

---

Theses, Dissertations, and Projects

---

2013

## He works and she does too : race and gender differences in relationship between earner status, marital satisfaction, and division of family tasks

Samantha M. Rivera  
*Smith College*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses>



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Rivera, Samantha M., "He works and she does too : race and gender differences in relationship between earner status, marital satisfaction, and division of family tasks" (2013). Masters Thesis, Smith College, Northampton, MA.

<https://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses/600>

This Masters Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in Theses, Dissertations, and Projects by an authorized administrator of Smith ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@smith.edu](mailto:scholarworks@smith.edu).

Samantha Marie Rivera  
He Works and She Does Too: Race  
and Gender Differences in the  
Relationship Between Earner Status,  
Marital Satisfaction, and Division of  
Family Tasks

### **ABSTRACT**

This study sought to fill gaps in literature by exploring similarities and differences in marital satisfaction and division of family tasks between Caucasian and Mexican-American dual-earner and single-earner couples. The subsample included in the analysis was a subset from the Supporting Father Involvement study based in California. Participants were 522 couples, with two-thirds Mexican-American and approximately one fourth Caucasian. The study examined the following four questions: (1) How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with marital satisfaction? (2) Does the SFI intervention affect couple satisfaction differently for distinct racial/ethnic and earner groups? (3) How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with the division of family tasks? (4) Are there differences between dual-earner Mexican-Americans and comparison groups in the division of family tasks?

The findings indicated that earner status was associated with marital satisfaction and that Mexican-American dual-earning couples' marital satisfaction reports were different than comparison groups. Additionally, both earner status and race/ethnicity analyzed separately and combined did have an association with division of family tasks. Last, differences were found between how Mexican-American dual-earning couples and comparison groups divide family tasks. Further examination of these relationships is detailed and the importance of including factors such as gender ideologies, salary, and acculturation in future studies is emphasized.

**HE WORKS AND SHE DOES TOO: RACE AND GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EARNER STATUS, MARITAL SATISFACTION, AND  
DIVISION OF FAMILY TASKS**

A project based upon an independent investigation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Work.

Samantha Marie Rivera

Smith College School for Social Work  
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063

2012

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Marsha Kline Pruett for allowing me to work with data from the Supporting Father Involvement study, and for her kindness, support, and dedication throughout the entire process. I could not have done it without you!

I wish to thank Rachel Ebling for her help with the data analysis and for always answering my e-mails anytime, day and night.

I am so grateful to my entire family for seeing me through the entire Smith process. This is our collective accomplishment! To my parents, I could not be where I am today without your continued faith in me. I especially want to thank my mama for never losing faith in me even when I could not find it in myself.

I want to give a special thanks to my sisters for always being there for me. Yesie & Rodney, thank you for all the advice and meals you gave me throughout the year. To my nephew Max (goozie bear), I hope one day you can read this and understand how much picking you up from school and cuddling with you while watching Alvin and the Chipmunks kept a smile on my face. Yvy, I will never forget our conversation in May that gave me that extra push. To my twin star Michie, you are my heart and soul. Everything I do is in honor of you.

I wish to thank all my friends for standing by me with faith and love, especially to my New York girls, Sharai Lewis-Gruss and Carol Wilson. The two of you were always up for going to Dutch Kills and sharing “the secret.” You are my sisters and I love you both. Of course, I could not have gotten through without my Smith rock, Chris Heinrich. We started together and will end together because “the real is on the rise”.

Last but not least, I want to give a special thank you to Joshua Gesino. You were in it with me everyday. You never got tired of hearing about my topic or at least you never let it show. I am so grateful for all of your help with edits and brainstorming. You held my thoughts and ideas for me when I could not hold them for myself. I am forever grateful that you never stopped believing in me.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	iv
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION .....	1
II LITERATURE REVIEW .....	5
III METHODOLOGY .....	21
IV FINDINGS .....	26
V DISCUSSION .....	32
REFERENCES .....	42
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Consent Form .....	49
Appendix B: Recruitment Letter .....	50

## LIST OF TABLES

Table .....	Page
1. Marital Satisfaction Mean Scores for Single-Earner and Dual-Earner Participants.....	26
2. Marital Satisfaction Mean Scores for Dual-Earner Participants .....	27
3. Means for Single-Earner & Dual-Earner Couples for Division of Family Tasks Variables.....	28
4. Significant t-Test Results and Earner Group Means for Division of Family Tasks Variables.....	30
5. Significant t-Test Results and Earner Group Means for Satisfaction of Division of Family Tasks Variables .....	30

## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

Women's presence in the workforce has increased significantly since the 1970s, to the point where one in two workers are women (Cox, 2006). Research shows that four in five mothers of school-age children work for pay. Moreover, one in two working women provide half or more of their household income (Cox, 2006). A major reason women work outside the home is to help their families meet economic needs (Frankel & Capstick, 2012). However, many women believe that entering the workplace is essential for their personal satisfaction and view their confidence and self esteem as increased from their work (Cox, 2006). As a result, dual-earning families have significantly increased in the United States, defining the norm for two parent families (Fraenkel & Capstick, 2012; White & Rogers, 2000).

According to a 2012 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report, 58.5 % of two parent households are considered "dual-earner", meaning the majority of two parent couples in the United States are both employed. Along with the growing number of dual-earning couples in the U.S., research on dual-earner couples has increased over the past four decades in an attempt to identify the challenges and needs for couples that both work. More specifically, research seeks to understand how maternal employment in dual-earner couples is related to couples' gender roles, power dynamics, division of housework, and marital satisfaction.

Various studies conducted in the 1980s and 1990s focused on the differences facing dual-earner families compared to single-earner families. Much of this research examined how a woman's role in the workforce could yield negative consequences for children and families. Additionally, research focused on the challenges and differences facing *women* in dual-earner

families, rather than men. Scholars framed the topic as a women's issue, suggesting that women held the burden of renegotiating work and family balance (Spain & Bianchi, 1996). Despite their financial contribution to the family, Hochschild (1989) concluded that employed women retained most of the household responsibilities, requiring them to work the "second shift" at home after returning from their jobs. Thus, women were adapting to their change in employment by working the "second shift" to maintain existing family equilibrium.

As research in this area has progressed, studies on dual-earner couples have evolved to paint a more complex picture of how the family system adapts to maintain stability. More recent research on dual-earner families suggests that maternal employment itself does not have a significant association with the satisfaction of family relationships. However, when maternal employment does have an affect on family relationships, it is usually positive (Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2011). Additionally, research shows that men contribute more to childcare and housework when wives work (Wang & Bianchi, 2009), but women continue to do more than men despite employment status (Cox, 2006). Interestingly, scholars' conclusions about dual-earner couples over the past four decades has centered on Caucasian, middle-class, heterosexual couples (Fraenkel & Capstick, 2012). Given that the U.S. Census Bureau reports minorities accounted for 92% of the nation's population's growth between 2000 and 2010 (Tavernise, 2012), one might question how translatable current findings on dual-earner couples are to the growing population of dual-earner couples of color.

### **Latino Dual-Earner Couples**

Latinos are one of the fastest growing minority groups in the U.S. In 2010, the Latino population was 50.5 million, accounting for 16% of the total U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Moreover, the Latino population is predicted to keep growing as the majority of



Latina women are at a prime fertility age (Travernise, 2012). According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, 44% of Latino married couples with children under the age of 18 were dual employed. Generally, the percentage of dual-earning Latino couples is slightly lower than other racial/ethnic groups (Fraenkel & Capstick, 2012). Some scholars account for the small percentage difference among Latino couples by assuming Latino families continue to maintain traditional gender roles which dictate that men provide financially for the family while women provide through housework and childcare (Fraenkel & Capstick, 2012). Nevertheless, with such growth in the Latino population, one can assume that the number of dual-earner Latino couples will only continue to increase. With these statistics in mind, it is easy to infer that research will begin to challenge the assumption that Latinos will continue to adhere to a more traditional family system with stereotypical gender roles.

Can the existing research on dual-earning, white, middle-class couples benefit the growing number of Latino dual-earner couples? Can the conclusions and implications of research findings on Caucasian dual-earning couples be useful for clinicians looking to meet the psychosocial needs of Latino dual-earner couples? At present time, answers to these questions are unknown. This investigator, through exploratory research, seeks to clarify these matters for Latinos families and service providers by analyzing data from the Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) study. The SFI study is a randomized clinical trial comparing two variations of a preventive intervention aimed at strengthening fathers' involvement in families and improving couple and child outcomes. The two preventive interventions, father-only and father-mother, addressed five family domains in the intervention curriculum and in the assessment of outcome: the well-being of the individual parents, the quality of the relationship between the parents and in the family of origin relationships, parenting styles, and outside stresses and social

supports (e.g., employment). Using convenience sampling from the SFI sample, the current study seeks to better understand dual-earning Mexican-American couples by exploring how the relationships between employment status, marital satisfaction, and division of household labor look similar or different for Mexican-American dual-earner families when compared to Caucasian dual-earner couples, Caucasian single-earner, and Mexican-American single-earner couples. The study will examine the following three questions: (1) Is race/ethnicity or couple's earner status associated with marital satisfaction? (2) Are there differences between dual-earner Mexican-Americans and comparison groups in the division of family tasks? (3) How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with the division of family tasks?

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Literature Review**

The current study will use the conceptual framework of systems theory to examine and discuss the literature on Caucasian and Latino dual-earner couples. Systems theory offers a holistic approach to conceptualizing the challenges and benefits of dual-earner two-parent families as it focuses on the interconnectedness between the individuals that make up a whole family unit. According to this theory if one part of the family system changes, then the other parts of the system will adapt to reach a new equilibrium (Cox, 2006). Therefore, the following review of literature will consider how couple earner status, more specifically female employment, acts as a catalyst for change in the family system, particularly in family dynamics, i.e. marital satisfaction and division of household labor. Moreover, using a systems theory framework, the literature review seeks to better understand the ways in which wives *and* husbands are adjusting to maternal employment in order for the family to achieve a new equilibrium.

#### **Couple Earner Status**

Female employment is one of the most significant shifts the family system has seen over the past four decades. The 1980s through the 1990s witnessed a serious increase in maternal employment (regardless of young children) and a higher probability of employment for married women (Spain & Bianchi, 1996; White & Rogers, 2000). Research suggests that high rates of female employment continue because their economic contribution plays a crucial part in maintaining the financial well being of a family (Galinsky et al., 2011). Moreover, Farley (1996) concluded that “Wives’ financial contributions have become increasingly important, facilitating

adaptation to recent economic trends that left many workers, particularly young men with little education, unemployed or underemployed” (as cited in Schoen, Rogers, & Amato, 2006). Given the crucial impact wives’ employment and economic contributions have on the family unit, it is likely that dual-earner couples will remain prevalent, redefining the norm for a two-parent families in today’s society (Fraenkel & Capstick, 2012; White & Rogers, 2000). As this trend continues, it is crucial for researchers to continue exploring how the family unit adjusts when the roles of wife and mother expand to include employment.

