performed with four levels of years on the job (less than 2 years, 2-5 years, 5-10 years and 10 or more years) as the between-subjects variable and the six scales of the JDI as the dependent variables. There was a main effect for years on the job ( $F = 2.36, p < .005$ ). This main effect appeared to be associated with a significant univariate  $F$  value for the scale, opportunities for promotion ( $F = 4.3, p < .005$ ). Table 1 shows that individuals on the job less than 2 years ( $M = 33.30$ ) perceive more opportunities for promotion than those on the job 2 to 5 years ( $M = 30.74$ ), 5 to 10 years ( $M = 31.27$ ), and 10 or more years ( $M = 23.73$ ). As would be anticipated, these findings appear to indicate that mothers who are on the job longer perceive less opportunities for promotion, but this is not altogether conclusive.

TABLE 1  
*Means and Standard Deviations of the Job Satisfaction and Demographic Variables*

<i>Demographic Variables</i>	<i>WP</i>		<i>PP</i>		<i>PROM</i>		<i>SUP</i>		<i>PPJ</i>		<i>JOBGEN</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Age</b>												
21-30 yrs	38.59	9.51	36.18	16.87	32.54	17.58	43.50	11.19	39.27	14.99	41.36	11.97
30-40 yrs	36.79	10.28	29.48	16.28	21.80	16.52	40.61	12.64	41.77	12.58	43.98	9.45
Over 40 yrs	35.82	11.84	28.12	19.27	20.94	16.72	45.12	7.90	44.88	7.21	40.00	8.50
<b>Race</b>												
White	42.34	18.29	35.85	24.23	29.11	35.42	45.73	19.19	47.02	18.03	47.21	17.49
Nonwhite	39.73	24.51	35.96	26.74	31.31	30.04	47.62	21.15	42.92	25.46	47.35	21.05
<b>Marital Status</b>												
Married	41.14	17.54	34.41	22.89	28.55	24.32	44.73	18.22	44.50	18.59	46.27	16.58
Nonmarried	47.50	30.01	47.36	32.08	34.64	37.35	55.00	25.67	55.71	24.84	52.00	27.59
Other	42.43	27.14	37.29	33.61	35.57	33.93	51.00	24.31	56.43	19.22	53.86	20.41
<b>Years Married</b>												
1-5 yrs	59.42	31.03	56.29	35.48	52.42	37.96	61.64	29.62	60.55	31.13	61.68	29.64
5-10 yrs	37.90	8.85	31.10	16.08	25.31	15.01	40.79	12.46	39.86	12.21	41.52	10.28
10 or more yrs	41.36	20.19	34.48	24.90	28.75	26.98	46.25	19.96	47.09	19.63	48.30	17.94

*Note:* WP=Work on Present Job; PP=Present Pay; PROM=Opportunities for Promotion; SUP=Supervision on Present Job; PPJ=People on Present Job; JOBGEN=Job in General.

TABLE 1 *continued*

<i>Demographic Variables</i>	<i>WP</i>		<i>PP</i>		<i>PROM</i>		<i>SUP</i>		<i>PPJ</i>		<i>JOBGEN</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Number of Children</b>												
One	44.06	20.32	37.75	26.73	33.19	27.28	46.04	21.18	46.07	20.71	46.94	19.96
Two	42.30	20.10	36.14	24.87	30.61	27.08	47.03	19.13	47.49	20.34	48.58	18.35
Three	31.87	10.32	30.62	13.83	14.87	10.01	40.44	14.84	40.75	12.50	42.62	8.27
Four or more	43.40	20.85	32.70	26.69	27.10	28.66	49.80	19.91	48.60	19.39	48.30	19.15
<b>Age of Children</b>												
Infant-5 yrs	38.25	12.91	31.10	19.61	26.46	20.32	41.26	15.04	41.95	15.32	43.95	12.39
6-10 yrs	43.45	15.39	32.57	21.74	26.12	22.11	45.67	17.52	45.65	17.06	47.40	15.21
11-15 yrs	49.00	28.56	50.11	30.63	42.67	35.18	56.39	24.72	56.39	25.04	54.06	26.15
16+ yrs	43.67	31.90	44.11	33.04	33.28	38.18	53.61	26.27	52.89	27.14	50.83	268.08
<b>Education</b>												
High School	35.59	11.64	28.82	17.53	24.12	17.28	43.68	10.49	39.41	14.06	41.15	10.73
Associate	30.57	7.62	28.00	14.42	13.29	13.49	39.36	14.12	41.71	12.68	37.29	10.53
Bachelor	37.80	10.15	34.53	16.69	25.82	17.44	40.04	12.98	42.36	12.27	43.62	10.45
Master	40.48	9.02	27.52	17.08	20.39	16.55	42.00	11.36	43.74	10.15	46.30	7.28
Doctorate	38.50	8.83	28.40	16.83	32.00	16.30	42.00	14.27	41.40	13.30	44.60	9.56
<b>Employment Status</b>												
Full-time	35.08	10.66	30.12	16.10	22.80	16.68	41.03	12.46	41.51	11.99	41.04	10.78
Part-time	41.46	8.09	31.87	17.70	24.22	18.00	43.27	11.45	44.51	10.84	46.46	7.45

