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Work role vs. familial roles: Management of work and family responsibilities among blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women in the Lower Rio Grande Valley apparel industry

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WORK ROLE Vs FAMILIAL ROLES: MANAGEMENT OF WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG BLUE-COLLAR CHICANA AND MEXICAN IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY APPAREL INDUSTRY

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DATE: May 2, 1996

A mis padres, Jorge Villarreal y María Olivia Solano de Villarreal.
Porque sólo ustedes saben como alentar a un hijo
hacia el logro de sus ideales.

Marioly

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ABSTRACT

WORK ROLE Vs FAMILIAL ROLES: MANAGEMENT OF WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG BLUE-COLLAR CHICANA AND MEXICAN IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY APPAREL INDUSTRY

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This qualitative study examined how a select group of forty Chicana and Mexican immigrant women employed as apparel production workers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley manage work and family responsibilities. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews. The interviews were conducted over a one year period in the county of Hidalgo, Texas. This study identified two processes used by women in managing work and family. Age and the timing of life events were found to have the greatest influence on the process of managing work and family responsibilities among the studied women. Ethnicity, contrary to existing explanatory models, was not found to account for any significant difference.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the relationship between work and family lives of a selected group of Chicana and Mexican immigrant women[1] workers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley apparel industry. In particular, I am interested in exploring how blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women manage the conflicting demands of work and family responsibilities. In exploring the "how," I am emphasizing the procesual nature of this management, and it is this emphasis that calls for the qualitative approach of this study. Hence, this study is strictly exploratory and descriptive.

The increasing participation of women in the labor force, and particularly of women of color, makes the exploration of the ways in which women manage work and family an important sociological issue. This study brings to the front the analysis of two timely sociological problems, ethnicity and gender, with special attention given to blue-collar working women. In exploring these concerns, the scope of this study is limited to the investigation of how these women manage work and family responsibilities.

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[1] The term Chicana in this study refers to native born women of Mexican descent who were raised in the United States. Also included in this category are Mexican-born women raised since preschool years in the U.S. The term Mexican immigrant woman, on the other hand, refers to women who were born and raised in Mexico who migrated to the U.S. as adults. Also included in this category are U.S. born women of Mexican descent raised in Mexico who migrated to the U.S. as young adults.

For the purpose of this study *management* is defined as the ability of women to combine work, family responsibilities and identity investment by successfully manipulating their commitment to one role or the other as demanded by the situation at hand. Management of work and family responsibilities will be explored along three main dimensions. First, the *work role dimension* explores the importance of outside employment in women's lives in terms of commitment to and identification with the work role. Second, the *mother role dimension* explores the relationship between motherhood and employment responsibilities. Finally, the *housewife role dimension* explores the relationship between outside employment and changes in the division of household labor, parenting responsibilities and decision making.

My approach to this research is grounded in previous research findings and my empirical critical response to explanatory models that tend to differentiate between Chicanas and Mexican immigrant women. Particularly, the acculturation models that assert that the more acculturated Chicanas are more likely to have democratic and egalitarian family structures (Baca Zinn 1980; Melville 1988) while Mexican immigrant women need to transform values, norms, and behaviors attributed to "traditional" culture in order to acculturate and achieve democratic and egalitarian family structures (Pesquera 1985), and more original approaches (Segura 1991) that explain the differences among Chicanas and Mexican immigrant women as rooted in their dissimilar social locations.

The thesis is organized in the following manner. Subsequent discussion in this introductory chapter presents an historical overview of the distribution of Chicana and Mexican immigrant blue-collar workers in the U.S., as well as an overview of the economic development of the Lower Rio Grande Valley to better understand its importance in studying

blue-collar women in the region. Additionally, the conflicting relationship between family and work for working women is discussed and the explanatory models that differentiate between Chicana and Mexican immigrant women are presented. Finally, the chapter concludes with a criticism of these models and a discussion of the assumptions and research questions that guided this study.

Chapter II presents the theoretical approach and provides a review of relevant research literature. Chapter III outlines the methodological approach and summarizes the characteristics of the sample. Chapter IV presents the results of this study, where I further discuss the assumptions that guided the study as these relate to the management of work and family responsibilities for the women in the study. Finally, Chapter V presents a synthesis of the main findings and concluding remarks.

Blue-Collar Chicana and Mexican Immigrant Women: An Historical Overview

Recent literature on Chicana and Mexican immigrant women shows a great interest in exploring the work and family lives of blue-collar workers (Flores-Ortiz 1991; Herrera and Del Campo 1995; Lamphere et al. 1993; Pesquera 1985, 1991; Segura 1991; Soldatenko 1993). This interest is partly due to the large numbers of Chicana and Mexican immigrant women working as operatives and laborers. Operatives are semiskilled workers who operate machine or processing equipment, and also perform other factory duties which require only limited training (within this category, a great number of Chicanas and Mexican immigrant women are found in the apparel industry as operators of sewing machines). Laborers, on the other hand, are unskilled workers in manual occupations without special training (a large number of

Chicanas and Mexican immigrant women are also found as laborers in agriculture or food/kindred industries) (Arroyo 1977:160).

Although it is difficult to identify the exact figures of Chicana/Mexican immigrant women workers in official records, because these do not distinguish among different Hispanic nationalities but group them under the category of "Hispanic," we will assume with Arroyo (1977) that the information provided for the Hispanic females in the Southwest refers, almost exclusively, to the Mexican origin population. In 1969, according to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Report, 49.7 percent of the Hispanic females in the labor force held blue-collar jobs, i.e. craftswomen, operatives and laborers (Arroyo 1977:154). This represents almost half of the working Hispanic females. The other half were distributed as follows: 39.0 percent held white collar occupations and 11.3 percent held service occupations (Arroyo 1977:154). The figures for California, which we assume refer to the Mexican origin population,[2] show that 50.6 percent held blue-collar jobs, 40.4 percent held white collar jobs, and 9.0 percent were service workers (Arroyo 1977:156). The distribution by occupation in Texas for the same year shows that 49.7 percent held blue collar jobs, 36.8 percent held white-collar jobs, and 13.5 percent were service workers (Arroyo 1977:156).

The number of blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women has changed. Since 1989, according to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1990:1), only 31.6 percent of Hispanic females in the United States held blue-collar jobs, with a larger number of women entering white collar and service occupations. For example, the percentage of Hispanic

[2]The 1969 Census figures precede the large immigration wave of the 1980's, when war and economic chaos in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala prompted many to seek refuge in the United States.

females in white collar and service jobs increased respectively by 50.8 and 17.5 percent. California followed the national trend, and by 1989 the distribution by occupation of Chicana and Mexican[3] immigrant women shows that 35.4 percent held blue collar jobs, 49.2 percent held white collar jobs, and 15.4 percent held service jobs (U.S. EEOC 1990:229). In Texas, the decrease of participation in blue collar occupations was even higher, and by 1989 only 29.8 percent held blue-collar jobs, 52.7 percent held white-collar jobs, and 17.5 percent were service workers (U.S. EEOC 1990:229).

The decline in blue collar work among Hispanic women paralleled the decline of blue-collar work for the U.S. as a whole. For example, in 1966, 32.6 percent of the total female labor force were blue-collar workers, 56.9 percent were white collar workers, and 10.5 percent held service occupations (U.S. EEOC Part I, 1968: F6). By 1989 the number of women employed in blue-collar occupations decreased to 19.6 percent, while their counterparts in white collar and service jobs increased respectively by 68.6 and 11.8 percent (U.S. EEOC 1990:1). However, in spite of the decreases in blue-collar work, the U.S. Department of Labor still projects that by the year 2000, 57 percent of Hispanic women will be employed outside the home, and the majority of these women will have blue-collar, service-delivery jobs typical of working-class employment (Herrera and Del Campo 1995:52).

It appears that the above projection is particularly applicable to women of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, where the representation of Chicana/ Mexican immigrant women in blue-collar jobs continues to be an important one. For example, according to the U.S. Equal

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[3]We will still assume that the figures reported for Hispanic women in the Southwest refer to Mexican origin population because, despite of the immigration wave of the 1980's, Chicanos account for almost 90 percent of the Southwest's Hispanics Schaefer 1993:252).

Employment Opportunity Commission (1990:560), in 1989, 45.8 percent of Chicana/Mexican immigrant women in the area of McAllen, Edinburg and Mission, Texas held blue-collar jobs. This is not surprising if we consider that since the 1970's, the economic development of the Lower Rio Grande Valley has provided a large number of blue-collar occupations for Chicana and Mexican immigrant women. The economic development of the region and its consequences for Chicana and Mexican immigrant women are discussed in the following section.

The Economic Development of The Lower Rio Grande Valley (1970-1995)

Historically the economic activity and development of the region had revolved primarily around farming and ranching. In 1966, for example, 46.0 percent of Chicana/Mexican immigrant women were laborers (U.S. EEOC 1968:460) employed in agriculture and food processing industries. However, the decade of the 1970s saw considerable expansion of other important income producing sectors such as retail trade, tourism, service industries, and light manufacturing (Patrick, Crews and Vento 1986). The expansion of the manufacturing sector created new job opportunities for women and the occupational distribution of women in the region changed. In 1989, for example, only 12.8 percent of Chicana/Mexican immigrant women in the region were laborers employed in agriculture and food processing industries and 31.7 percent were operatives (U.S. EEOC 1990). Many of the latter found as operators of sewing machines in the new apparel factories.