### **Mexican-American dual-earner couples**

Despite evidence supporting the increase in women’s labor participation, much of the existing literature fails to explore the employment status shifts of Latino two-parent families. Given that Latinos of Mexican origin account for 63% of the Latino population in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011), the majority of literature on Latino dual-earning couples focuses on Mexican-Americans. The current study will look specifically at Mexican-American dual-earning couples to contribute to the small amount of existing literature on this ethnic group. Despite the assumption that Mexican-American families maintain traditional family dynamics, Baker (2004) found that Mexican women’s participation in the labor force increased upon immigration to the United States due to the combination of high unemployment rates, higher cost of living in comparison to Mexico, and the fact that many Mexican immigrants come to the United States in search of greater economic stability for their families. Based on the available information of Mexican-American families, it would appear that dual-earner two-parent families will continue to increase among Mexican-American couples, highlighting the importance of including Mexican-American dual-earning couples in research that explores family changes when wives are employed.

Yu, Lucero-Liu, Gamble, Taylor, Christensen and Modry-Mandell (2008) note that “cultural values affect which social interactions should be expected, accepted, rewarded, or condemned in each context and differentially influence how individuals within a culture recognize, evaluate, and react to behavior” (p. 170). It is reasonable then to expect that culture will play a role in shaping family values and dynamics. Therefore, it is useful to explore the salient aspects of Mexican-American culture that are related to family values in order to better understand how wives’ employment influences the Mexican-American family specifically. *Familismo* is perhaps the most influential value driving Mexican-American family dynamics. *Familismo* can be best understood as “loyalty” for the family unit as a whole, including extended family and non-blood relationships (Gonzalez & Acevedo, 2006). *Familismo* values drive Mexican-American families to put their family unit ahead of individual needs. Thus, Mexican-American families are likely to adapt to changes in the family unit by collectively adjusting to reach a new balance or equilibrium. These changes may be seen in the form of more flexible gender roles, offering opportunities for wives’ to work and husbands to be more involved in family tasks. Family values such as *familismo* may increase Mexican-American two-parent couples’ willingness to negotiate traditional gender roles for the overall success of the family.

Two additional cultural norms known as *marianismo* and *machismo* may also influence behavior for Mexican-American men and women regarding their family dynamics. Garcia & Zea (1997) relate *marianismo* to “female socialization”: cultivating women to be “pure, long suffering, nurturing, pious, virtuous, and humble...” (cited in Gonzalez & Acevedo, 2006). *Marianismo* shapes Mexican female’s family role as the matriarch of the family, focusing their responsibility on the needs of their husbands and children. Given this family role, employed Mexican-American wives may see a conflict arise as they are forced to renegotiate their time

between work and family. Regarding men, Sandoval and De la Roza (1986) argue that machismo encourages a man to “provide for, protect, and defend his family” (as cited in Gonzalez & Acevedo, 2006). If Mexican-American men hold on to the culturally influenced family role of *machismo*, they too may find that their wives’ employment challenge their familial purpose as sole providers. Moreover, they may also resist broadening their definition of provider to include providing in the form of childcare and family tasks. Although *machismo* and *marianismo* may motivate Mexican-American couples to maintain more traditional gender roles in their relationship dynamic, the underlining value of *familismo* may allow for more flexibility in roles if Mexican women need to work to maintain the family’s economic security. Do Mexican-American dual-earner couples compromise on gender roles? Do these challenges influence marital relationships? With these questions in mind, it is important to better understand if and how wives’ employment is related to marital satisfaction and division of household work for Mexican-American families.

### **Marital Satisfaction**

Given the prevalence of dual-earner two-parent couples it is essential to better understand the impact maternal employment has on marital relationships. Studies on Caucasian dual-earner couples rarely investigate the direct relationship between earner status (wives’ employment) and marital satisfaction and happiness. However, various studies have examined the relationship between maternal employment and marital quality and distress. Fincham and Bradbury (1987) argue that marital quality, marital satisfaction, and marital distress can be used interchangeably when they refer to spouses’ evaluations of their marriages (as cited in Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Moreover, Karney and Bradbury (1995) made a strong argument that “marital happiness or satisfaction is the central variable reflecting marital quality” (as cited in Schoen et al., 2006).

Given the scant research on dual-earner couples examining the relationship between maternal employment and marital satisfaction, this investigator will review research on dual-earner couples that consider the relationship between maternal employment and marital quality as well as marital distress and satisfaction. By expanding this literature review to include various assessments of spouses' marital evaluations, this review offers a better picture of how maternal employment may influence couples' opinions of their marriages, an essential dynamic of the family system.

A large body of research has examined the effects of maternal employment on marital relationships. However, these studies offer conflicting results; as some research suggests that marital employment undermines marital quality, while other studies suggest that wives' employment has positive effects on marriage (Schoen et al, 2006). A widely utilized perspective to discuss the possible negative effects of wives' participation in the workforce on marriages focused on "role specialization in marriages," suggesting that women's participation in the workforce is "nonnormative" and that "specialized, hierarchical relations" between a husband and wife are necessary to "facilitate cohesiveness and stability" (Schoen et al., 2006, p.509). Becker (1981) and Parsons (1959) used role specialization theory to defend limited empirical evidence that suggested maternal employment negatively effects marital quality. These researchers proposed that a decrease in role specialization "undermines affective closeness between spouses by introducing the potential for status competition, threatening the efficiency of marriage and the gains associated with being married and ultimately undermining the quality of marriage" (Schoen, Rogers, & Amato, 2006). Some studies have yielded results in support of early specialization perspectives. For example, Brennan, Barnett, and Gareis (2001) found that husbands' marital quality has a negative association with wives' salary if husbands connect a

breadwinning identity with self-value. Moreover, wives' employment may increase the possibility of divorce (Heidemann, Suhomlinova, & O'Rand, 1998), as well as marital dissatisfaction for wives if the burden of negotiating work hours with family tasks remains on them (Hochschild, 1989). In addition, early studies imply that marital satisfaction decreases when wives are employed (Booth, Johnson, White, & Edwards, 1984) and spouse's employment has a positive relationship with psychological distress among married men (Kessler & McRae, 1982). These findings suggest that wives' participation in the workforce may have a negative impact on marriages as well as variables connected to marital quality and satisfaction. However, the majority of these findings is outdated and may not account for societal shifts in gender ideologies that impact couple dynamics.

Other studies that include more recent findings suggest that wives' employment has positive implications for marital relationships. Some research indicates that employment can defend against psychological symptoms such as depression and anxiety for women and men (Barnett, Brennan, Raudenbush, & Marshall, 1994; Kessler & McRae, 1982, Ross, Mirowky, & Goldsteen, 1990). Psychological health can increase the likelihood that couples engage in positive interactions with their partner, which is a variable that has been associated with higher marital satisfaction (Zuo, 1992). Moreover, job satisfaction has been shown to have a significant negative association with marital conflict (Rogers & May, 2003). Therefore, job satisfaction may help husbands and wives manage negative feelings about familial roles by reducing marital conflict and thus, possibly protecting marital satisfaction. Furthermore, Rogers & DeBoer (2001) found that employment and income had a significant positive impact on wives' general well-being and marital happiness. Both men's and women's financial advancement at work is associated with higher rates of marriage, less divorce, more marital happiness, and greater child



well being (White & Rogers, 2000). Thus, the newer generation of working wives may find that their presence in the labor force, especially a positive presence, can offer them marital benefits.

Evidence indicating societal shifts towards more egalitarian salaries and gender ideologies may explain why more recent research on dual-earner couples suggests maternal employment may yield marital benefits. Ehrenreich (2001) argued that low salaries contributing to financial strains could have negative effects on health and relationships. Although women continue to earn smaller salaries than men, women are experiencing a steady increase in job opportunities and salary growth (White & Rogers, 2000). Therefore, if wives are trading in hours at home for hours in the workplace and continue to have financial instability, they may experience stress that negatively influences their marital relationships. However, if job opportunities and salaries continue to increase for women, they may be more likely to experience the marital benefits related to employment. Additionally, some research suggests that gender roles are shifting amongst contemporary fathers. Galinsky et al. (2011) found that men were not as likely as they were in the past to believe that maternal employment negatively affects a woman's relationship with her child or the child's well being. Moreover, men not only wanted to spend more time with their children, but also were more active in their children's lives than their fathers were with them (Galinsky et al., 2011). If husbands are more accepting of their wives' participation in the workforce and are more involved in their children's lives, they may be less likely to feel conflicted about their partner's employment status, possibly decreasing the negative effect of maternal employment on marital satisfaction. Furthermore, how men evaluate themselves and their worth has shifted away from career success. Levine & Pittinsky (1997) argue that a trend has been building over the past decade where men increasingly "judge themselves and their happiness as much or more by how they function in personal domains" (as

cited in Fraenkel & Capstick, 2012, p. 81). Although challenges may arise as a result from maternal employment, marital satisfaction may not decrease when wives are employed if husbands are more likely to invest in the success of their familial relationships. From these studies, it seems that societal shift towards more egalitarian salaries and gender ideologies may increase the likelihood that employment will result in positive implications for marital satisfaction.

Given that much of the current research suggests that maternal employment can offer marital benefits such as marital satisfaction, Schoen, Rogers, & Amato (2006) attempted to fill the gap in dual-earner research by investigating the direct association of earner status and marital happiness and stability. They analyzed 2, 280 surveys on dual-earner couples from the National Survey of Families and Households in 1987-1988 and then again in 1992 to 1994. After examining how the employment changes for women after the first time period affected marital stability and happiness at the second period, they found that couples whose wives had become employed or remained employed experienced less marital disruption than couples whose wives remained unemployed. Schoen, Rogers, & Amato's (2006) research strengthened past studies implying that wives' employment may yield benefits that increase marital quality and decrease marital distress by connecting earner status more directly with positive marital satisfaction.