*Note:* WP=Work on Present Job; PP=Present Pay; PROM=Opportunities for Promotion; SUP=Supervision on Present Job; PPJ=People on Present Job; JOBGEN=Job in General.

TABLE 1 *continued*

<i>Demographic Variables</i>	<i>WP</i>		<i>PP</i>		<i>PROM</i>		<i>SUP</i>		<i>PPJ</i>		<i>JOBGEN</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Occupation</b>												
Academic	40.20	6.44	25.35	15.86	21.90	16.21	44.30	11.48	46.60	8.91	48.70	5.04
Clerical	33.38	9.87	25.64	15.32	17.36	15.39	43.14	10.53	43.00	11.92	39.93	8.89
Managerial	36.91	11.10	34.52	16.51	27.57	18.53	38.17	14.98	40.78	11.51	40.17	11.31
Official	40.75	10.59	41.00	10.39	27.00	18.66	36.00	12.49	45.75	6.65	40.75	8.50
Professional	38.28	10.30	37.52	16.26	26.08	19.70	42.64	11.23	40.72	14.27	46.04	8.99
Sales	39.13	10.45	27.00	14.85	29.37	11.27	39.00	16.12	37.25	13.68	35.50	16.19
<b>Years on Job</b>												
> 2 yrs	41.88	18.10	29.76	25.13	33.30	24.56	49.06	15.64	47.27	17.97	48.88	14.44
2-5 yrs	44.78	28.58	42.85	30.74	31.52	35.34	49.52	26.29	52.11	26.12	48.93	26.47
5-10 yrs	41.06	13.17	33.88	19.63	31.27	19.87	44.91	14.57	43.94	14.71	44.64	13.69
10 or more yrs	40.75	18.48	37.25	23.04	23.73	25.28	42.86	20.65	43.98	19.31	46.77	17.85
<b>Household Income</b>												
Up to 24,999	45.42	25.43	35.95	32.28	34.47	32.47	51.00	23.90	49.42	26.46	49.10	24.54
25,000-49,999	42.49	19.67	37.65	24.86	33.70	26.35	47.19	19.78	45.16	20.67	47.22	18.68
50,000-74,999	37.75	18.25	33.44	23.21	23.19	23.92	46.56	16.78	44.75	16.80	45.50	16.07
75,000-99,999	41.37	15.38	34.11	20.85	30.07	22.80	40.93	17.78	44.74	15.74	46.07	15.36
More than 100,000	45.44	21.45	40.72	25.01	28.39	28.76	45.33	22.30	50.83	21.04	50.78	18.78

*Note:* WP=Work on Present Job; PP=Present Pay; PROM=Opportunities for Promotion; SUP=Supervision on Present Job; PPJ=People on Present Job; JOBGEN=Job in General.