Different factors attracted apparel[4] companies to South Texas during the 1970s. On the one hand, the presence of large military installations near some border cities increased the demand for certain types of uniforms and civilian wear. On the other hand, the growing population in the border region provided a large pool of employees to work in the new apparel factories (DeMoss 1989).This factor is usually mentioned by apparel plant managers when asked why apparel is booming in South Texas (Berman and Mack 1980). However, Berman and Mack (1980:38) warn us that "large supply" of labor is a Texas euphemism for "cheap labor."

This "large supply" of labor in the Rio Grande Valley consisted of Chicana and Mexican immigrant women who were attracted to work for companies that offered them a steady job. The majority of these women were previously seasonal workers, working in the fields and packing sheds intermittently during the year. These jobs were not steady and neither were their salaries. Apparel companies, on the other hand, offered these women steady 40 hours-a-week jobs. That made a great difference and many were willing to go to work for these companies.

In spite of changes elsewhere, apparel companies in the Lower Rio Grande Valley remain one of the major employers of women in the region. And today, according to the Rio Grande Valley Chamber of Commerce (1995), 6 apparel manufacturers rank among the 24 top manufacturers in the area, employing more than 4,000 people. Given the large numbers of

[4] It is important to highlight that the apparel industry remains the largest employer of women in the manufacturing sector and throughout time it has been a significant employer of minority and immigrant women. During the 1970s, for example, women comprised 82 percent of the national apparel work force and approximately 17 percent of the national apparel industry work force was comprised of minority groups (Arpan, De la Torre, and Toyne 1982:10).

blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women in the region, it is surprising to find that studies examining blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women are almost nonexistent. This thesis will help to fill this gap in the knowledge by exploring the relationship between work and family lives of Chicana and Mexican immigrant women workers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley apparel industry.

The Conflicting Relationship Between Work and Family Responsibilities

Traditionally, social scientists have conformed to prevailing social norms in viewing combined commitments to family and work as conflicting, especially for women. Women are likely to be seen as unable to manage the competing demands of family and work in ways that satisfy the expectations for achievement attributed to each sphere (Crosby 1987). Moreover, sociological investigation on the study of women and work has frequently used gender models to explain working women's attitudes and behaviors. The general assumption of gender models is that women's family experiences (i.e. gender socialization, family roles, and division of household labor) influence their employment attitudes and behaviors, and that the central life interest of women is in the family (Feldberg and Glenn 1979). Women derive their identity from familial roles (i.e. wife, mother, housekeeper), and these roles frequently conflict with their work role.

According to role conflict literature, when someone occupies two roles with contradictory expectations, conflict occurs (Hodson and Sullivan 1995).Conflict among expectations is what structural role theorists call *role conflict* (Turner 1991). For working women, role conflict derives from their attempts to reconcile the "competing urgencies" of

work and family. Reconciling the "competing urgencies" means that women have to balance job and family responsibilities and identity investment (Pesquera 1991:110). This identity investment is shaped by women's internalized traditional social and cultural expectations and by social pressure exerted on women to conform to traditional domestic roles. The traditional belief that Hispanic women generally hold traditional sex-role attitudes (Ortiz and Cooney 1984) suggests that role conflict should be stronger among Chicana and Mexican immigrant women and they would present difficulties in the management of work and family responsibilities.

However, according to role theory, the commitment made to roles, as well as the rigidity and clarity of role expectations, should influence the conflict one experiences (Stryker and Statham 1985). In other words, it is the level of commitment to roles rather than the time and energy expenditures that occasions strain (Marks 1977). Research on women's work commitment (Sobol 1974) shows that the maintenance and commitment to the work role for blue-collar women is assumed to derive only from economic motivations. In addition, the few studies addressing the problem of work identity (Sobol 1963; Haller and Ronmayer 1971; Pesquera 1991) suggest that women in blue collar jobs, with limited opportunities and rewards, are less likely to identify with their work role than women in high-status employment situations that offer autonomy, greater intrinsic rewards, higher educational training, and more subjective evaluation. These findings thus suggests that work identity and work commitment among blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women is likely to be weak.

More interesting, assuming a weak work commitment for blue-collar women, then we could expect that blue-collar women are more likely to manage work and family

responsibilities. In other words, blue-collar women are assumed to be able to combine work, family responsibilities and identity investment by successfully manipulating their commitment to one role or the other as demanded by the situation at hand. If this is so, both blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women would be expected to reduce role conflict and manage work and family responsibilities. However, different explanatory models assert that the management of work and family responsibilities should be different for Chicanas and Mexican immigrant women.

The Explanatory Models

Linear acculturation models imply that Chicanas and Mexican immigrant women lie on a sort of "cultural continuum" with Mexican immigrants at one end holding more conservative behaviors and attitudes grounded in traditional (often rural) Mexican culture, and U.S.-born Chicanas holding an "amalgamation" of cultural traditions from Mexico and the United States (Segura 1991). These models caution, however, that depending on their level of acculturation Chicanas may lie at different levels along this continuum (Baca Zinn 1980; Melville 1988). According to these models, the less acculturated women will have the most difficult time balancing work and family responsibilities given their internalized traditional social and cultural expectations. Hence, management of work and family responsibilities among Chicanas may vary, but Mexican immigrant women are more likely to experience a difficult time balancing work and family responsibilities.

Segura (1991) proposes a different approach in understanding differences in managing the conflicting demands of work and family among Mexican immigrant and Chicana women,

explaining these differences as rooted in their "dissimilar social locations." According to Segura (1991:121):

> ...Mexicanas [immigrant women], raised in a world where economic and household work often merge, do not dichotomize social life into public/private spheres[5], but appear to view employment as one workable domain of family. As a consequence, the more recent the time of emigration, the less ambivalence Mexican women would express regarding employment. Chicanas, on the other hand, raised in a society that celebrates the expressive functions of the family and obscures its productive economic functions, express higher adherence to the ideology of stay-at-home wife/mother and correspondingly more ambivalence to full-time employment.

According to the dissimilar social locations approach, Mexican immigrant women are more likely to manage work and family responsibilities than Chicanas.

The dissimilar social locations approach as well as the acculturation models try to explain the possible differences in the management of work and family conflict between Chicana and Mexican immigrant women based on women's traditional role expectations and their socialization process. According to these explanatory models it is very likely that Chicana and Mexican immigrant women in the study will differ in the ways they experience and manage the conflicting demands of work and family. However, given their blue-collar status, women in this study are expected to experience low role conflict due to their weak commitment to the work role.

I adhere only to the last part. In other words, I agree with the research literature that shows that a weak commitment to the work role will allow an easier management of work and family responsibilities. However, I do not agree either with the acculturation models or with the

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[5]The private sphere encompasses family life, the household, and domesticity. The public sphere, on the other hand, concerns human actions that serve political, institutional, commercial, and other depersonalized features of society (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974; Thompson 1991).

dissimilar social location approach that assume that blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women should differ in the ways they manage work and family responsibilities.

Critique of the Explanatory Models and Assumptions of the Study

It appears to me that the acculturation models and dissimilar social locations approach assume that Chicanas are raised in a more privileged socio-economic environment than Mexican immigrant women, hence this socio-economic difference accounts for their ability to manage or not the conflicting demands of work and family. The aforementioned models are ahistorical in that they neglect the fact that large numbers of working-class Chicana and Mexican immigrant women have long traditions of working in the formal and informal economic sectors. My argument, on the other hand, assumes that both, blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women, are likely to manage work and family responsibilities as they are part of a tradition that concomitantly identifies with both, work and familial roles.

My approach takes into account the historical and biographical context of these women's lives. My empirical study was thus guided by two main assumption. First, blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women are socialized to manage work and family responsibilities. In other words, I assume that to the extent that large numbers of working-class women have long traditions of working in the formal and informal economic sectors, they are likely to traditionally identify with both, work and familial roles. Second, blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women are likely to transform their work role into a family role, making it easier to manage work and family responsibilities by reducing commitment to the work role. I thus assume that to the extent that these women view their work role as a means

of survival for the family, they are likely to perceive their outside employment only as part of their familial responsibility.

As mentioned before, the purpose of this study is to describe the process through which blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women manage work and family responsibilities and this process will be analyzed along three main dimensions: *work role*, *mother role*, and *housewife role dimensions*. First, the work role dimension is considered in order to determine the level of commitment and identification with the work role for the women in the study. In examining the work role, I consider not only these women's economic motivations to work, but also their internalized traditional social and cultural expectations which may affect their commitment and identification with the work role.

In other words, the work role will be presented *vis a vis* familial roles to present an over all analysis of the process through which women reconcile the competing demands of work and family. Second, the purpose in isolating the mother role is to better understand the process through which women manage work and mothering responsibilities. Finally, the purpose in isolating the housewife role is to analyze the impact of women's outside employment in the division of household labor, parenting responsibilities and decision making. Several specific research questions will address each dimension.

Three research questions will address the work role dimension: (1) To what extent does familial roles or ideology shape the labor force behavior of the women in the study? (2)To what extent do economic motivations account for the work role consistency and commitment of the women in the study? and (3) To what extent do internalized traditional social and cultural expectations shape women's identification with the work role?