### **Marital Satisfaction among Mexican-American Dual-Earner Couples**

Given that research on Caucasian dual-earner couples examining the direct association of earner status and marital satisfaction is limited, it comes at no surprise that research looking at this association with Mexican-American couples is virtually non-existent. Research on dual earning couples indicates that marital satisfaction is closely related to correspondence of role expectations among the couple and the performance of those roles. In other words, if working

violates a woman's expectations of herself or her family's expectation of her than her and her family may have a greater chance of dissatisfaction. If a woman's support system (parents, in laws, children, and others) feels she should be a homemaker than negative attitudes will be high (Lye and Biblarz, 1993). Given that *marianismo* encourages women to be the family nurturer while *machismo* encourages men to provide for their family, one may assume that maternal employment would have a negative association with marital satisfaction.

Only two studies to date investigated the relationship between wives' employment and marital satisfaction among Mexican-American couples. These studies support the assumption that maternal employment will have a negative association with marital satisfaction. Saenz, Goudy, & Lorenz (1989) analyzed data of 991 participants from the 1979 National Chicano Survey and found that Mexican-American women reported significantly lower marital satisfaction than their unemployed counterparts. However, this significant association was reduced when men contributed more to housework. Additionally, Bean, Curtis, & Marcum (1977) examined 325 surveys from the 1969 Austin Family Survey, concluding that Mexican-American men are less satisfied with marriages when women work and Mexican-American women are less satisfied with marriages when they work voluntarily. These findings are aligned with early research using a specialization role perspective to suggest that Caucasian dual-earner couples experience lower marital satisfaction when their wives are employed (Becker, 1981; Parsons, 1959). Similar to findings made by Becker (1981) and Parsons (1959), the research on Mexican-American dual-earner couples suggesting that maternal employment decreases marital satisfaction is outdated. Given changing societal norms about gender ideologies found in the U.S., new research on Mexican-American dual-earner couples may find that maternal employment is associated with high marital satisfaction or not associated with marital

satisfaction. Interestingly, Santiago-Rivera et al. (2002) found that even highly acculturated Latino families continue to hold onto *familismo* (as cited in Gonzalez & Acevedo, 2006). Therefore, even if Mexican-American couples are not acculturating to societal shifts about gender ideologies in the U.S., Mexican-American families may have made culturally syntonic adjustments to meet modern family needs, requiring women to contribute financially to the family. However, how these adjustments influence marital satisfaction remains unclear.

### **Division of Family Tasks**

Prior to the 1970s, the majority of wives and mothers were responsible for housework and childrearing, while their husbands provided financially for the family. However, over the last four decades these family dynamics have shifted. Various studies have examined shifts in division of housework for two-parent families where both mothers and fathers are employed. Early research tended to focus on how women as individuals were making up time spent at work that was once spent completing housework. Early findings suggest that women held the burden of completing the housework despite contributing financially to the family. Hochschild (1989) was one of the first scholars to call national attention to this burden, revealing that men may not be shifting their roles in the family to adjust to this family systems change. In her sample, she found that working mothers were expected to complete the majority of the household work, childcare, care for elders, maintain the family schedule and coordinate family activities while financially contributing to the family. She labeled this phenomenon the “second shift,” stating that women were often in a bind negotiating and balancing work and family roles (Hochschild, 1989). This shocking revelation motivated scholars to look more in-depth at how both mothers and fathers of dual-earner families were adjusting to meet family needs.

Research investigating the division of housework for Caucasian dual-earner families has revealed a more complicated picture than that of Hochschild's (1989) earlier research. More recent studies reveal that both women and men are changing stereotypical gender behaviors when both partners work. Findings suggest that the amount of time women spend on housework has been steadily declining since 1965. Bianchi, Milkie, Slayer, & Robinson (2000) analyzed data from the 1965-1995 National Survey of Families and Households and found that women spend on average 12 hours less per week on housework in comparison to previous decades. These researchers attributed this decrease in household work hours to maternal employment increases, fewer children, and later marriages. Additionally, they found that men increased their participation in housework since the 1960s by about 5 hours per week. A large body of research has emerged supporting the finding that husbands have steadily increased the amount of time they spend on housework and childcare when their wives' work (Slayer, 2005; Wang & Bianchi, 2009). A major reason for this increase may be related to gender ideology shifts in both men and women toward more egalitarian relationships and marriages. These shifts have changed so much in the past few decades that men and women no longer show a statistically significant difference when it comes to views on gender pertaining to work and family roles (see review by Galinsky et al. 2011). These findings imply that husbands in dual-earner relationships may be adjusting their views on gender roles and in turn familial roles when wives are employed to better meet the needs of the family system.

Although research suggests husbands are contributing more to family tasks than in the past, wives continue to do more than husbands at home regardless of employment status (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Stevens, Kiger, & Riley, 2001). Carey (2010) found that mothers spend 27% of their time on housework, while fathers spent 18% of their time on housework. Moreover, she

found that mothers spend 18% of their time on leisure activities, while fathers spend about 23% of their time on leisure activities. These findings indicate that wives tend to use more of their time outside of work completing domestic labor than on leisure, while men do the opposite. Overall, women work more hours than men when paid work, housework and childcare are considered (see reviews in Coltrane, 2000; Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Therefore, even though attitudes about gender roles are continuing to change, division of family tasks remains unequal for dual-earner couples.

Research has revealed interesting findings on the continued inequality of housework amongst dual-earner couples. Studies suggest that husbands and wives can feel that the division of labor is equal even when the wife continues to complete most of the household tasks (Cox, 2006). Moreover, studies show that the perception of equity regarding division of labor appears to be significantly related to positive family outcomes (Frisco & Williams, 2003; see review in Coltrane, 2000; Stevens et al., 2001). Understood differently, because men continue to earn higher salaries than women in the workplace (Cox, 2006), they may contribute more financially to the family, allowing the couple to feel like equal partners even if wives do more household chores. Other dual-earner couples may be satisfied with division of housework even if it actually is unequal because of lingering stereotypical gender ideologies. Some research suggests that men were reluctant to engage in housework if they considered housework to be feminine, particularly if their role as provider was threatened (Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, & Matheson, 2003). With regard to wives, Gaunt (2008) concluded that female earners were more hesitant to relinquish control over housework and child rearing, possibly contributing to unequal division of domestic labor (as cited in Fraenkel & Capstick, 2012). Moreover, Mederer (1993) found that wives perceive their husbands' unwillingness to increase domestic labor as a way for her to

maintain the power in the family. Taking these findings into account, it appears that some men and women in dual-earner couples still adhere to some traditional gender roles when it comes to division of labor. However, it is unknown whether these persisting views affect a dual-earner couple's ability to find stability when the wife works.

### **Division of Family Tasks among Mexican-American Dual-Earner Couples**

Once again, compared to the literature on Caucasians, few studies examine how Mexican-American dual-earner couples divide housework when wives' are employed. Some research indicates that Mexican-American dual-earner couples have moved away from traditional gender prescribed family roles when wives work. Research on Mexican-American dual-earner couples found that maternal employment did have an effect on division of housework, but that mothers still complete the majority of housework and childcare (Coltrane & Valdez, 1993; Ybarra, 1982). More recent research on Mexican-American dual-earner couples found that men feel compelled to contribute more to housework and childcare when their wives are employed (Grzywacz, Rao, Gentry, Marin, & Arcury, 2009). The few studies that examine the division of housework for Mexican-American dual-earner couples yield two interesting findings. First, father involvement in childcare increased the more hours mothers worked (Coltrane, Park, & Adams, 2004). And second, fathers contributed more to household tasks when mothers earned more (Coltrane, Park, & Adams, 2004; Pinto & Coltrane, 2009). Overall literature on Mexican-American dual-earner couples is comparable to research on Caucasian dual-earner couples, which indicate that men do more housework than in years past but that wives continue to do more than men when both partners are employed. However, this research remains limited.

The minimal research on Mexican-American dual-earner couples suggests that husbands and wives are adjusting gender roles to meet the new needs of the family. However, another gap in the literature remains. Few studies look at how Mexican-American dual-earner couples perceive the division of housework. As research on Caucasian dual-earner couples has strongly shown, perception of division of tasks is more essential to adaptive family dynamics than the actual division of labor. Therefore, it is crucial to examine how Mexican-American couples feel about their division of housework and if these perceptions differ from the actual division of work. Some scholars assume that Mexican cultural family values will promote patriarchal characteristics (Zinn, 1980) yielding inequitable division of family tasks for Mexican-American dual-earner couples (Williams, 1990). However, other evidence suggests that even though Mexican-Americans tend to have ideas about what roles and behaviors are suitable for them based on their gender (Dion & Dion, 2001), they also find life in the United States challenges their existing gender role assumptions and responsibilities (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992). In accordance with the cultural value of *familismo*, these findings indicate that Mexican-Americans may start to renegotiate gender roles to adapt to financial demands in the United States that force both wives and husbands to work. Therefore, research about how cultural values are related to perceptions regarding division of housework remains unclear.

Recent research indicates that both Mexican-American husbands and wives are conflicted when it comes to more equitable division of labor. Evidence suggests that Mexican-American wives want their husbands to contribute more to household labor when they work (Herrera & DelCampo, 1995; Segura, 1992), but they are more likely than other ethnic groups to accept an unequal division of household labor (Coltrane, 2000). These findings imply that Mexican-American wives may request more from their husbands when they work to maintain family



structure, but that they are not necessarily unsatisfied if the divisions of household tasks are unequal. This conflict may lie in Mexican-American women's desire to maintain *marianismo* as a platform to conserve and express Mexican culture (Segura, 1992). On the other hand, Mexican-American men are more likely to expect that they must contribute more to household labor when wives work (Grzywacz et al., 2009). However, Baca Zinn & Wells (2003) found when Latina wives were employed, tension within Latino families increased as Latino men continued to adhere more to the aspect of *machismo* that related to being the sole breadwinner (as cited in Pinto & Coltrane, 2009). It appears that husbands and wives in Mexican-American dual-earner couples may be exercising flexible gender roles to meet family demands when wives work, but that how these cultural values affect their expectations about division of labor differs. Therefore, the current study seeks to better understand how employment status may affect not only the equality of the division of household labor but also the satisfaction with the division of labor for Mexican-American couples.