Bonferroni post-hoc tests of significance indicated that individuals on the job less than 2 years felt there were more opportunities for promotion than individuals on the job 2 to 5 years and those on the job more than ten years ( $p < .05$ ). However, there was no difference between individuals on the job less than two years and those on the job between 5 and 10 years. In addition, mothers on the job between 5 and 10 years perceived greater opportunities for promotion than mothers on the job between 2 and 5 years ( $p < .05$ ). Based on these results, two hypothesis were further explored. First, MANOVAs were performed to examine if there is a relationship between one's level of education and occupation with perceived opportunities for promotion. No significant relationships were found. The second hypothesis examined whether there is a relationship between the age of a woman's children and her perception about opportunities for promotion. Again, no significant relationships were found.

*Occupation.* Finally, for the occupation variable, a MANOVA was performed with six levels of occupation (academic, clerical, managerial, official, professional, and sales) as the between-subjects variable and the six scales of the JDI as the dependent variables. Although the cell sizes of two of the occupation levels were small (official,  $n = 6$ ; sales,  $n = 9$ ), the statistical analyses performed were powerful enough to yield significant results. There was a main effect for occupation ( $F = 2.19$ ,  $p < .005$ ). This main effect appeared to be associated with a significant univariate  $F$  for the present pay scale ( $F = 3.46$ ,  $p < .005$ ) and the opportunities for promotion scale ( $F = 2.3$ ,  $p = .05$ ). These results are outlined in Table 1. Bonferroni post-hoc tests indicate that mothers employed as managers were significantly more satisfied than academics and clerical workers ( $p = .05$ ). With regard to the promotion sub-scale, managers were significantly ( $p < .05$ ) more satisfied with their opportunities for promotion than clerical workers. No differences were found between the other groups. However, given the smallness of some of the cells, these results may warrant further analysis with a larger sample.

#### DISCUSSION

One of the most important findings of this study is that factors directly relating to motherhood were not found to be significant in relation to either job satisfaction or external competence for working mothers. This is not to say that motherhood itself may not have an effect, although this is an issue not addressed in this study. Rather, if one accepts motherhood as a given, this study reveals that factors such as marital status, years married, and the ages of children are not significant in relation to job satisfaction or self-esteem. The importance of this finding, along with other related findings, may perhaps be best appreciated in relation to the cluster of ideas raised in connection with the "motherhood mandate."

These include: timing of the mother's career; employment status; and the profession chosen.

In relation to the timing of one's career, Etaugh and Poertner's (1991) research indicates that women are encouraged to make career choices based on their child-bearing status. They are encouraged to make career decisions based on the ages of their children rather than their own career development. In this study, the age and number of children a woman has were not found to be significant. These factors did not affect job satisfaction or external competence. This may indicate either that the women in this study have been able to successfully negotiate the societal pressures associated with the "motherhood mandate" or, more simply, that young mothers and mothers with young families do not experience *less* job satisfaction than mothers whose children are older. In addition, women whose children were older had higher levels of internal worth, which suggests that they may feel a sense of accomplishment in having raised their children but that this is not something that has affected their job satisfaction. Thus, in either case, postponing entering the work force based on the ages of one's children does not lead to greater job satisfaction or self-esteem.

That is not to say, however, that this delay may not have an adverse effect on mothers' career development. An important finding was the relationship between opportunities for promotion and age. Younger mothers seem to be more satisfied with opportunities for promotion than older mothers regardless of how long they have been on the job. This may indicate that older women experience discrimination in the area of promotion as a result of age, and suggests that age may be a factor contributing to the "glass ceiling" (Morrison & Glinow, 1990). Older women, regardless of when they enter the work force, may be hitting that ceiling earlier. Therefore, women who postpone entering their career may have less opportunities for advancement due to discrimination based on age. Moreover, it must be stressed that opportunities for promotion was found to be an important variable with regard to each of the analyses. This suggests that the experience of hitting the "glass ceiling" cannot be considered a harmless corollary of motherhood nor an accommodation to the career goals and aspirations of these women. Rather, it must be acknowledged as potentially destructive to women's job satisfaction. Contrary to the "motherhood mandate," delaying full-time employment until one's children are in school could have a detrimental effect on the mothers' career development. Further research needs to examine not only the barriers women face, but also the psychosocial effects of those barriers.