The mother role dimension will be addressed through the following questions: (4) To what extent do long traditions of working in the formal and informal economic sectors ease management of work and motherhood responsibilities for the women in the study? and (5) To what extent do internalized traditional social and cultural expectations account for women's perception of work and motherhood as conflicting roles difficult to negotiate and reconcile?

Three more questions will address the housewife role dimension: (6) To what extent does women's employment accounts for changes in the division of labor in parenting and household tasks? (7) To what extent do these changes ease management of work and household responsibilities for women in the study? and finally (8) To what extent does earning a substantial portion of the family income increases women's authority in the family?

The formulation of the research questions was guided by previous studies on Chicana and Mexican immigrant women workers and by different theoretical approaches in Social Psychology and the Sociology of Work. The following chapter includes a theoretical discussion and a review of relevant research literature.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theoretical Discussion

This thesis proposes that combining several conceptual frameworks in Social Psychology and the Sociology of Work is useful in understanding the relationship between the work and family lives of Chicana and Mexican immigrant blue-collar women. The insights offered by Social Psychology in role theory, for example, allow us to conceptualize the causes and consequences of *role conflict*, as well as the *management* of work and family responsibilities for the women under study. Moreover, conceptual frameworks derived from the Sociology of Work help us to understand the meaning of the work role for both groups of women in terms of *work commitment and work identity*. In addition to these conceptual frameworks, Acculturation models are discussed in this chapter in order to lend support to my view which is critical of models that distinguish between Chicana and Mexican immigrant women.

Role Theory

For structural role theorists, the social world is viewed as a network of variously interrelated positions, or statuses, within which individuals enact roles (Turner 1991:412). The

concept of position, or status, is used here for the differentiated parts of organized groups. In Parsons (1951:25) words:

> ...where the actor in question is "located" in the social system relative to other actors. This is what we call his *status*, which is his place in the relationship system considered as a structure, that is a patterned system of *parts*.

The concept of role, on the other hand, is used here as the "expected patterns" of behavior attached to positions (Shafritz 1980; Stryker and Statham 1985). Structural role theorists root the concept of role in moral norms or societal values. Persons learn through socialization, the process by which individuals acquire the physical, intellectual, and, moral tools needed to function in society (Ritzer 1992), to hold expectations of themselves and others. Role expectations thus are grounded in societal values that tend to be shared widely throughout a society. Violations to role expectations are sanctioned by society and individuals are likely to feel societal pressure to conform to these expectations.

Clarity and consensus on role expectations are taken by role theory to be important determinants of the pressure persons feel toward conformity (Stryker and Statham 1985). If expectations are clear and consensus about them is high, then the pressure toward conformity will be considerable. In contrast, low consensus resulting from the uncertainty of a population as a whole or from the existence of opposing subgroups of expectations reduces the pressure toward conformity.

Although contradictory or unclear role expectations reduce the pressure toward conformity, when someone occupies two roles with contradictory expectations of what one should be doing at a certain time conflict among expectations occurs (Hodson and Sullivan

1995:80). Conflict among expectations is what structural role theorists call *role conflict* (Turner 1991:423). For example, a worker may be expected to be at work on time and to care for her sick infant. Job-related travel, changing work shifts, child care, and unexpected emergencies either at home or on the job are important sources of role conflict (Hodson and Sullivan 1995:80) among working mothers.

Structural role theory is not only concerned with the causes and consequences of role conflict, but also in its resolution. Working mothers can manage role conflict by reducing involvement in one role or the other (Stryker and Statham 1985:338). Women who plan to work, for example, may limit the number of children they have or intend to have (Scanzoni and Murray 1972; Waite and Stolzenberg 1976) to reduce involvement in their mother role. Working women may also negotiate household responsibilities with children as well as with spouse (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Scanzoni 1970; Safilios-Rothschild 1970) to lessen their housekeeper role. On the other hand, women who give more priority to their family roles and needs than to their own work involvement may reduce work when their children are young or quit working altogether (Sweet 1973), or they may choose flexible occupations or part-time jobs.

Some theorizing and research on the multiplicity of roles and on role conflict has begun to recognize that the individual is not completely helpless and passive in the face of structural constraints. For example Marks (1977) argues that it is not time and energy expenditures that occasions strain, but rather the level of commitment to roles. If persons can move readily from one role to the next, multiple roles can increase rather than decrease personal satisfaction; thus

the commitment made to roles as well as the rigidity and clarity of role expectations should influence the conflict one experiences (Stryker and Statham 1985:339).

For the purpose of this study, *role conflict* will be defined as "the perception that demands associated with different roles are difficult to negotiate and reconcile."[6] This conflict is assumed to lessen when a successful management of work and familial roles is present. In this study, *management* is defined as the ability of women to combine work, family responsibilities and identity investment by successfully manipulating their commitment to one role or the other as demanded by the situation at hand.

Conceptual Distinction Between Work Commitment and Work Identity

The work commitment approach was explored in the late sixties and early seventies to explain the labor force behavior of wives. Workers can be more or less committed to their jobs. Commitment develops when workers perceive that their own needs will be met through continued employment in the job and when they perceive that the goals and values of the occupation or the employer are compatible with their own goals and values (Hodson and Sullivan 1995:107).

Chappell (1980) makes an analytical distinction between work commitment and work identity. According to Chappell (1980), commitment to work refers to behavioral factors that include activity within the work role and a determination to continue within that role. While work commitment refers to role specific behavior, identification with work is more general and subjective. Work identity pertains to the subjective meaning of paid labor in people's lives. It

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[6] Coverman 1989, cited in Centrallo (1994:20).

refers to the importance of the work role for a person's sense of self. It is possible for individuals to hold a high level of work commitment because of economic need, and not highly identify with their jobs.

Acculturation Models

Acculturation models emphasize the need to transform values, norms, and behaviors attributed to "traditional" culture, as a means of achieving democratic and egalitarian family structures (Pesquera 1985:6). Linear acculturation models imply that newly arrived Mexican women from rural areas are more likely to espouse traditional Mexican values, while U.S.-born Chicanas have assimilated many American practices. As a result, Chicanas hold a hybrid culture that combines elements of values and social relationships from traditional Mexico as these have been impacted by the culture and social system of the United States and Chicana's own individual and group adaptations (Melville 1980:156).

However, women of Mexican heritage in the United States acculturate to varying degrees. Moreover, acculturation is selective. Melville (1980) explains that selective acculturation means that an individual chooses to modify her behavior in those areas where accommodation to the majority culture is seen as imperative, and/or is facilitated by certain personal or situational factors. She distinguishes four categories of acculturation facilitators: (1) attitudinal facilitators (2) cognitive facilitators, (3) behavioral facilitators, and (4) brokers. By attitudinal facilitators, Melville (1980) means those attitudes and values that promote "readiness" in an individual to adapt and accept elements of culture different from one's own (such as class aspiration). Cognitive facilitators are the information or the means to acquire

knowledge that promote familiarity with the majority culture (such as knowledge of the English language and level of education). Behavioral facilitators are activities that promote positive contact with the majority culture (employment outside the home and independent shopping). Finally, brokers are persons or institutions that intervene to aid an individual in becoming familiarized with the majority culture (such as children attending school, relatives who precede the recent migrants, and service institutions) (Melville 1980:160).

Review of Relevant Research Literature

Management of Work and Family Responsibilities for Chicana and Mexican Women

Gender models that explain working women's attitudes and behaviors assume that their basic social relationships are determined by the family; the family structure is nuclear and male-headed; their connection to the family is as wife/mother; their social position is determined by the family; their sociopolitical behavior and attitudes are derived from gender, role socialization, family roles, and activities and relationships of household work; and their central life interest is in the family (Feldberg and Glenn 1979). The general assumption is that women's family experiences influence their employment attitudes and behaviors. Nevertheless, these models tend to reflect the experiences of white, leisured women. Segura (1991) criticizes the literature that notes that one of the dominant themes in analyzing women and work is the "guilt" of their employed mothers based on "espousing something different" from their own mothers (Berg 1986). This notion rests on the assumptions that motherhood is a "unilaterally oppressive state"; that employed mothers feel guilt; and that today's employed mothers do not have working mothers (Segura 1991:123). These assumptions are suspect, Segura (1991)

concludes, in as much as large numbers of working-class, immigrant and ethnic women have a long work tradition in the formal and informal economic sectors.

Research also shows that when wives earn a substantial portion of the family income women increase their authority in the family (Baca-Zinn 1975). A few studies have suggested that Chicanas increasingly participate in egalitarian marital arrangements (Ybarra 1982), where decision-making and housework are shared by wife and husband when the wife is employed. However, other studies suggest that even employed Chicanas who describe egalitarian relationships in their marriages do not perceive themselves to have equal influence (Flores-Ortiz 1991). Research also suggests that egalitarian marriages, where the husband does more housework, "marginally" increase women's marital satisfaction (Rosen 1987; Saenz, Goudy and Lorenz 1989). However, Chicanas' struggle to have more egalitarian marriages often leads to marital conflict. Men attempt to compare their wives to other women, as a means of social control (Pesquera 1985). Social control is not only exercised by the husbands, but by female relatives that criticize them "for working outside the home and enjoying it" (Flores-Ortiz 1991:172). This suggests that social control does not only affect marital satisfaction for Chicana workers, but that familial roles or ideology may as well influence the way they perceive themselves as workers.