### **Gaps in Literature**

It is evident from this literature review that since the 1970s, dual-earning families have become more prevalent, defining the norm for two parent families (Fraenkel & Capstick, 2012; White & Rogers, 2000). This is especially true for Caucasian dual-earning couples in which wives are more likely to be employed in comparison to previous years. Likewise, Mexican-American wives are more likely to be employed and this number is expected to grow. When reviewing the literature about dual-earner couples through a systems theory lens, it appears that both Caucasian and Mexican-American couples are adapting previously stereotypical family roles and dynamics to meet the needs of the family unit when wives' employment changes the existing family system. The ways in which dual-earner couples adjust and the implications of

these adjustments lie at the heart of this study. Research has not clearly identified if there is a relationship between earner status and marital satisfaction and if this relationship looks differently depending on race/ethnicity. In addition, research indicates that husbands in Caucasian dual-earner couples contribute more to housework than in the past but wives continue to do more. Although research on division of domestic labor for Mexican-American dual-earner couples suggests similar findings, research is limited. Therefore, research has yet to confirm that Mexican-American dual-earner husbands do contribute more to housework when wives are employed. Additionally, research argues that Caucasian couples may be satisfied with division of housework even if the division is unequal. However, evidence on whether dual employment among Mexican-American couples affects satisfaction with division of labor remains mixed. If wives' employment does not yield completely equitable division of housework, are Mexican-American couples still satisfied with division of labor?

This study seeks to fill gaps in literature by exploring similarities and differences in marital satisfaction and division of family tasks between Caucasian and Mexican-American dual-earner and single-earner couples. The study will examine the following three questions: (1) Is race/ethnicity or couple's earner status associated with marital satisfaction? (2) Are there differences between dual-earner Mexican-Americans and comparison groups in the division of family tasks? (3) How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with the division of family tasks?

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Methodology**

The current exploratory study investigated differences between dual-earning Caucasian couples and dual-earning Mexican-American couples with regard to (a) marital satisfaction, and (b) division of family tasks. More specifically, this study sought to gain a clearer picture of how couple earner status and race/ethnicity interact in the way they influence marital satisfaction and division of family tasks. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between these variables, this study compared couples with four unique combinations of race/ethnicity (Caucasian vs. Mexican-American) and earner status (dual-earner vs. single-earner). Moreover, the current study will examine if the SFI intervention affected couples in each of these groups differently.

Based on previous literature, the current study examined the following exploratory questions: (1) How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with marital satisfaction? (2) Does the SFI intervention affect couple satisfaction differently for distinct racial/ethnic and earner groups? (3) How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with the division of family tasks? (4) Are there differences between dual-earner Mexican-Americans and comparison groups in the division of family tasks?

#### **Data Collection**

Data for this study was obtained from the Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) study based in California (e.g., Cowan, Cowan, Pruett, Pruett & Wong, 2009). The SFI study was a

randomized clinical trial comparing two variations of a preventive intervention aimed at strengthening fathers' involvement in families and improving couple and child outcomes. The SFI study and staff were located within Family Resource Centers in four California counties (San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz, Tulare, and Yuba).

At each site, some participants were recruited by project staff through direct referrals from within the Family Resource Centers, while most participants were recruited from other county service agencies, informational talks at community meetings, ads in the local media, local family fun days, and information tables placed strategically at sports events, malls and other community public events where fathers were in attendance (see Cowan et al., 2009 for details).

Case managers then administered a short screening interview which assessed if parents met four additional criteria: (a) both partners agreed to participate regardless of whether they were married, cohabitating or living separately; (b) the partners were biological parents of their youngest child and intended to raise the child together; (c) neither the mother or father struggled with a severe mental illness or drug or alcohol abuse problem; and (d) the family did not have a current open case with Child Protective Services, including both child and spousal cases and no instance of spousal violence or child abuse within the last year. The purpose of this last criterion was designed to bar participants who may amplify the risks for child abuse or neglect should they increase participation in their children's daily life.

Screening interviews were administered to determine if couples met the criteria for eligibility. The SFI sample consisted of eligible couples who signed consent forms, agreed to participate in their assigned interventions, and completed the baseline assessments. A case manager administered the initial assessments in English or Spanish. After the intervention, assessments were given at 6 and 18-month intervals.

## Sample

With the overall SFI study serving as the sampling frame, purposive sampling was then used to define the subsample of participants for the current study. Couples who participated in phases I and II of the SFI project and had completed both the Quality of Marriage Index (i.e., instrument for assessing couple satisfaction) and the Who Does What questionnaire (i.e., instrument for assessing division of family tasks) determined the selection for this subsample. The subsample consisted of 522 couples.

A majority of the couples were of Mexican descent ( $n = 377$ ; 72.2%); the rest were Caucasian ( $n = 145$ ; 27.8%). Mixed race/ethnicity couples were not included in this sample. More of the couples were dual-earner, although the sample was relatively split between single-earner ( $n = 210$ ; 40.2%) and dual-earner ( $n = 312$ ; 59.8%) households. The single-earner couples included 51 Caucasian couples (9.8%) and 159 Mexican-American couples (41.8%). The dual-earner couples included 94 Caucasian couples (18%) and 218 Mexican-American couples (41.8%).

Mean age for husbands at baseline interview was 33 years ( $SD = 7.8$ ), with a range of 18-64 years. Mean age for wives at baseline interview was 30 years ( $SD = 7.0$ ), with a range of 18-50 years. Mean income for husbands was \$26,222 ( $SD = \$19,319$ ), with a range of \$0-\$132,000. Mean income for wives was \$9,994 ( $SD = \$13,676$ ), with a range of \$0-\$100,000.

A higher proportion of Mexican-American couples in this sample held traditional family earner roles-42% of the Mexican-American couples were in single earning households, while 35% of Caucasian couples in the sample were in single earning households. Although this proportion difference was not statistically significant, it is an interesting differentiation between Mexican-American and Caucasian dual-earning couples in the sample.

Information was obtained from Mexican-American participants (participants of Mexican descent) about their birthplace and number of years in the United States. Of the Mexican-American sample, 18% of husbands reported being born in the United States, while 22.8% of wives reported being born in the United States. Husbands of Mexican descent reported living in the United States for 16 years ( $SD = 8.3$ ), with a range from 0-44 years. Wives of Mexican descent reported living in the U.S. for 12 years ( $SD = 8.4$ ), with a range of 0-44 years. Thus, husbands tended to have been born in America and live in the U.S. a longer time than had the wives, but these differences were not statistically significant.

### **Instruments**

Data for this study were collected through two questionnaires: The Quality of Marriage Index (QMI; Norton, 1983) and The Who Does What? questionnaire.

**Marital Satisfaction:** The Quality of Marriage Index (QMI; Norton, 1983), a six-item questionnaire with one global estimate and five specific questions about marital satisfaction, was used to measure each partner's satisfaction with the couple relationship. Couple satisfaction was measured using the following two scores: (a) baseline QMI score for each spouse; and (b) gain score for each spouse, or the difference between 18-month follow-up QMI score minus baseline QMI score. Gain scores (also known as difference scores) have been shown to be "an unbiased estimate of true change" (Rogosa, 1988, p. 180).

**Division of Family Tasks:** Who Does What? is a 9-point Likert scale (from 1= "she does it all" to 5 = "we're about equal on this" to 9 = "he does it all"), was used to assess how couples allocate family tasks. By pooling these 11 ratings, different summary variables are created. The present study utilized the following variables: (a) current division of family tasks (sum of the 11 ratings); (b) dissatisfaction with current division of family tasks (i.e., the absolute difference

between "how it is now" and "how I'd like it to be"); and (c) degree of inequality in current division of family tasks (how far the couple is to being equal, or rating "5"s).

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were used to describe demographic statistics of the sample (n = 522). Inferential statistics were conducted using SPSS. The first set of analyses pertains to scores from the Quality of Marriage Index. First, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with a 2 x 2 factorial design to test main effects and the interaction effect of the two independent variables (couple's race/ethnicity and couple's earner status) on marital satisfaction. Next, using independent-samples t-tests, simple contrasts were tested to measure differences in marital satisfaction between dual-earner Mexican-American couples and (a) dual-earner Caucasian couples, and (b) single-earner Mexican-American couples. Last, condition (assignment to one of the intervention groups vs. control) was included in a 2 X 2 X 3 MANOVA. This approach enabled a test of intervention on marital satisfaction differed by group (i.e., groups defined by couple race/ethnicity X earner status).

The second set of analyses pertains to predictions of variables from the Who Does What instrument. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with a 2 x 2 factorial design to test main effects and the interaction effect of race/ethnicity and couple's earner status on the division of family tasks. Next, using independent-samples t-tests, simple contrasts were tested to measure differences in division of family tasks between dual-earner Mexican-American couples and (a) dual-earner Caucasian couples, and (b) single-earner Mexican-American couples.

## CHAPTER IV

### Findings

#### **Exploratory Question 1: How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with marital satisfaction?**

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with a 2 x 2 factorial design was conducted to examine effects of race/ethnicity and earner status on couple satisfaction. The main effect of couple's earner status on baseline couple satisfaction was significant for husbands ( $F [1,414] = 6.17, p < .05$ ) and approaching significance for wives ( $F [1,414] = 3.33, p < .07$ ). Husbands (and to some extent wives) in single-earner couples were more satisfied (at baseline) than those in dual-earner couples (see Table 1). There was no significant main effect of couple's race/ethnicity. There was no significant interaction effect of the two independent variables (couple's race/ethnicity and couple's earner status) on couple satisfaction.

Table 1

*Marital Satisfaction Mean Scores for Single-Earner and Dual-Earner Participants*

	QMI at Baseline	
	Husbands	Wives
Agreement on How to Solve the Problem	37.8 (SD=6.6)	35.9 (SD=8.3)
Teamwork	36.3 (SD=7.0)	34.2 (SD=8.8)

Next, using independent-samples t-tests, simple contrasts were examined between dual-earner Mexican-American couples and (a) dual-earner Caucasian couples, and (b) single-earner Mexican-American couples. For both husbands ( $t = 3.71, p < .001$ ) and wives ( $t = 2.37, p < .05$ ), a significant difference was found between dual-earner Mexican-American couples and dual-earner Caucasian white couples in baseline couple satisfaction (see Table 2). Mexican-American dual-earner fathers and mothers were more satisfied than Caucasian fathers and mothers. No



significant differences were found between dual-earner Mexican-American couples and single-earner Mexican-American couples in couple satisfaction. Overall, the results suggest that both Mexican-American and Caucasian husbands are happier with their marriages when only one partner is working. However, when both partners are working, Mexican-American husbands and wives report higher couple satisfaction than do Caucasian husbands and wives.