In terms of employment status, the "motherhood mandate" supports the idea of part-time work for mothers of young children. In contrast, the findings of this study reveal that part-time versus full-time employment

status is not significant in relation to job satisfaction or self-esteem. That is, that regardless of whether a mother works full- or part-time, neither her job satisfaction nor her self-esteem is affected. Thus, the suggestion that mothers with young children will be more satisfied at work (Fitzgerald & Rounds, 1994) because they would be better able to negotiate the demands of the two roles more effectively does not seem to be supported.

With regards to the choice of a profession, the findings of this study fail to support the career choices advocated by the "motherhood mandate." In examining the differences in job satisfaction among women from different occupations, no difference was found in their satisfaction with: (a) the work done on the present job; (b) opportunities for promotion; (c) supervision; and (d) coworkers. Differences were found in the areas of: (a) satisfaction with pay, with women in lower salaried occupations less satisfied; and (b) opportunities for promotion, with women in clerical positions the least satisfied. Overall, these findings do not identify an occupation, which leads to greater job satisfaction for working mothers.

Finally, with regard to race and self-esteem., Nonwhite women were found to have higher levels of internal worth (how they view themselves) than White women, with no differences found with regard to external competence (how others view them). Thus, Nonwhite mothers appear to feel better about themselves than White mothers, whereas both groups have the same perceptions of how others view their competence. In addition, younger White mothers have higher levels of internal worth and lower levels of external competence than older White mothers, while Nonwhite younger mothers have lower levels of internal worth than older Nonwhite mothers. One likely explanation for this phenomenon is the social experience for White women that youth is valued over experience, whereas for Nonwhite women conformity with the stereotype of the "black mammie" (e.g., Collins, 1990) is socially supported and valued. This finding should be interpreted with caution, since the sample size of Nonwhite participants was very small. Therefore, future research needs to examine the intersection of race and motherhood and its effects on self-esteem.

In conclusion, it appears that variables directly related to a women's motherhood status have little to no effect on job satisfaction and self-esteem. This indicates that, although women are encouraged to make decisions based on their motherhood status, there is no evidence to suggest that those decisions will increase their self-esteem or job satisfaction and may in fact be counterproductive in terms of their career development. Although the implications cannot be generalized to a Canadian context, these results warrant further analysis on a Canadian sample.

### *Implications for Counselling*

Finally, the results of this research read in relation to other existing research on employed mothers has significant implications for counselling. First, this study reveals that none of the factors relating to motherhood are significant in relation to either job satisfaction or self-esteem for working mothers. Counsellors must become aware of their own beliefs about the relationship between work and motherhood so that they do not impose a societal standard upon their client. Further, counsellors must be aware that not only are the decisions women are encouraged to make based on their current or prospective motherhood status *not* supported, but they may even be detrimental to the mother's career development. For example, counsellors could discuss with their clients the possible loss of pay and promotion opportunities if their clients choose to leave the workforce temporarily. Second, counsellors need to be aware of and understand the interaction between a mother's career and her self-esteem. Counsellors could discuss with their clients how they may view their sense of worth if they were to leave the work force and how they believe others would view them. This could facilitate the clients' understanding of the role of work in their self-esteem so that they may make a more informed choice. Third, since many women feel compelled to make their choices for others (Etaugh & Poertner, 1991) and may adopt career choices based on their motherhood status for the benefit of their spouses and/or children, counsellors need to be aware that a mother's failure to attend to her own career can have a negative impact on her self-esteem, on the home environment, and on the very people she is attempting to benefit. Finally, for those women who make or have made decisions contrary to those imposed by the "motherhood mandate," counsellors need to be aware of and help their clients develop strategies to cope with the resistance and social pressure which may be brought to bear on those women.

Thus, as indicated by Fitzgerald and Rounds (1994) and supported by this study, counsellors need to understand work adjustment and work adjustment theory from the perspective of including contextual variables in order to help facilitate the career decisions of their clients who are mothers, and to support their career development as mothers. As such, decisions about work and work adjustment could then be made from a consideration of a wide variety of individual and environmental variables, versus only considering a woman's status or prospective status as a mother. Finally, counsellors need to be able to discuss with their clients the discrimination that they may possibly experience in the workplace which results from their motherhood status.

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