Commitment and Identification With the Work Role

The work commitment approach was explored in the late sixties and early seventies to explain the labor force behavior of wives. The earliest examinations measured work commitment in terms of future work plans. Sobol (1963) related these work plans to type of

work (i.e. class), plans to have more children, and reasons for working. The results of her study showed that women employed as operatives were unlikely to plan work in the future, and women pregnant at the time of the interview were still less likely to plan future work. The most important variable relating to future work was reasons for working. The reasons for work, in rank order according to their relationship to work commitment (from most committed to least committed to work in the future) were: (1) working to fill a need for accomplishment, (2) working to meet people or to occupy time, (3) helping in family business, (4) working because the family "needs income," (5) working to acquire assets (Sobol 1974: 66).

Haller and Ronmayer in 1971 added a new dimension to the Sobol measurement of work commitment (Sobol 1974). They suggest that if work commitment is to be measured by the length of time a woman plans to work, then one should distinguish between future work expectations and wishes. They found that nonfinancial motivations showed a strong connection with wishes for long-term employment. This connection was extremely high for white-collar workers. For blue-collar workers, however, financially motivated women often are more likely to expect long-term employment. This suggests that strong work commitment is generally related to occupation. However, Haller found some exceptions in women employed in the Austrian textile industry. These women claimed to work for financial reasons, but showed a high work commitment as measured by future work wishes. Generally, they worked for firms in isolated, small communities. Jobs were passed on through the family, and workers lived in an occupational community, where they socialized in off-hours with persons in their own line of work (Sobol 1974:69).

More recent studies of work commitment also include the concept of work identity. An example of this is Pesquera's (1991) study of work commitment and work identity among Chicana professional, clerical and blue-collar workers. Pesquera (1991) relies on Chappell's (1980) analytical distinction between work commitment and work identity. Pesquera (1991:98) notes that, according to Chappell,

> ...commitment to work refers to behavioral factors that include activity within the work role and a determination to continue within that role (Chapell 1980:85). While work commitment refers to role specific behavior, identification with work is more general and subjective. Work identity pertains to the subjective meaning of paid labor in people's lives. It refers to the importance of the work role for a person's sense of self (Chapell 1980:86). It is possible for individuals to hold a high level of work commitment because of economic need, and not highly identify with their jobs.

Pesquera (1991) found that all Chicanas in her study, despite the types of job, shared a strong commitment to work. Regardless of their reasons for entering the labor force, women indicated they expected to work until retirement age, and asserted that they would not quit work even if it was no longer economically necessary. She notes that the strength of the work commitment shared by these women can be traced to their childhood and adolescent work experiences, a strong work ethic developed within their families of origin, their contemporary socioeconomic circumstances, and most important, an ideological commitment to a dual-earner household (Pesquera 1991:107).

The level of work identity, however, was affected by such factors as job status and the reward system for various occupations. Women in high-status employment situations that offer autonomy, greater intrinsic rewards, higher educational training, and more subjective evaluation appear likely to be more identified with their work roles than those in low-status

jobs with limited opportunities and rewards. Pesquera (1991) notes that their role as economic providers was of important significance in the development of a work identity.

Differences and Similarities of Chicana and Mexican Immigrant Women

The concept of acculturation has been frequently used as the major explanatory agent of conjugal role structure in Chicano families, as well as a predictor of both degree and quality of marital satisfaction, work satisfaction, and mental health for Chicanas and Mexican women. Chicana scholars have questioned both utilizations of the acculturation model when it is applied to employed Chicanas. Ybarra (1982), for example, refutes the notion that if Chicano families were changing toward more egalitarian relationships it was principally because they were becoming more acculturated into Anglo-American society, and thus adopting the values and ideals of the Anglo-American family.

In her study of conjugal role structure among a hundred Chicano couples, Ybarra (1982) found that when the wife was employed there was a greater likelihood that household chores and child care would be shared between spouses, and that, in general, they would have a more egalitarian conjugal role structure than couples where the wife was not employed. The results supported her hypothesis that acculturation cannot be considered as the sole and/or major influence of changes occurring within the Chicano family.

Other Chicana scholars have accepted the acculturation model. Flores-Ortiz (1991), for example, accepts the literature that concludes that more acculturated Chicanas, that is, those less familistic and less attached to traditional sex-role expectations, experience greater job satisfaction and less anxiety. Moreover, she notes that these women often report greater marital

difficulty, particularly if their spouses are less acculturated (Flores-Ortiz 1991:154). In her study of levels of acculturation, marital satisfaction, and depression among Chicana workers, Flores-Ortiz (1991) found that a move away from traditional gender role values, i.e. acculturation, was related to marital conflict. The conflict often centered on the wife's involvement with wage labor, and the extent to which her work outside the home detracted from her role as a housekeeper.

The acculturation models in both of the above mentioned studies were applied to Chicanas, but what about Mexican women? Can Mexican women fit or defy acculturation models that imply that Mexican immigrants hold more conservative behaviors and attitudes grounded in traditional Mexican culture? Segura (1991) in her study of motherhood and employment defies the notion that, in terms of motherhood and employment, Mexican women should have more "traditional" ideas about motherhood than U.S.-born Chicanas. That is, since the traditional ideology of motherhood typically refers to women staying home to "mother" children rather than going outside the home to work, Mexican women theoretically should not be as willing to work as Chicanas or American women in general - unless there is severe economic need (Segura 1991:125).

Contrary to the expectations of acculturation models, Segura (1991) found that Mexican women' views of motherhood were more conducive to consistent market presence than those articulated by Chicanas, and she argues that this distinction is rooted in their dissimilar social locations. Segura (1991) thus proposes that Mexican women are socialized to combine work and family, and appear to view employment as part of their familial duties. Chicanas, on the other hand, "raised in a society that celebrates the expressive functions of the

family and obscures its productive economic functions,"(Segura 1991:121) are more likely to experience more ambivalence to full-time employment.

Segura's argument is interesting since it not only questions acculturation models, but also traditional gender models that tend to overlook differences in class and ethnicity. However, as I mentioned before, this approach suggests that Chicanas are raised in a more privileged socio-economic environment than Mexican immigrant women, hence this socio-economic difference accounts for their ability to manage or not the conflicting demands of work and family.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Research Design

The purpose of this study, as mentioned before, is to explore and describe how blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women manage work and family responsibilities. My interest in exploring and describing the "how" (i.e. the process) leads me to approach blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women through a research design that allows for gathering data in order to analyze this process and examine the explanatory models, but not to generalize the findings.

Given my attempts to explore the nature of the management of work and family responsibilities among blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women, a qualitative method proved the most convenient for this study. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990:19), qualitative methods are used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known; or to gain novel and fresh slants on things about which quite a bit is already known. In this study, both of the reasons alluded to by Strauss and Corbin (1990) are applicable since little is known about blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women, and what exists in the literature needs to be revisited.

Several reasons guided the choice of the in-depth interview method to explore the formulated research questions. First, my approach takes into account the historical and

biographical context of the studied women's lives. In depth interviewing can elicit this kind of data, whereas the observer can hardly go back in time to study past events (Taylor and Bogdan 1984:80). Second, the focused open-ended exploratory method allows the researcher to direct the interview in the desired manner, which is in line with the specific interest of this study.

Moreover, the focused open-ended exploratory method also allows the subject to expand. One of the principal strengths of this method is that it generates data in the words of the subject (Pesquera 1985). Finally, this method is useful in describing how women manage work and family responsibilities in their own words and simultaneously test reality and theory.

The Sample

The population under study consists of Chicana and Mexican immigrant women who are married, have at least one child, and work as operatives in the Lower Rio Grande Valley apparel industry. However, because it was impossible to obtain lists of the women workers in the apparel industry in order to generate a random sample, the sample was generated through a non-probability sampling technique that included purposive and "snowball" sampling.

Several characteristics were specified for inclusion in the sample, that is, only Chicana and Mexican immigrant women who at the time of the interview were:

- Married
- Full-time operatives in the apparel industry
- Aged twenty-four and over
- Mothers

Only married women who were full-time employed and had children were included because these characteristics were essential to explore the conflicting demands between their work role and their roles as wives and mothers. Forty women were sought, twenty in each ethnic category and a proportionate number of women between the age intervals of 24-39 and 40-55 in each of these categories in order to draw comparisons between different age groups among both groups of women. However, my intention to generate a sample that included a proportionate number of Chicana and Mexican immigrant women failed.

The sample consists of forty women, twenty-four are Mexican immigrant and sixteen are Chicanas. Twelve (half) Mexican women are between the ages of twenty-four and thirty-nine and the twelve between the ages of forty and fifty-five (other half). Nine Chicanas are between the ages of twenty-four and thirty-nine and only seven Chicanas are between the ages of forty and fifty-five. Nonetheless, comparisons will be made between ethnic and age groups. The problems I encountered in generating my sample are explained in the next section.

Method of Selection

The purposive sampling technique was the most useful for generating a sample with the specific characteristics sought. I contacted employers and/or managers of apparel factories which employ large numbers of Chicana and Mexican immigrant women as operatives, in Edinburg and McAllen, TX. The purpose and method of the study were explained to the employers and/or managers, and they were asked permission for posting a "recruitment announcement" in the workplace. The "recruitment announcement" (see Appendix A) explained the purpose and method of the study as well as the required characteristics of the

participants. I intended to get a response from women who were willing to participate or just curious about the study.