Table 2  
*Marital Satisfaction Mean Scores for Dual-Earner Couples*

	QMI at Baseline	
	Husbands	Wives
Dual-Earner Mexican American Couples	37.3 (SD=6.4)	35.1 (SD=8.1)
Dual-Earner Caucasian Couples	33.9 (SD=7.7)	32.3 (SD=10.2)

**Exploratory Question 2: Does the SFI intervention affect couple satisfaction scores differently for distinct racial/ethnic and earner groups?**

Condition (assignment to one of the intervention groups vs. control group) was included in a 2x2x3 factorial MANOVA. This approach enabled us to test whether effects of the intervention on changes in couple satisfaction differed by group (i.e., groups defined by couple race/ethnicity and earner status). There were no significant 2-way or 3-way interactions. In other words, despite differences in couples’ satisfaction when they entered the study, Mexican-American dual-earning couples, Caucasian dual-earning couples, Mexican-American single-earning couples, and Caucasian single-earning couples were impacted equally by the SFI intervention.

**Exploratory Question 3: How are race/ethnicity and couple’s earner status associated with the division of family tasks?**

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, with a 2 x 2 factorial design to test main effects and the interaction effect of race/ethnicity and earner status on the division of family tasks. A significant main effect was found for couples’ race/ethnicity on one

dependent measure: wives' dissatisfaction with division of family tasks: ( $F [1,411] = 10.15, p < .01$ ). More specifically, Mexican-American wives (mean = 19.0, SD = 11.7) reported greater dissatisfaction than Caucasian wives (mean = 14.9, SD = 9.2).

Significant main effects were found for couple's earner status on four dependent measures from the Who Does What instrument: (1) husband-reported division of family tasks ( $F [1,411] = 11.08, p = .001$ ), (2) wife-reported division of family tasks ( $F [1,411] = 4.71, p < .01$ ), (3) husband-reported inequality ( $F [1,411] = 14.03, p < .001$ ), and (4) wife-reported inequality ( $F [1,411] = 6.03, p < .05$ ). Both husbands and wives in dual-earning households reported that husbands were doing more family tasks compared to single-earner couples. In addition, husbands and wives in single-earning households reported greater inequality in the division of domestic tasks (see Table 3). Thus, in dual-earner households, both partners perceived that husbands were doing more family tasks and that there was less inequality between them in the division of family labor.

Table 3  
*Means for Single-Earner & Dual-Earner Couples for Division of Family Tasks Variables*

	Single-Earner Couples	Dual-Earner Couples	Interpretation
Husbands Report: Division of Family Tasks	37.9 (SD=12.0)	42.3 (SD=10.2)	Higher Numbers = Husband is Doing More
Wives Report: Division of Family Tasks	33.3 (SD=11.2)	38.7 (SD=12.0)	Higher Numbers = Husband is Doing More
Husbands Report: Inequality of Family Tasks	20.9 (SD=10.6)	17.3 (SD=8.4)	Higher Numbers = Greater Inequality in Division of Tasks
Wives Report: Inequality of Family Tasks	24.3 (SD=9.8)	20.5 (SD=9.9)	Higher Numbers = Greater Inequality in Division of Tasks

Last, a significant interaction was found for couple race/ethnicity X earner status on husband-reported inequality ( $F [1,411] = 5.18, p < .05$ ), but not on wife-reported inequality.

**Exploratory Question 4: Are there differences between dual-earner Mexican-Americans and comparison groups in the division of family tasks?**

Simple contrasts were examined between dual-earner Mexican-American couples and (a) dual-earner Caucasian couples and (b) single-earner Mexican-American couples on each of the Who Does What variables.

a) Based on independent-samples t-tests, one significant difference between Mexican-American and Caucasian dual-earner husbands was found:  $t = -2.7, p < .01$ . Specifically, dual-earner Caucasian white husbands (mean = 19.2, SD = 8.0) reported higher inequality in the division of family tasks than did dual-earner Mexican-American husbands (mean = 16.4, SD = 8.5). In other words, from husbands' perspectives, family care was less evenly distributed among Caucasian couples than among Mexican-American couples (see Table 4).

b) Again based on independent-samples t-tests, significant differences were found between dual-earner and single-earner Mexican-American couples on 4 out of 4 Who Does What variables: (1) husband-reported division of family tasks ( $F=4.1, p < .001$ ), (2) wife-reported division of family tasks ( $F=4.9, p < .001$ ), (3) husband-reported inequality of family tasks ( $F=-4.4, p < .001$ ), and (4) wife-reported inequality of family tasks ( $F= -4.4, p < .001$ ). Therefore, among all Mexican-American couples in the sample, dual-earning couples report that husbands are helping more at home with domestic tasks than do single-earning couples. In addition, dual-earning Mexican-American couples perceive that the division of family tasks is more balanced than do single-earning Mexican-American couples (See Table 4).

Table 4

*Significant t-Test Results and Earner Group Means for Division of Family Tasks Variables*

	t	Single-Earner Couples	Dual-Earner Couples	Interpretation
Husbands Report: Division of Family Tasks	4.1*	37.4 (SD=12.6)	42.2 (SD=9.2)	Higher Numbers = Husband is Doing More
Wives Report: Division of Family Tasks	4.9*	32.8 (SD=11.6)	38.8 (SD=11.7)	Higher Numbers =Husband is Doing More
Husbands Report: Inequality of Family Tasks	-4.4*	21.4 (SD=11.4)	16.4 (SD=8.5)	Higher Numbers =Greater Inequality in Division of Tasks
Wives Report: Inequality of Family Tasks	-4.4*	24.8 (SD=10.2)	20.0 (SD=10.2)	Higher Numbers=Greater Inequality in Division of Tasks

\*  $p < .001$ 

Next, simple contrasts were examined between dual-earner Mexican-American couples and (a) dual-earner Caucasian couples and (b) single-earner Mexican-American couples on satisfaction with the division of family tasks. Based on independent samples t-tests, a significant difference was found for 1 out of 2 Who Does What variables: Husband-reported dissatisfaction with family tasks ( $F=-2.4, p < .05$ ). When earner status is assessed among all Mexican-American couples in the sample, single-earning Mexican-American husbands are more dissatisfied with family tasks in general than dual-earning Mexican-American husbands (see Table 5).

Table 5

*Significant t-Test Results and Earner Group Means for Satisfaction of Division of Family Tasks Variables*

Mexican-American				
	t	Single-Earner Couples	Dual-Earner Couples	Interpretation
Husbands Report: Dissatisfaction with Family Tasks	-2.4*	16.7 (SD=11.3)	13.9 (SD=8.9)	Higher Numbers = Greater Dissatisfaction

\*  $p < .05$

This study sought to fill gaps in literature by exploring similarities and differences in marital satisfaction and division of family tasks between Caucasian and Mexican-American dual-earner and single-earner couples. The study examined the following four questions: (1) How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with marital satisfaction? (2) Does the SFI intervention affect couple satisfaction differently for distinct racial/ethnic and earner groups? (3) How are race/ethnicity and couple's earner status associated with the division of family tasks? (4) Are there differences between dual-earner Mexican-Americans and comparison groups in the division of family tasks? After analyses were completed on the sample, findings lead to a few interesting conclusions. First, earner status was associated with marital satisfaction and Mexican-American dual-earning couples' marital satisfaction reports were different than comparison groups. Second, both earner status and race/ethnicity analyzed separately and combined did have an association with division of family tasks. Last, differences were found between how Mexican-American dual-earning couples divide household tasks in comparison to dual-earning Caucasian couples, single-earning Caucasian couples, and single-earning Mexican-American couples.

## **Chapter V**

### **Discussion**

#### **Marital Satisfaction**

The findings reported indicate that there is a relationship between earner status and marital satisfaction. More specifically, husbands in dual-earning couples were less satisfied with their marriages than husbands in single-earner partnerships. These findings are in contrast with more recent studies indicating that wives' employment is not associated with marital happiness so much as it is with marital stability (Schoen, Rogers, & Amato, 2006). A possible explanation for why single-earning Caucasian and Mexican-American husbands may be more satisfied with their marriages is that their family roles are less likely to be challenged. This is supported by Brennan, Barnett, & Gareis' (2001) research, which highlights the relationship between marital satisfaction and variables connected to wives' employment such as gender ideologies and salary for husbands in dual-earner marriages. It is possible that Mexican-American and Caucasian husbands in dual-earning relationships continue to struggle with internalization of traditional gender roles. Husbands may present with ambivalence about their wives' participation in the work force: on one hand logically accepting a wives' participation in the work force for financial reasons and on the other hand feeling threatened or uncomfortable with relinquishing their familial purpose as sole provider. Although research connecting gender ideologies and salary with marital satisfaction has been conducted with Caucasian dual-earning couples, research has not fully explored this relationship for Mexican-American couples. Our findings suggest that

this relationship may translate to Mexican-American husbands, supporting findings by Baca Zinn & Wells (2003). Baca Zinn & Wells (2003) report that Mexican-American husbands may adhere more to culturally informed traditional gender roles when their wives work, possibly increasing tension in their relationship and family life (as cited in Pinto & Coltrane, 2009). However, further research is needed to better understand the possible interaction between culturally informed gender ideologies, salaries, earner status, and marital satisfaction for Mexican-American husbands and wives in dual-earning couples.

Interestingly, the gender differences that emerged within the relationship between earner status and marital satisfaction suggest that the relationship between earner status and marital satisfaction may be more connected to gender than race/ethnicity. However, gender ideologies can be influenced by the cultural context in which they are developed and utilized. For example, evidence suggests that Mexican-American women acculturate more quickly than men in terms of wanting to renegotiate traditional marital roles. This gender difference in acculturation and renegotiation of marital roles within Mexican-American couples is associated with greater marital distress (Negy & Snyder, 1997). Therefore, cultural values either from the culture of origin or the receiving community can influence gender ideologies, which inform the negotiation or renegotiation of family tasks. Given that satisfaction with the division of family tasks was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction for men and women among Caucasian couples (Stevens, Kiger, & Riley 2001), it is possible that Mexican-American couples' level of acculturation may be indirectly related to marital satisfaction depending on how acculturation is influencing gender ideologies and the division of family tasks. Further research using acculturation measures may offer further insight as to how acculturation may be related to marital satisfaction and the division of family tasks.

Although not statistically significant, wives in dual-earner marriages had slightly lower marital satisfaction than their single-earner comparison group. A possible explanation for why dual-earner wives' marital satisfaction reports were different than their husbands' may be associated with the relational and psychological benefits for women that are linked to their participation in the labor force. Literature on dual-earner couples suggests that maternal employment could offer marital benefits in the form of higher marital satisfaction for wives as it increases positive interactions with their partners (Zuo, 1992) and defends against psychological distress (Coltrane, 2000). The current findings challenge outdated research concluding that Mexican-American wives report a reduction in marital satisfaction when they are employed (Saenz, Goudy, & Lorenz, 1989), revealing that Mexican-American wives in dual-earning relationships may be more likely to experience the employment benefits that defend against a decrease in marital satisfaction.

While marital satisfaction was not dependent on race/ethnicity combined with earner status, when earner status was controlled, racial/ethnic differences emerged regarding marital satisfaction. Our analyses indicate that Mexican-American dual-earning husbands and wives were more satisfied with marriages than Caucasian dual-earning husbands and wives. Findings indicate that research on Caucasian dual-earning couples specifically may not be comparable to Mexican-American dual-earning couples despite similarities between Mexican-American and Caucasian dual/single earning husbands. Moreover, these results contradict outdated research, which suggested that Mexican-American husbands and wives were less satisfied with their marriages when wives work (Bean, Curtis, & Marcum, 1977; Saenz, Goudy, & Lorenz, 1989). Our results show that more modern Mexican-American dual-earning couples may adjust to maternal employment, revealing a resilience that protects against decreased marital satisfaction.



Cultural values related to *familismo*, loyalty to the success of the family, may play a part in this racial/ethnic difference. However, further research that addresses this relationship more specifically is needed to better understand the connection.

### **Division of Family Tasks**

Current findings indicate earner status is associated with division of family tasks. Dual-earner partners reported husbands helped more at home than single-earner partners. Moreover, partners in single-earner couples reported greater inequality in division of family tasks than dual-earner couples. These findings support past research suggesting that husbands in Caucasian and Mexican-American dual-earning couples are contributing more to family tasks such as childcare and housework than husbands of past generations (Slayer, 2005; Wang & Bianchi, 2009; Ybarra, 1982). These findings add to the limited body of research on how Mexican-American dual-earning couples divide family tasks when wives work. Moreover, these findings support that earner status is not only associated with division of family tasks but also with *husbands* contributing more to family tasks, making the division more equitable when both partners are employed.

When earner status was controlled to include only dual-earner couples, the current findings reveal that from husbands' perspectives, family care was less evenly distributed among Caucasian couples than among Mexican-American couples. Although some similarities between Caucasian and Mexican-American couples were found regarding marital satisfaction and division of family tasks, these findings suggest that differences between these two racial/ethnic groups exist as well. While both Mexican-American and Caucasian dual-earning husbands have shown they do contribute more to family tasks, Mexican-American husbands feel the division is more balanced than Caucasian couples. Because no significant difference was found between

Mexican-American and Caucasian husbands and wives regarding the actual amount of family tasks husbands are doing at home, cultural difference may play a role here. If Mexican-American men adhere more to *machismo* values suggesting that they provide financially to the family (Pinto & Coltrane, 2009) and view women's role as caregiver in their families through the value of *marianismo* (Grzywacz et al., 2009) than higher value on their tasks contributions than Caucasian husbands. Therefore, Mexican-American husbands perceive that the division of family tasks is more equal than Caucasian husbands even if the actual amount of domestic work both groups contribute is the same.

When race/ethnicity was considered for both dual-earner and single-earner couples, Mexican-American wives were less satisfied with the division of family tasks compared to Caucasian wives. These findings make an important contribution to research as no studies have investigated differences or similarities in satisfaction of division of family tasks between Mexican-American and Caucasian couples. Mexican-American mothers may be more adamant about challenging stereotypical gender roles (see early acculturation mentioned above), which lead them to report higher levels of dissatisfaction than Caucasian couples. Mexican-American women can still maintain *marianismo* through participation in household tasks as a way to express Mexican culture (Segura, 1992), while simultaneously wanting their husbands to broaden their interpretation of *machismo* as family providers to include providing in the home through family tasks. Therefore, Mexican-American women may feel that wanting their husbands to contribute more at home does not mean that they or their husbands are sacrificing important parts of their Mexican culture. In the future, research should take into account how acculturation and adherence to culturally influenced gender ideologies may influence division of family tasks when both partners work.

Reports made by husbands indicating higher levels of inequality in division of family tasks were dependent on earner status and race/ethnicity. This finding is better understood through additional analysis, revealing that single-earning Mexican-American husbands are more dissatisfied with division of family tasks than dual-earning Mexican-American husbands. Moreover, Mexican-American husbands in dual-earning couples not only helped more with family tasks but also Mexican-American husbands and wives in dual-earning couples felt division of these tasks was more balanced than single-earning Mexican-American couples. When evaluated together, these findings suggest that Mexican-American husbands are less fluid regarding division of family tasks when their wives do not work and they do. It is possible that Mexican-American husbands are not always familiar or comfortable with how to perform these tasks, and thus label this kind of work as a wife's role (Grzywacz et al., 2009). Therefore, by associating certain tasks based on gender, these working husbands can avoid confronting their insecurities around domestic tasks. However, when wives are employed, Mexican-American husbands are challenged to renegotiate gender informed division of family tasks in a more equitable way (Grzywacz et al., 2009) and have done so successfully in this study.

Findings related to family tasks when wives are employed may be connected to findings suggesting that Mexican-American dual-earner couples were more satisfied with their marriages than Caucasian dual-earner couples. Research argues that an increase in husbands' contribution to family tasks can improve dual-earner couples' marital satisfaction (Coltrane, 2000; Sigle-Rushton, 2010). Moreover, some research suggests that dual-earning couples that hold flexible definitions of gender roles tend to have better outcomes (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Zimmerman, Haddock, Current, & Ziemba, 2003). Therefore, Mexican-American dual-earner couples in this study may be more satisfied with their marriages because husbands are doing more at home and

division of family tasks are more balanced. Even though both groups reported that husbands contributed more to family tasks, Mexican-American dual-earner couples were more satisfied with their marriages than Caucasian dual-earner couples. A reason for this difference could be related to intra-ethnic group differences. Mexican-American husbands and wives in dual-earning couples felt division of family tasks was more balanced than single-earning Mexican-American couples. Therefore, Mexican-American dual-earner couples may be more likely to reap the marital benefits contributing to marital satisfaction than Caucasian dual-earner couples if they compare their family dynamics to other single-earner Mexican-American couples. Further research investigating the relationship between marital satisfaction and the division of family tasks may yield interesting findings that could contribute to the gap in literature for both Caucasian and Mexican-American dual-earner couples.

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations to this study that must be considered. The sub sample used in this study consisted of couples that all resided in California. Although the sample size was fairly large, the findings may look different for couples living outside the state of California. Another limitation of the study is that convenience sampling was used to obtain the data, possibly distinguishing the sample from couples not participating in the SFI study. In the larger SFI study, husbands who participated were committed to change in hopes of improving their family's outcomes. Therefore, the findings may say something more specifically about the couples that participated in the study than it does about the general population of single-earner and dual-earner couples. In addition, the current study did not control for possible confounding variables such as age, salary, and part-time or full-time work. These variables may influence marital satisfaction, division of family tasks, and the perceptions of division of family tasks,

possibly influencing the current findings. Moreover, the larger SFI study did not use any measures to assess for acculturation among the sample. Thus, although it is likely that there is a range of acculturation among the subsample, there was no way to measure which participants were more acculturated and to what degree. Furthermore, the current study investigated Mexican-American couples exclusively. Although these findings may inform clinicians and researchers about Latino dual-earning couples, it is important to acknowledge that Latinos are comprised of numerous different ethnic groups from various geographic locations. Therefore, these findings should act as a starting point that can be expanded based on the specific Latino ethnicity of interest as opposed to directly translatable findings.

Another possible limitation for the current study may be connected to the writer's personal bias related to the Latino culture. My cultural background plays a part in how I approach my work. As a Puerto Rican woman, I am invested in the success of Latino families. This investment may have influenced my interpretations of the previous literature and the current findings.

### **Implications for Clinical Social Work**

The findings of this study provide insights that clinicians can use when working with dual-earner two-parent families. When both parents work in two-parent families, time at home with the family is limited. Therefore, couples must work together to constantly renegotiate family tasks such as childcare and housework in order to adjust to the change in the family system. The inter-couple gender differences that emerged in the current study highlight the differences in how each partner may approach or perceive the renegotiation at home when both partners work. Therefore, it is essential for clinical social workers to be aware that they have multiple clients in family and couples work that each yields different areas of focus. Husbands

may need extra encouragement and praise for the contributions they make at home that they are not used to making. This encouragement may increase the amount of contribution that husbands make to family tasks and may influence shifts in stereotypical gender ideologies. On the other hand, wives extended hours of work spent on family tasks need to be acknowledged and validated. The clinician can facilitate communication and teamwork with the couple in order for them to reap the psychosocial and financial benefits that can be associated with dual-employment.

Additionally, the current findings should encourage social workers, whenever possible, to reframe dual-earner status as a strength of the two-parents. Evidence suggests that when maternal employment does have an affect on family relationships, it is usually positive (Galinsky, 1999). Moreover, dual-earner couples share the responsibility of providing economically for their family, reducing the pressure that comes from a more traditional relationship dynamic. This shift can provide couples with a platform to challenge gender constructs by spreading the relational power in a way that supports the values of a fair and equal partnership (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Galinsky et al., 2009). As the current evidence shows, dual-earner couples appear to be better at negotiated family tasks when both partners work in a more equitable way than single-earner couples. These adjustments can allow for couples to exercise their strengths, flexibility, and resiliency, concepts that should be highlighted and celebrated by clinical social workers in couples therapy and family therapy.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Lastly, the current findings stress the need for empirical research across different cultures in order to better understand differences and similarities between groups. The current study revealed that Mexican-American and Caucasian dual-earner couples both have more equitable

division of labor. However, when more specific analyses were conducted differences that were dependent on race and gender were found, confirming the importance of intersectional analysis in research that includes race, gender, and class when examining marital satisfaction and division of labor among dual-earning couples (Dillaway & Broman, 2001). Moreover, the current study should encourage clinical social workers to avoid cultural assumptions and remain curious about each client, couple, or family's unique narrative. Research can offer a helpful outline to better understand and organize the strengths and challenges of dual-earner families. However, each couple should fill in this outline with their personalized experiences. Clinical social workers should inquire about what is working for these dual-earning families. How are they able to better manage division of family tasks? Do they prioritize family time and well-being? Do they emphasize equality and the partnership in the forms of joint decision-making, equal influence over finances, and joint responsibility for housework? Clinical social workers can then use these successful strategies when working with other dual-earner couples that are experiencing family conflict and stress.