However, only one of the employers accepted to announce my study and only one woman responded to this announcement. In addition, I was not allowed to approach the possible participants in the work place. This not only obstructed my search for participants, but did not allow me to gather impressionistic data about the distribution of Chicanas or Mexican immigrant women in the workplace. In spite of this obstacle, all employers agreed that over half of their work force (approximately sixty percent) were Mexican-born women, and that the remaining were U.S.-born women of Mexican descent.

A "snowball" sampling method was used as a second and desperate step in generating the sample. Participants were asked to recommend others and this process was followed with each subsequent participant. This was the best technique to generate the purposive sample needed because it is the participants who know whether their co-workers fit or do not fit into the theoretically relevant categories. However, after the seventeenth interview, participants were no longer able to recommend other participants[7]. One participant, however, enlightened my search for more participants by recommending other small apparel factories in the area, and suggested that employers would allow me to approach women in their workplace.

Although my initial intention was to generate a homogenous sample that included only women working in large apparel companies, the other twenty-three participants were found in smaller companies. I started my search in the same way, first by contacting employers and/or

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[7]It is interesting to note that most of the women interviewed who work in large apparel factories reported they only communicate with their co-workers during breaks and exclusively work-related. This might partly explain why these women were unable to recommend more participants.

managers of the small shops suggested. I found a very positive response from employers and/or managers and I was allowed to approach the possible participants in the work place at lunch time. The "snowball" sampling technique used before was displaced by approaching all the women at once in their workplace.

This allowed me not only to get a list of all the women interested in participating in the study and setting appointments for the interviews, but also to observe the distribution of Chicana and Mexican immigrant women working in these factories. Once again, employers could not provide reliable data, but as I approached women in the workplace I inquired about their place of birth and their age at the time of immigration to the U.S. Based on my inquiry and observations I could say that about sixty percent of the women were Mexican immigrants and about forty percent were Chicanas.[8]

Generalizability/Limitations

The small sample size (n=40) will allow the exploration of the theoretically relevant categories, but its non random nature by no means guarantee the representativeness of the sample. Hence, generalizations of the findings of this study will not be possible. However for the exploratory and descriptive purpose of the study, the sample will allow us to learn about the work and family lives of blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women of the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

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[8] Based on employers' information, results from my inquiry, and observations, I decided that my own sample's composition - sixty percent Mexican immigrant women and forty percent Chicanas - was more suitable than a proportionate number of women of each ethnic group as originally sought.

The Interview

All interviews were guided by a semi-structured questionnaire intended to explore the formulated research questions. The questionnaire was prepared in both, English and Spanish (see Appendix C) in order to avoid problems of reliability in translating the questions from one language to another. The interview schedule consisted of forty-two background questions and seventy-two open-ended questions. The opened-ended questions focused on the following areas:

- Social and economic conditions and socialization.
- Work histories, labor force behavior, and the role as economic providers.
- Effects of employment in motherhood responsibilities or vice versa.
- Effects of outside employment in the division of household labor.
- Working conditions.

The interviews were conducted either in English or Spanish, according to the preference of the interviewee. All Mexican women preferred the interview in Spanish and all - but one - Chicanas in English. With the exception of only one Chicana who preferred Spanish. However, both languages were used in the interviews with most Chicanas. Each participant was asked to sign a letter of informed consent (see Appendix B) before the interview took place. The length of the interview varied from one to two hours and they were completed in one visit.

Most of the interviews were conducted at the subject's homes, but for convenience (limited time on the part of the subject or place of residence too far away) two interviews were

conducted in public places. The interviews were conducted over a one year period in The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, particularly in Hidalgo County.

Characteristics of the Sample

As determined by the research design, at the time of the interview all of the women in the sample were married, had at least one child, and were employed full-time in the apparel industry. I interviewed twenty-four Mexican immigrant women and sixteen Chicanas between the ages of twenty-four and fifty-five. Half of the Mexican immigrant women in the sample were between the ages of twenty-four and thirty-nine, I will refer here after to these women as younger Mexicans. The other half of Mexican immigrant women in the sample were between the ages of forty and fifty-five, and I will refer to them as older Mexicans. Nine Chicanas in the sample were between the ages of twenty four and thirty-nine and seven more between the ages of forty and fifty-five, I will refer to these women as younger and older Chicanas respectively.

Most Chicanas were born and raised in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Only three younger Chicanas are Mexico-born women raised since preschool years in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. At the time of the interview, two of these women were U.S. citizens and the other was a U.S. resident. More than half of Chicanas are either third generation or their families have always lived in the region. Parents of these Chicanas were either born and raised in the Lower Rio Grande Valley or born elsewhere in Texas and raised in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Other Chicanas are second generation with Mexico-born parents who migrated to the U.S. as young adults. Only the three Mexico-born Chicanas who were raised in the U.S.

are first generation. These women's parents were born in Mexico and migrated with their children to the U.S.

The majority of Mexicans were born and raised in Tamaulipas, Mexico - a state bordering Texas. Others were born and raised in Nuevo Leon, San Luis Potosi and Yucatan, Mexico. Only one younger Mexican was born in Texas but raised in Tamaulipas, Mexico. The majority of the Mexicans' parents were born and raised in Mexico. Only two women said their mothers were born in the Lower Rio Grande Valley but raised in Mexico. Most of the older Mexicans migrated to the United States when they were twenty-one years old or older. The majority of younger Mexicans migrated to the U.S. when they were between the ages of fifteen and twenty.

More than half of older Mexicans reported that their reason for migration was to follow their husbands, and the others for the economic improvement of their children. Almost half of the younger Mexicans, however, reported they migrated to the U.S. for their own economic improvement, and the others to follow their parents, husbands or for the economic improvement of their children. At the time of the interview, the majority of older Mexicans were U.S. citizens and most younger Mexicans were U.S. residents.

Ethnic Identity and Language Skills

The majority of the Mexican women identify themselves as Mexicans. However, a few mentioned they preferred the term Hispanic and one younger Mexican said she identifies with the term Mexican-American. Most of the Mexicans lack English language skills. A few reported they do not understand nor speak English. Almost half reported they do not speak

English, but understand a little. Others reported they understand a lot, but they do not speak English. And only a few reported no problems with the English language (more younger than older women). All Mexicans, however, reported that they felt more comfortable speaking Spanish than English, and the majority said they speak Spanish both at work, with their co-workers and supervisors, and at home. Only a few said they speak both languages at work and home.

Chicanas do not identify themselves with the term Chicana, the majority preferred either the term Mexican-American or Hispanic to identify their own ethnic status. However one reported she preferred the term Mexican and another said she preferred the term American. All Chicanas speak both languages, but the majority reported they feel more comfortable speaking English, than both or Spanish only. Half of Chicanas said they speak both languages at home. Others reported they speak English only, and only one reported speaking Spanish at home. At work, however, most Chicanas said they speak Spanish with their co-workers, and others speak both languages. The majority reported they speak Spanish or both languages with their supervisors. But some, however, preferred to speak English with their supervisors.

Formal Education

All the women in the sample have some years of schooling. The average number of years of schooling for younger Mexicans is 8.7, and two reported having one year of commercial studies or secretarial studies. The average years of schooling for older Mexicans is 8 years. Younger Chicanas have an average number of years of schooling of 11.3. And older Chicanas have an average of 10.3 years of schooling.

The husbands of older Mexicans and younger and older Chicanas have about the same number of years of schooling as their wives. Only younger Mexicans' husbands have more years of schooling than their wives. The average years of schooling for younger Mexican's' husbands is 9.7, one has one year of commercial studies and another a college degree.

Family Background

More than half of the women in the sample come from farm work backgrounds. The majority of older Mexican and Chicana women reported agriculture as their fathers' occupation. Younger Mexican and Chicana women reported agriculture, semi-skilled or operative jobs as their father's occupations. But the overall majority had fathers who were employed in agriculture. All Mexicans reported that in their families their father was the head of the household. On the other hand, a significant number of Chicanas (six) lived in families where the mother was the head of the household and where the father was not present because of death or divorce.

As a consequence, the majority of Chicanas reported their mothers worked. Half of these mothers, however, were employed seasonally. Chicana's full-time employed mothers worked as domestics or operatives. On the other hand, most of the Mexicans' mothers did not work, they were wife/mothers. Only six reported their mothers worked. However most of these mothers worked at home or seasonally.

Mexicans with working mothers believe their mother's work helped them out in terms of having a more comfortable life style. Some Chicanas reported their mother's work was economically important too, but others said that their mother's work taught them to work and

to get ahead in life. None of the women had negative feelings about their mothers' work. They all believe their mothers were good mothers and raised them right.

Most Mexicans reported their mothers took care of them when they were little because their mothers did not work or they worked at home or seasonally. Most Chicanas reported that a female family member took care of them while their mothers worked, and for those whose mothers did not work their mothers took care of them.

In the majority of the Mexican's families, non-working mothers were responsible for household tasks. And most Mexicans were expected to help in household tasks when they were between the ages of six and ten. On the other hand, Chicanas' working mothers had to arrange household tasks in a different way. Some Chicanas reported their mothers were responsible for household tasks, others had a maid or a grandmother to help, and other Chicanas said they were responsible for household tasks while their mothers worked. As most Mexicans, the majority of Chicanas were expected to help in household tasks when they were between the ages of six and ten.