## References

- Baker, P.L. (2004). "It is the only way I can survive": Gender paradox among recent Mexican immigrants to Iowa. *Sociological Perspectives*, 47(4). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/sop.2004.47.4.393>.
- Barnett, R.C., Brennan, R.T., Raudenbush, S.W., Marshall, N.L. (1994). Gender and the relationship between marital-role quality and psychological distress: A study of women and men in dual-earner couples. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 18(1), 105-127. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.1994.tb00299.x.
- Barnett, R.C., & Hyde, J.S. (2001). Women, men, work, and family: An expansionist theory. *American Psychologist*. 56(10), 781-796. doi: 10.1037//0003-066X.56.10.781.
- Becker, G.S. (1981). *A treatise on the family*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bean, F. D., Curtis Jr., R. L., & Marcum, J. P. (1977). Familism and marital satisfaction among Mexican Americans: The effects of family size, wife's labor force participation, and conjugal power. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 39(4). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/350480>.
- Bianchi, S. M., & Milkie, M. A. (2010). Work and family research in the first decade of the 21st century. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ888921&site=ehost-live>.
- Bianchi, S. M., Milkie, M. A., Sayer, L. C., & Robinson, J. P. (2000). Is anyone doing the housework? Trends in the gender division of household labor. *Social Forces*, 79(1).
- Bittman, M., England, P., Folbre, N., Sayer, L., & Matheson, G. (2003). When does gender trump money? Bargaining and time in household work. *American Journal of Sociology*, 109(1), Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=11652036&site=ehost-live>.



- Booth, A., Johnson, D. R., White, L., & Edwards, J. N. (1984). Women, outside employment, and marital instability. *American Journal of Sociology*, 90(3). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2779296>.
- Brennan, R. T., Barnett, R., & Gareis, K. C. (2001). When she earns more than he does: A longitudinal study of dual-earner couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(1). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3599966>.
- Carey, B. (May 23, 2010). Families' every fuss, archived and analyzed. *The New York Times*, Retrieved June 15, 2012, from [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/23/science/23family.html?\\_r=3](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/23/science/23family.html?_r=3).
- Coltrane, S. (2000). Research on household labor: Modeling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4), 1208-1233. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.01208.x.
- Coltrane, S. & Valdez, E.O. (1993). Reluctant compliance: Work-family role allocation in dual-earner Chicano families. In J.C. Hood (Ed.), *Men, work, and family* (pp. 151-175). Thousand Oaks, CA US: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Cox, F.D. (2006). *Human intimacy: Marriage, the family, and its meaning* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomas Wadsworth.
- Dillaway, H., & Broman, C. (2001). Race, class, and gender differences in marital satisfaction and division of household labor among dual-earner couples: A case for intersectional analysis. *Journal of Family Issues*. 22(3), 309-327. doi: 10.1177/019251301022003003.
- Dion, K. K., & Dion, K. L. (2001). Gender and cultural adaptation in immigrant families. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(3). Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.smith.edu:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=5487112&site=ehost-live>.

- Ehrenreich, B. (2001). *Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in American*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Fraenkel, P., & Capstick, C. (2012). Contemporary two-parent families: Navigating work and family challenges. In F. Walsh (4<sup>th</sup> ed.), *Normal family processes: Growing diversity and complexity* (pp. 78-101). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Frisco, M., & Williams, K. (2003). Perceived housework equity, marital happiness, and divorce in dual-earner households. *Journal of Family Issues*, 24(1), 51-73. doi:10.1177/0192513X02238520.
- Galinsky, E., Aumann, K., & Bond, J.T. (2011). *Times are changing: Gender and generation at work and at home: The 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce*. New York: Families & Work Institute.
- Grzywacz, J. G., Rao, P., Gentry, A., Arcury, T. A., & Marín, A. (2009). Acculturation and conflict in Mexican immigrants' intimate partnerships: The role of women's labor force participation. *Violence Against Women*, 15(10), 1194-1212. doi:10.1177/1077801209345144.
- Goldenburg, H., & Goldenberg, I. (2008). *Family therapy: An overview*. (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.
- Gonzalez, M.J., & Acevedo, G. (2006). Psychological interventions with Hispanic patients: A review of selected culturally syntonetic treatment approaches. In J. Rosenberg & S. Rosenburg, *Community mental health: Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (pp.153-165). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Herrera, R. S., & DelCampo, R. L. (1995). Beyond the superwoman syndrome: Work satisfaction and family functioning among working-class, Mexican-American women. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 17(1), 49-60. doi:10.1177/07399863950171003.

- Hiedemann, B., Suhomlinova, O., & O'Rand, A. M. (1998). Economic independence, economic status, and empty nest in midlife marital disruption. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 60(1). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/353453>.
- Hochschild, A.R. with Machung, A. (1989). *The second shift*. New York: Avon.
- Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (1992). Overcoming patriarchal constraints: The reconstruction of gender relations among Mexican immigrant women and men. *Gender & Society*, 6(3). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/189994>.
- Karney, B.R., & Bradbury, T.N. (1995). The longitudinal course of marital quality and stability: A review of theory, methods, and research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118(1), 3-34. Doi:10.1037/0033-2909.118.1.3.
- Kessler, R. C., & McRae Jr., J. A. (1982). The effect of wives' employment on the mental health of married men and women. *American Sociological Review*, 47(2). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2094964>.
- Lye, D. N., & Biblarz, T. J. (1993). The effects of attitudes toward family life and gender roles on marital satisfaction. *Journal of Family Issues*, 14(2), 157-188. doi: 10.1177/019251393014002002.
- Mederer, H. J. (1993). Division of labor in two-earner homes: Task accomplishment versus household management as critical variables in perceptions about family work. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 55(1), Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/352964>.
- Negy, C., & Snyder, D. K. (1997). Ethnicity and acculturation: Assessing Mexican American couples' relationships using the Marital Satisfaction Inventory—Revised. *Psychological Assessment*, 9(4), 414-421. doi:10.1037/1040-3590.9.4.414.
- Parsons, T. (1959). The social structure of the family. In R.N. Anshen (Ed.), *The family: Its function and destiny* (pp. 241-273). New York: Harper.

- Pinto, K., & Coltrane, S. (2009). Divisions of labor in Mexican origin and Anglo families: Structure and culture. *Sex Roles, 60*(7/8), 482-495. doi:10.1007/s11199-008-9549-5.
- Rogosa, D. (1988). Myths about longitudinal research. In Warner, S.K., R. T. Campbell, W. Meredith, S.C. Rawlings, *Methodological issues in aging research* (pp. 171-209). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.
- Rogers, S. J., & DeBoer, D. D. (2001). Changes in wives' income: Effects on marital happiness, psychological well-being, and the risk of divorce. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 63*(2), 458-472. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.00458.x.
- Rogers, S. J., & May, D. C. (2003). Spillover between marital quality and job satisfaction: Long-term patterns and gender differences. *Journal of Marriage & Family, 65*(2). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3600092>.
- Ross, C. E., Mirowsky, J., & Goldsteen, K. (1990). The impact of the family on health: The decade in review. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 52*(4). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/353319>.
- Saenz, R., Goudy, W. J., & Lorenz, F. O. (1989). The effects of employment and marital relations on depression among Mexican-American women. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 51*(1). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/352384>.
- Sayer, L. C. (2005). Gender, time and inequality: Trends in women's and men's paid work, unpaid work and free time. *Social Forces, 84*(1).
- Segura, D. A. (1992). Chicanas in white-collar jobs: "You have to prove yourself more". *Sociological Perspectives, 35*(1), 163-182. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ahl&AN=9606215898&site=ehost-live>.
- Spain, D., & Bianchi, S. (1996). *Balancing act: Motherhood, marriage and employment among American women*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

- Schoen, R., Rogers, S.J., & Amato, P.R. (2006). Wives' employment and spouses' marital happiness: Assessing the direction of influence using longitudinal couple data. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27(4), 506-528. doi: 10.1177/0192513X05283983.
- Stevens, D., Kiger, G., & Riley, P. J. (2001). Working hard and hardly working: Domestic labor and marital satisfaction among dual-earner couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(2). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3654610>.
- Tavernise, S. (2012, May 17). Whites account for under half of births in U.S. *The New York Times*, Retrieved June 15, 2012, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/17/us/whites-account-for-under-half-of-births-in-us.html?pagewanted=all>.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2012, April 26). *Employment characteristics of families summary*. Retrieved June 15, 2012, from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/famee.nr0.htm>.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2011, March). *Overview of race and Hispanic origin: 2010*. Retrieved June 15, 2012, from <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf>.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2011, May 26). *2010 Census shows nation's Hispanic population grew four times faster than total U.S. population*. Retrieved June 15, 2012, from <http://2010.census.gov/news/releases/operations/cb11-cn146.html>.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2011, March). *Profile America facts for features: Hispanic heritage month*. Retrieved June 15, 2012, from [http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/cb11-ff18.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb11-ff18.html).
- Wang, R., & Bianchi, S. M. (2009). ATUS fathers' involvement in childcare. *Social Indicators Research*, 93(1), 141-145. doi:10.1007/s11205-008-9387-4.

- White, L., & Rogers, S. J. (2000). Economic circumstances and family outcomes: A review of the 1990s. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1566723>.
- Williams, N. (1990). *The Mexican-American family*. New York, NY: General Hall.
- Ybarra, L. (1982). When wives work: The impact on the Chicano family. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 44(1), Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=5271805&site=ehost-live>.
- Yu, J.Y., Lucero-Liu, A., Gamble, W. C., Taylor, A. R., Christensen, D. H., & Modry-Mandell, K. (2008). Partner effects of Mexican cultural values: The couple and parenting relationships. *Journal of Psychology*, 142(2), 169-192. doi:10.3200/JRLP.142.2.169-192.
- Zimmerman, T.S., Haddock, S.A., Current, L.R., & Ziemba, S. (2003). Intimate partnership: Foundation to the successful balance of family and work. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 31, 107-124. doi: 10.1080/01926180390167070.
- Zin, M.B. (1980). Employment and education of Mexican-American women. *Harvard Educational Review*, 50. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.smith.edu:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ahl&AN=19735563&site=ehost-live>.
- Zuo, J. (1992). The reciprocal relationship between marital interaction and marital happiness: A three-wave study. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 54(4). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/353168>.

## Appendix A

### The Quality of Marriage Index

*Instructions:* Circle the number that best describes the degree of satisfaction you feel in various areas of your relationship.