Work Experience

Half of the Mexican women began to work before marriage. The majority of these were younger Mexicans who entered the labor force between the ages of eleven and fifteen. These either worked as seasonal farm workers during vacations or when it was the season, or as domestics or baby-sitters. A few more younger and older Mexicans also entered the labor force before marriage, but they were between the ages of sixteen and twenty when they started to work. Younger Mexicans started working as operatives in the apparel sector and older

Mexicans as janitors or baby-sitters. The majority of these women began to work because of economic reasons, only two older Mexicans said they worked as a distraction.

However, the other half of Mexicans only started to work after marriage. The majority of these were older women who began to work when they were between twenty-one and thirty years old. Most of these women began to work as operatives in the apparel sector, and others worked in the fields. Two older Mexicans began to work when they were thirty years of age or older, and their first job was as operatives of sewing machines. A few younger Mexicans also began to work after marriage, when they were between the ages of twenty-six and thirty, and they also worked in the apparel sector. The majority of these women began to work in order to help their husbands with household expenses or because their husband could not find a good job or were sick and could not work.

On the other hand, the overwhelming majority of Chicanas, irrespective of their age, started to work before marriage. The majority began to work when they were between eleven and fifteen years old. However, a few started to work when they were as young as six years old. The majority began to work in the fields because their parents took them to work. Others worked as secretaries, cashiers or waitresses. These women began to work in order to help their families or to get things their parents could not provide. Only two Chicanas entered the work force after marriage and this took place before their twentieth birthday. One of them said she began to work to help her husband pay for their house and she entered the labor force as operative in the apparel sector. And the other one because her husband could not find a job and she took a job as a cashier

The majority of the women in the sample shared their earnings with their families. When they were single, the majority gave part of their pay-check to one of their parents for household needs and kept the rest for themselves. The younger women employed as family farm workers did not receive their own checks, because the money was given to the head of the family as a unit. One young Mexican said she gave all the money to her mother and asked for money when needed. Only a few younger women who began to work before marriage said they spent their money on themselves. As for the women who started to work after marriage, all of their earnings are shared with the family.

Most of the Mexican women who were single when they began to work said that they took the decision of what to do with their earnings (i.e. sharing their money with the family), except for the few younger women who started to work very young who said their parents decided most of the time. This was the case for most Chicanas, because they began to work very young. Only a few Chicanas said they took the decision of what to do with their earnings. Most of the women who started to work after marriage said that they take the decision of what to do with their money. Some Mexican women said this decision was made by both spouses. And one older Chicana said she gave her money to her husband and he took decisions about how to use that money.

Family Structure

All the women have at least one child. The average number of children for younger Mexicans is 2.7, and for older Mexicans 4.4. Younger Chicanas have an average of 2.6 children and older Chicanas an average of 4.5. Most of the women in the sample had their first

child in the first year of their marriages. Only a few women delayed childbearing until the third or fourth year of marriage (four Mexicans and one Chicana). The median age of the youngest child for younger Mexicans is 6 years and for older Mexicans, 16 years. The median age of the youngest child for younger Chicanas is 5 years and for older Chicanas 15 years.

At the time of the interview, half of the Mexican women lived in households that included parents (husband and wife) and children only. One younger Mexican was living only with her children at the time of the interview because her husband was deported. Half of the younger Mexicans lived in extended households that included grandparents and/or other relatives. Some older Mexicans also lived in extended families that included married children and grandchildren. And two older Mexicans were living only with their husbands. Also half of Chicanas lived in households that only included children and parents. The other half lived in extended households. However, more older than younger Chicanas lived in extended households which include grandparents, married daughters or sons, and/or other relatives.

Most of the Mexicans reported their husbands as the head of household, but others asserted that both spouses were the head of household. Two younger Mexicans who lived at their parents' or in-laws reported a grandparent as the head of the household. On the other hand, only half of Chicanas reported their husbands as the head of household, and almost half asserted they were the head of household. Only one younger Chicana said both spouses were the head of household.

Wives and Husbands Economic Contribution to the Household

At the time of the interview, all the women were employed as operatives in the apparel industry. More than half, however, worked in small shops and at the time of the interview they were working less than forty hours/week (more younger than older women). The others were employed in large apparel factories and, at the time of the interview, they were working full forty hours/week (more older than younger women). Most of their husbands were employed in different blue-collar, service and agricultural occupations (technicians, semi-skilled workers, truck drivers, messengers, janitors and farm workers). However almost half of older Mexican's husbands were not employed at the time of the interview because they were disabled or could not find a job, and a few younger Mexicans' husbands as well. This was the case for a few younger and older Chicanas as well. These women were the sole providers.

At the time of the interview, the majority of the younger Mexicans working in small shops earned less than their husbands. However, one of them earned more than her husband and another one was the only provider because her husband could not find a job. On the other hand, half of the older Mexicans employed in small shops earned less than their husbands, but the other half either were the only providers or earned more than their husbands. The majority of the older Mexicans working in large apparel factories either earned more than their husbands or were the only providers. Only one younger Mexican working in a large apparel factory, however, is the only provider because her husband could not find a job, but the others earned less than their husbands.

The majority of younger Chicanas working in the small shops, as their Mexican counterpart, earned less than their husbands. However, at the time of the interview, two were

the only providers because their husbands could not find a job. Just like their Mexican counterpart, half of the older Chicanas employed in small shops earned less than their husbands, but the other half either were the only providers or earned more than their husbands. All of the older Chicanas working in large apparel factories either earned more than their husbands or earned about the same. And the majority of younger Chicanas working large apparel factories earned about the same as their husbands.

In conclusion, women in the sample earn a substantial portion of the family income or are the sole providers. Their economic contribution is essential for their families and the majority of them work because they have to contribute to household expenses or support their families. How committed and identified women are with their work role will be analyzed in the next chapter to understand how women in this study manage work and family responsibilities.

CHAPTER IV

MANAGEMENT OF WORK AND FAMILIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the main assumptions underlying this study was that blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women are socialized to manage work and family responsibilities. This assumption was based on the belief that large numbers of working-class women have long traditions of working in the formal and informal economic sectors, thus they are likely to traditionally identify with both, work and familial roles. However, an important household structural difference was found between the studied Chicanas and Mexican immigrant women.

The majority of Chicanas in the sample grew up in families where the mother worked or was the head of the household, while most Mexicans grew up in families where mothers did not work. In addition, most Chicanas started to work before marriage, in contrast to only half of the Mexicans. In other words, Chicanas were socialized to manage work and family responsibilities, while Mexicans were socialized to reproduce the traditional division of labor.

This important structural difference shaped their expectations of combining work and family when married. Most Mexicans did not expect to combine work and family because they expected to reproduce their mother's lives. This was particularly important

for older Mexicans. Fanny,[9] an older Mexican, remembers how things used to be in Mexico at the time she got married:

> We didn't think of that. Before, in Mexico, the mother didn't work, that meant a loss of prestige for the father or husband.

More younger Mexicans, however, expected to combine work and family even when they did not have working mothers. It is interesting to note that these younger women were employed before marriage, and their early introduction to the labor force was an important factor in shaping their expectations. Consuelo, a younger Mexican, tells how important working was to her:

> I never thought to stop working. I didn't get used to being at home, I was used to earn my own money and whatever money I got was to buy my clothes.

Most Chicanas, socialized to manage work and family responsibilities and with a long working tradition of their own, expected to combine work and family when married. Sylvia, a younger Chicana, tells how her early introduction to the labor force has influenced her life:

> I guess since my mom put me to work very young I've always known I was going to work. I've never been the housewife type. I've always had other jobs, working, juggling in life.

Although most Chicanas had working mothers, some older Chicanas did not expect to combine work and family as did their Mexican counterpart. Ericka, an older Chicana, said:

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[9] This and all the other names appearing in this chapter are fictitious.

> I thought that I wasn't going to work and that I was going to stay at home with the children.

On the other hand, some younger Chicanas who did not have working mothers, but who started to work before marriage, expected to combine work and family as did their Mexican counterpart. Claudia, a younger Chicana, said:

> Of course I expected to work. I thought: "How am I going to afford a house if I don't help?!"

Despite the differences in role expectations among the women in the sample, both groups of women were able to successfully combine work, family responsibilities, and identity investment. Our second assumption was only partially confirmed, since working women in the sample relied on several factors to manage work and family responsibilities. Initially, we assumed that the process through which blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women manage work and family responsibilities was primarily unidimensional. This unidimensional assumption implied that if women view their work role as a means of survival for the family, they would likely perceive their outside employment only as part of their familial responsibility. This would result in the transformation of the work role into a family role, making it easier to manage work and family responsibilities by reducing commitment to the work role.

Our data, however, leads us to propose a multi-dimensional analysis. The purpose of this study, then, is to describe the processes through which blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women manage work and family responsibilities. These processes will be analyzed along three main dimensions. The next section will address their *work role vis*

a vis their familial roles in order to present an over all analysis of the processes through which they reconcile the competing demands of work and family. In the second and third sections, the *mother role* and the *housewife role* are isolated to better understand these processes.

Work Role: Familial Roles and Work Commitment and Identification

Familial roles or ideologies have a strong influence on the willingness to attain employment and sustain a work role for the majority of the women interviewed. This was evidenced by their labor force behavior. Although the majority of Chicanas started working before marriage, in contrast to only half of the Mexican women in the sample, the majority of the women, irrespective of their age, either stopped working when they got married or to take care of their children. Alicia, an older Chicana, explains why she stopped working after marriage in the following statement:

> I stopped working when I got married because my husband didn't want me to work. Then, the girl was small and I couldn't leave her. In total I didn't work for 8 years, till my girl was at school.

Brenda, a younger Mexican, explains how the difficulties to find someone trustworthy to take care of her children was a reason to keep her from working in several occasions:

> When the girl was 6 months old she got sick and I stopped working for two years. Then, I went back to work but stopped working again when my boy was born and we moved to San Antonio. I stayed with my boy for those two years because I didn't know anybody there. When we came back to the Valley I went back to work, but my mom got sick and I didn't have anyone with whom to leave my boy, so I stopped working again.

Not all the women in the sample who started to work before marriage have stopped working for familial reasons. A few Mexicans reported not having the proper papers to work in the U.S., lay-offs, and time-lived in Mexico as reasons for not working. Lay-offs was another reason for Chicanas to stop working. Only one young Mexican has been continuously employed, in contrast to four Chicanas who started working before marriage and have been continuously employed.

In addition to the women who started to work before marriage, but who stopped working for familial reasons, there is another group of women who started to work only after marriage. Only two Chicanas in contrast to half of the Mexicans in the sample started to work only after marriage. This group of women also showed a strong familial ideology in their labor force behavior. They either started to work when their children were already of school-age or stopped working to have their children and/or take care of their children. Fanny, an older Mexican, started to work after marriage but had to stop working in two occasions because of the difficulties she had in finding someone to take care of her children:

> I stopped working for four years because I had a lot of trouble with my girls who were little and I didn't have someone to take care of them. I went back to work, but then my little one was born and I had the same problem, so I stopped working for two years to take care of him.

Victoria, a younger Chicana, tells how she would stop working every time she had a baby in the following statement:

> Every time I had a baby I stayed home for them, four years for the first two and two years for the last one.

A few of the women who started to work after marriage have been continuously employed. However, the majority of these women started working when their children were either of school-age or old enough to take care of themselves. These women wanted to help their husbands, felt their children did not need them at home all day long anymore, and wanted to feel useful. Ivvone a younger Mexican, tells how she decided to start working in the following statement:

> I started working to help my husband. My boy was at school all day long and I wanted to do something.

Although the labor force behavior of the majority of the women in the sample has been shaped by familial ideology, most of the women re- entered or entered the labor force as full-time operatives because the family needed the money. A few, however, reported they were bored at home or felt useless. Lisa, a younger Chicana, combines both reasons in the following statement:

> I found that I had too much time on my hands. I felt kind of depressed because I wasn't bringing anything to the household when I knew it was needed, I was feeling useless.

It is interesting to note that once full-time employed, the majority of the women in the sample expected to work as long as they were able to do so. This was particularly the case for older women. More younger women, however, gave the specific number of years they expected to work (ranging from 0 to 15) for different reasons and future expectations. For most of these women, their future work plans were determined by the present economic situation of their families and the age of their children. Claudia, a

younger Chicana, has only one child and plans to have more. She talks about her future work expectations in the following statement:

> I will work one or two more years, after that I will stay at home to take care of the children I plan to have, and since we will already have our own house, one check will be enough.

The economic factor seems to be important for both groups of women to consider a full or part-time job as well. Most women, irrespective of their age, prefer a full-time job because they can earn more money than with a part-time job. Estela, an older Chicana, expressed how in her present situation she prefers a full-time job, but she also retrospectively notes that she would still have preferred a full-time job if her children were young:

> I prefer full-time, because I need to work very badly. If it wasn't for the money I would prefer a part-time job. It's not because my children are now grown ups, if you had asked me this when my children were babies I would have answered the same. I don't like to depend on welfare or food stamps like my mother did.

For Brenda, a younger Mexican, a part-time job not only means less money but also time out of the house. She explains why a part-time job is not worthy in the following statement:

> I prefer a full-time job. A part-time would give me more liberty for the house, but you don't make much money and it takes you out of the house anyway.

Although for most of the women in the sample the economic factor was important to determine their future work expectations and their preference for a part or full-time job, an important difference among both groups of women was found when asked about their

willingness to continue being employed even if it was no longer economically necessary. The majority of Chicanas showed a strong commitment to work when they asserted they would continue working because they feel good working. Sylvia, a younger Chicana, said she would feel useless if she stopped working:

> If I stopped working I would feel useless, I need to be doing...and they tell me: "With four children that's a lot of work!" But they go to school, I don't have them with me eight hours of the day.

Only a few Chicanas said they would quit work if it was no longer economically necessary, in contrast to most Mexicans who showed a weak work commitment when asked the same question. Most Mexicans said they would quit work to take care of the house and children. Consuelo, a younger Mexican, tells how difficult is for her to be a good mother when she works:

> I would quit and I would play more with my children because when you are working you come back home tired and in a bad mood, and you don't feel like being with them [children]. I would have hobbies, I would study something.

Women in the sample did not show a strong work commitment in their willingness to attain and sustain employment throughout their lives. Even when more Chicanas than Mexicans expected to combine work and family when married, the level of work commitment for both groups of women was shaped by familial roles/ideology (i.e. stop working to take care of children or start working when children were already at school) and their economic reasons to attain full-time employment. However, once full-time employed for economic reasons, Chicanas developed a strong work commitment in which their willingness to continue employed was no longer solely for economic reasons.

Nonetheless, most of the women in the sample perceive their work as important not only for the family economic gain, but for personal benefits as well. In other words, women identify with their work role because it gives them pride, self-esteem, or a degree of economic independence. The majority of Mexicans identify with their work role because it has given them self-esteem and pride. Tere, an older Mexican, takes pride in her role as economic provider in the next statement:

> I'm proud to earn my own money. I can do what I want with the money I earn. I buy my daughters whatever they want. I found myself in a difficult situation, but I look forward.

Consuelo, a younger Mexican, went further to say that her work made her feel independent:

> I feel good about earning my own money. It feels good to be independent from someone else, to know that you can support yourself on your own.

It is interesting to note that only a few Mexicans reported that their work gave them a degree of economic independence, in contrast to most Chicanas for whom feeling independent was more important in determining their identification with their work role than feeling good about working and contributing to the household. Victoria, a younger Chicana, said:

> I can do as I want, I don't have to ask for money. I have control of the money and I do as I want, I'm self-dependent I guess.

Although the majority of the women in the sample asserted that they get personal benefits from their work role, more than half of the women showed problems in reconciling the "competing urgencies" of work and family. In other words, their inner

traditional social and cultural expectations to reproduce traditional domestic roles makes them perceive their work only as helping their husbands, and not as part of their familial obligation (i.e. family role), as originally expected. More Mexican women than Chicanas, however, view their work only as helping their husbands. Brenda, a younger Mexican, is clear about her internalized traditional expectations in the following statement:

> It's a way to help my husband because I don't think the obligation is mine, it's his.

Given the way they perceive their work role, an overwhelming majority of Mexicans believe that their role as wife/mother is more important than their work role. Moreover, half of Mexicans believe their work has a negative impact on family well-being. Luz, an older Mexican, talks about her role priorities in the following statement:

> Being a wife and a mother because that's the way it should be, first is the obligation of the children and husband, and, then, work. I think my work was negative for my children when they were little, because now I realize that they needed me there.

Nonetheless, half of the Mexicans believe their work is not negative for family well being. Consuelo, a younger Mexican, believes being a wife and a mother is more important but does not believe her work is negative. She tells how she combines work and family in the following statement:

> Being a wife and a mother is more important, but it's not negative for my family that I work. You just have to find time to do everything, to work and spend time with your children.

On the other hand, most Chicanas view their economic contribution as part of their obligation to their families. They perceive their work as helping the family out, it is their obligation because the children are theirs. In Hortencia's words: "It's part of my

obligation, the kids are mine." However, more than half of Chicanas believe their role as wife/mother is more important than their work role, but the majority believe their work is not negative for family well-being. Patricia, a younger Chicana, believes being a wife/mother is more important because sometimes children lack attention, but she does not believe her work is negative for her family:

> Being a wife and a mother is more important to me, because we were nine kids. When you come from a large family sometimes you lack attention, you grow up and you want that your children and husband get the attention you didn't get. But I don't think my work is negative, I don't think they lack attention because my husband gets home at 8:00, I get out at 4:00, the girl gets to my mom's and has fun with her cousins while I pick her up, I don't think it affects any.

Interestingly, almost half of Chicanas believe their work role is as important as their wife/mother role, and they do not see their work as negative for their family. Catalina, an older Chicana, explains why both roles are important to her:

> Both roles are important, you can't be a good mother and wife without being able to provide. I don't think my work is negative for my family, I have responsible people taking care of my kids.

Women in the sample did not show a strong work commitment in their willingness to attain and sustain employment throughout their lives. Even when more Chicanas than Mexicans expected to combine work and family when married, the level of work commitment for both groups of women was shaped by familial roles/ideology (i.e. stop working to take care of children or start working when children were already at school) and their economic reasons to attain full-time employment. However, once full-time employed for economic reasons, Chicanas developed a strong work commitment in which their willingness to continue employed was no longer solely for economic reasons.

Internalized traditional social and cultural expectations to reproduce traditional domestic roles shaped the way most Mexicans identify with their work role. The majority of them identify primarily with their wife/mother role and perceive their economic contribution as "helping their husbands." This perception shapes in turn the personal benefits they gain from their work. The majority of Mexicans gained self-esteem and pride from their role as economic providers. They feel good about working and helping their husbands through their economic contribution to the household.