		<b>Very Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Very Strongly Agree</b>		
1. We have a good relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
2. My relationship with my partner is very stable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
3. My relationship with my partner is strong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
4. My relationship with my partner makes me happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
5. I really feel like part of a team with my partner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
6. All things considered, what degree of happiness best describes your relationship?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; width: 100%;"> <span>Unhappy</span> <span>Happy</span> <span>Perfectly happy</span> </div>										

THIS WAS GIVEN TO US (CAROLYN AND PHIL) BY RICK HEYMAN

Richard E. Heyman, Ph.D.

Research Associate Professor

Family Translational Research Group

Department of Psychology

State University of New York at Stony Brook

Stony Brook, NY 11794-2500

(631) 632-7857

FAX: (631) 632-7876

Homepage [www.psychology.sunysb.edu/ftrlab-](http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/ftrlab-)

RMICS Coding: [www.psychology.sunysb.edu/ftrlab-/coding.htm](http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/ftrlab-/coding.htm)

#### Reference

Norton, R. (1983). Measuring marital quality: A critical look at the dependent variable. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 45, 141-151.

These are the cutoffs that Heyman uses for community couples:

37: Happy relationship

27: Distressed relationship

Error band around scores +/- 3

Appendix B

Individual Interview

C. Who Does What?: *Child Tasks*

ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Mom/Dad

Parents Dividing Child Tasks

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>SHE</b>				<b>WE BOTH</b>				<b>HE</b>
<b>DOES</b>				<b>DO THIS</b>				<b>DOES</b>
<b>IT ALL</b>				<b>ABOUT EQUALLY</b>				<b>IT ALL</b>

1. Now I'm going to ask you some detailed questions about who does what to take care of CHILD--things like feeding, changing diapers and bathing, and doing CHILD's laundry.

GIVE THE PERSON A CARD WITH THE 1-9 LINE IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH

Let's start with how you and OTHER PARENT divide feeding CHILD. Let's use the numbers on this line to show how you two divide feeding CHILD. For example, if MOTHER always feeds CHILD and FATHER never does, you'd answer 1. If each of you feeds CHILD about half the time, you'd answer 5. And if FATHER always feeds CHILD and MOTHER never does, you'd answer 9. And you can use any other numbers on the line. Does this system make sense to you?

So how do you divide feeding CHILD?  
TALK WITH PARENT TO HELP HER/HIM FIND THE RIGHT NUMBER ON THE LINE.

2. And how would you like it to be divided? It could be ok the way it is, or you could want FATHER/MOTHER to do more and you less, or you could want to do more yourself and FATHER/MOTHER to do less. \

TALK WITH PARENT TO HELP HER/HIM FIND THE RIGHT NUMBER ON THE LINE.

REPEAT 1 and 2 FOR EACH ITEM A-L.



**Comfort With Father Caring for Child**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
**VERY**                      **SOMEWHAT**                      **NOT AT ALL**  
 COMFORTABLE                      COMFORTABLE                      COMFORTABLE

**ASK MOTHER:**

I'm wondering how comfortable you and FATHER are with FATHER doing these different things to take care of CHILD.

3. Let's start again with feeding. When FATHER feeds CHILD, how comfortable are you with him doing this? (IF FATHER NEVER DOES TASK: I know that FATHER doesn't feed CHILD, but if he were to, how comfortable do you think you'd be with him doing this?)

4. And when FATHER feeds CHILD, how comfortable do you think he is with it? (IF FATHER NEVER DOES TASK: I know that FATHER doesn't feed CHILD, but if he did, how comfortable do you think he'd be doing it?)

**ASK FATHER:**

We also want to learn more about how comfortable you and MOTHER are with you doing different things to take care of CHILD.

3. Let's start again with feeding. When YOU feed CHILD, how comfortable is MOTHER with it? (IF FATHER NEVER DOES TASK: I know that you don't feed CHILD, but if you did, how comfortable do you think MOTHER would be with it?)

4. And when you feed CHILD, how comfortable are you doing this? (IF FATHER NEVER DOES TASK: I know that you don't feed CHILD, but if you did, how comfortable do you think you would be doing this?)

ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Mom/Dad

**Others Helping With Child Tasks**

5. Is there anyone else, besides you and CHILD'S OTHER PARENT, who does things to take care of CHILD, like feeding, changing diapers and bathing, or doing CHILD's laundry?

Yes...01

No....00 → Q7

IF YES, ANSWER WITHOUT ASKING IF KNOWN FROM WHAT THEY'VE ALREADY SAID

6. Who? How are they related to CHILD?

a. child's \_\_\_\_\_

b. child's \_\_\_\_\_

c. child's \_\_\_\_\_

d. child's \_\_\_\_\_

e. child's \_\_\_\_\_

f. child's \_\_\_\_\_

7. Overall, what percentage of the work to take care of CHILD does MOTHER do? FATHER do? All the OTHER PEOPLE together do? IF NO ONE BESIDES MOM AND DAD HELPS, EVERYONE ELSE GETS 0% AND DIVIDE BETWEEN MOM AND DAD ONLY.

START WITH DIVIDING BY 25%'s. GO BY 10% IF NECESSARY.

Mother:     %

Father:     %

Everyone else:     %

ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Mom/Dad

12. During the week, about how many hours a week do THESE OTHER PEOPLE watch CHILD? DIVIDE BY 5 TO CONVERT INTO HOURS PER DAY \_\_\_\_\_ hours per day

13. On weekends, about how many hours, total, do THESE OTHER PEOPLE, watch CHILD? DIVIDE BY 2 TO GET \_\_\_\_\_ hours per day (during the weekend)

ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Mom/Dad

**Form for Child Tasks, Child Care Log, and Comfort With Father Caring for Child**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>SHE DOES IT ALL</b>				<b>WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY</b>				<b>HE DOES IT ALL</b>

HOW IT IS NOW (1)	HOW YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO BE (2)		MOTHER'S Comfort with FATHER doing task (3)	FATHER'S Comfort with FATHER doing task (4)
		A. Feeding the baby		
		B. Keeping track of when baby needs to be fed		
		C. Changing the baby's diapers; dressing the baby		
		D. Bathing the baby		
		E. Deciding whether to respond to the baby's cries		
		F. Responding to the baby's crying in the middle of the night		
		G. Taking the baby out: walking, driving, visiting, etc.		
		H. Choosing toys for the baby		
		I. Playing with the baby		
		J. Doing the baby's laundry		
		K. Dealing with the doctor regarding the baby's health		

(8)	(9)	
		<b>Weekdays—Monday through Friday</b>
		L. Getting up/feeding/dressing baby
		M. Mornings: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
		N. Afternoons: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
		O. Dinner/playtime/bedtime
		P. Evenings to midnight
		Q. Middle of the night needs
		<b>Weekends—Saturdays &amp; Sundays</b>
		R. Getting up/feeding/dressing baby
		S. Mornings: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
		T. Afternoons: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
		U. Dinner/playtime/bedtime
		V. Evenings to midnight
		W. Middle of the night needs

**Satisfaction With Overall Division Between Parents**

14. Overall, how do you feel about your level of involvement with CHILD? Are you...

- very satisfied ..... 01
- pretty satisfied ..... 02
- neutral ..... 03
- somewhat dissatisfied.. 04
- very dissatisfied .... 05

15. Overall, how do you feel about OTHER PARENT'S level of involvement with CHILD? Are you...

- very satisfied ..... 01
- pretty satisfied ..... 02
- neutral ..... 03
- somewhat dissatisfied.. 04
- very dissatisfied .... 05

16. Overall, how do you think OTHER PARENT feels about your level of involvement with the baby?

- very satisfied ..... 01
- pretty satisfied ..... 02
- neutral ..... 03
- somewhat dissatisfied.. 04
- very dissatisfied .... 05



**Others Helping With Paying**

19. Is there anyone else, besides you and OTHER PARENT, who buys things for CHILD or pays for things like rent, groceries, and utilities in the house where CHILD lives?

Yes...01

No....00 → Q21

20. Who? How are they related to CHILD?

a. child's \_\_\_\_\_

b. child's \_\_\_\_\_

c. child's \_\_\_\_\_

d. child's \_\_\_\_\_

e. child's \_\_\_\_\_

f. child's \_\_\_\_\_

21. Overall, thinking of all the things that have been bought for CHILD so far--diapers, clothing, formula, car seat and maybe furniture like a crib--what percentage of this has MOTHER paid for? FATHER paid for? ALL THE OTHER PEOPLE TOGETHER paid for?

START WITH DIVIDING BY 25%'s. GO BY 10% IF NECESSARY.

Mother:     %

Father:     %

Everyone else:     %

22. What about all the money that has been spent since CHILD was born on rent, groceries, and utilities in the house where CHILD lives. What percentage of these household expenses has MOTHER paid for? FATHER paid for? ALL THE OTHERS PEOPLE TOGETHER paid for?

START WITH DIVIDING BY 25%'s. GO BY 10% IF NECESSARY.

Mother:     %

Father:     %

Everyone else:     %

Satisfaction With Parents Dividing Paying

23. In general, how satisfied are you with the way you and OTHER PARENT divide who pays for what for CHILD—things like diapers, clothing, formula, and equipment like car seats? Are you...

- very satisfied ..... 01
- pretty satisfied ..... 02
- neutral ..... 03
- somewhat dissatisfied.. 04
- very dissatisfied .... 05

24. In general, how satisfied are you with the way you and OTHER PARENT divide who pays for what for the house where CHILD lives--things like rent, groceries, and utilities? Are you...

- very satisfied ..... 01
- pretty satisfied ..... 02
- neutral ..... 03
- somewhat dissatisfied.. 04
- very dissatisfied .... 05





**Others Helping With Family Tasks**

27. Is there anyone else, besides you two, who does things around the house--like cooking, cleaning, shopping, or fixing things?

Yes...01

No....00 → Q29

28. Who? How are they related to CHILD?

a. child's \_\_\_\_\_

b. child's \_\_\_\_\_

c. child's \_\_\_\_\_

d. child's \_\_\_\_\_

e. child's \_\_\_\_\_

f. child's \_\_\_\_\_

29. Overall, thinking of all the things that have to be done around the house—things like cooking, cleaning, shopping, or fixing things --what percentage of this work does MOTHER do? FATHER? ALL THE OTHER PEOPLE TOGETHER? START WITH DIVIDING BY 25%'s. GO BY 10% IF NECESSARY.

Mother:     %

Father:     %

Everyone else:     %

30. In general, how satisfied are you with the way you and OTHER PARENT have divided the family tasks since CHILD was born? Are you...

very satisfied ..... 01

pretty satisfied ..... 02

neutral ..... 03

somewhat dissatisfied.. 04

very dissatisfied .... 05