For most Chicanas, on the other hand, internalized social and cultural expectations had more to do with reproducing the life style in which they were socialized, where the mother worked to help the family and where mother's work was part of her familial duties. Although slightly over a half of these women identify primarily with their wife/mother role, it can not be ignored that almost half identify with both, wife/mother and work, roles. Contrary to the Mexicans, who perceive their work as "helping their husbands," Chicanas are more likely to define the work role as an extension of familial obligations. Thus, they blend work and family roles.

Mother Role: Strategies to Combine Motherhood and Employment

The purpose in isolating the mother role is to better understand the process through which women in the sample manage work and mothering responsibilities. It is important to note that, despite the fact that all the women in the sample are presently employed mothers, women in the sample were not always employed mothers. Hence, in

this section I deal with employed and non-employed mothers,[10] describing motherhood/ related attitudes and behaviors in the present and the past of the women interviewed. For my analysis, I rely on Segura's (1991) conceptual distinction between voluntary non-employed mothers, involuntary non-employed mothers, ambivalent employed mothers and non-ambivalent employed mothers. According to Segura, voluntary non-employed mothers remain out of the labor force by choice in order to stay at home to care for preschool and/or elementary school-age children, and they assert that motherhood requires staying home with the children; involuntary non-employed mothers care full time for their children, want to be employed but they either cannot secure the job they want and/or they feel pressured to be at home mothering full-time; ambivalent employed mothers believe that employment interferes with motherhood and feel "guilty" when they work outside the home; and non-ambivalent employed mothers view employment and motherhood as compatible social dynamics irrespective of the age of their children, although some believe employment could be problematic if a family member could not take care of their children (Segura 1991:127-128).

Non-Employed Mothers: Voluntary and Involuntary

Women in the sample have not always been employed mothers. Half of the women in the sample either remained out of the labor force by choice in order to stay at home to care for pre-school age or older children (i.e. voluntary non-employed mothers) or remained out of the labor force when their children were pre-school age or older because

[10] In this study, the term non employed mother refers to women who were not employed when their children were of pre-school age.

they either could not secure the job they wanted and/or they felt pressured to be at home mothering full-time (i.e. involuntary non-employed mothers). Figure 1 shows the percentage of non-employed mothers in the sample by ethnic group, as well as their voluntary or involuntary non-employed status.

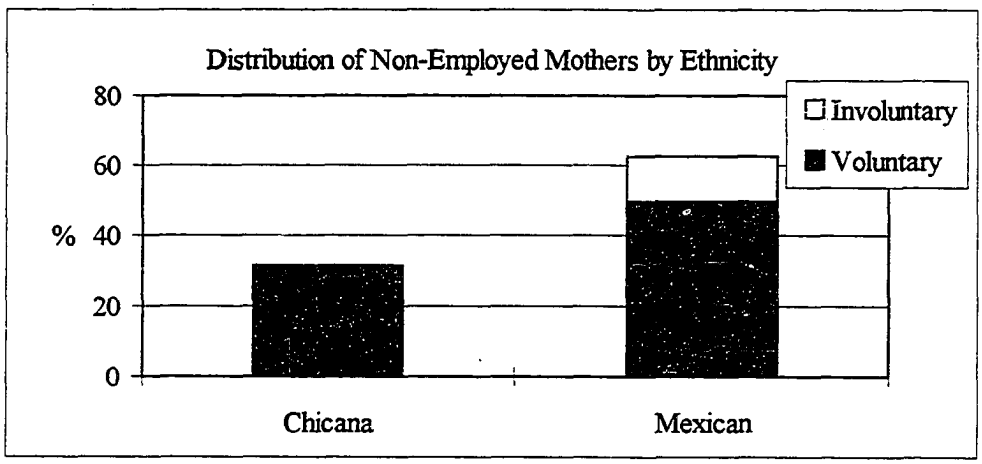

Figure 1

As shown in Figure 1, over sixty percent of the Mexicans in the sample were either voluntary or involuntary non-employed mothers at one time. However, only over ten percent of these women fall into the category of involuntary non-employed mothers, and fifty percent fall into the category of voluntary non-employed mothers - corroborating the importance Mexicans give to the mother role over the work role, discussed in the previous section. On the other hand, only over thirty percent of the Chicanas in the sample fall into the category of voluntary non-employed mothers and none of them fall into the category of involuntary non-employed mother.

When it comes to being a voluntary or an involuntary non-employed mother, women's age seems to be important for Mexican women, as was the case for their expectations to combine work and family when married, discussed in the introduction to

this chapter. Chicanas show a different pattern. None of them fall into the category of involuntary non-employed mothers, and when it comes to being a voluntary non-employed mother, older and younger women are evenly distributed. Figure 2 shows the percentage of non-employed mothers in the sample by ethnic and age group, as well as their voluntary or involuntary non-employed status.

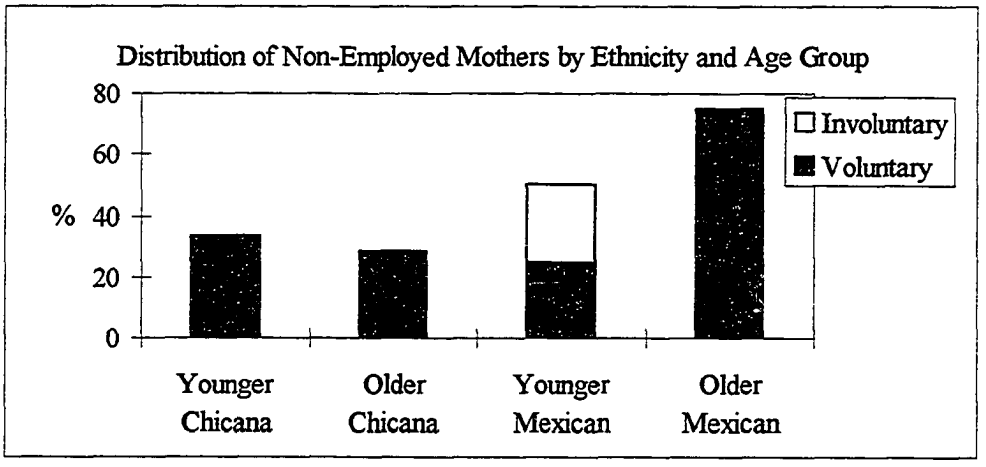

Figure 2

As shown in figure 2, over seventy percent of the older Mexicans in the sample are voluntary non-employed mothers. On the other hand, only over twenty percent of the younger Mexicans in the sample are voluntary non-employed mothers, and over twenty percent more of these are involuntary non-employed mothers. Chicanas show a different pattern. Figure 2 shows that older and younger Chicanas are evenly distributed in the category of voluntary non-employed mothers. Thirty percent of older Chicanas in the sample are voluntary non-employed mothers, and only over thirty percent of younger Chicanas fall into the same category. None of the Chicanas in the sample, however, fall into the category of involuntary non-employed mothers.

Voluntary Non-Employed Mothers' Attitudes

The category of voluntary non-employed mothers, as mentioned before, includes women who remained out of the labor force by choice in order to stay at home to care for pre-school age or older children. We can identify three categories of voluntary non-employed mothers in the sample: (1) Women who started working before marriage who stopped working when they got married and reincorporated to the labor force when their youngest child was between the ages of two and five; (2) Women who started working after marriage and whose children were either old enough to care for themselves or the youngest was between the ages of two and five; (3) Women who started or continued working after marriage and who stopped working to have or care for their infants.

Mexican voluntary non-employed mothers fall into one or another of the above mentioned categories depending on their age group. For example, older Mexicans tend to fall into the second category and younger Mexicans in the sample tend to fall into the first and second categories. Chicanas show a different pattern. They tend to fall into the first and third categories. Included in this third category, for example, are a few Chicanas who started working after marriage, stopped working to have children and reincorporated when their youngest child was between the ages of two and five. A few stopped working to have and care for their infants.

It is interesting to note that despite their decision to stay at home to care for pre-school children, not all of the voluntary non-employed mothers in the sample assert that motherhood requires staying home with the children. The majority of voluntary non-employed Mexican mothers believe that women should stay at home for pre-school age

children. However, some of them acknowledged that depending on the economic situation of the couple and on the people who could take care of the children, women could work even if the children were months old. Alejandra, a voluntary non-employed older Mexican, combines both reasons to assert that women with pre-school age children can work:

> If it's necessary that they [women] work, they can work even if the children are months old, but they have to be sure that their children are in good hands.

The majority of voluntary non-employed Chicanas, in contrast to only some of their Mexican counterpart, acknowledged that the economic situation of the couple is an important factor for women to work irrespective of the age of the children. Flor, a voluntary non-employed older Chicana, does not know if it is good to leave the children when they are infants, but she notes that the economic factor is a good reason to do so in the next statement:

> A lot of mothers have to keep up with payments. I don't know if it's good, but they have to.

In addition, more than half of voluntary non-employed Mexicans believe that working mothers are as good mothers as those who stay at home. Margarita, an older Mexican, said:

> Yes, there might be one or two who aren't [good mothers], but I think that there are better mothers who work than those who don't work, because they put all their efforts in working for their children, to educate them and get them clothes.

On the other hand, all voluntary non-employed Chicanas believe that working mothers are as good mothers as those who stay at home. Victoria, a voluntary non-employed younger Chicana, half jokingly explains the difference between staying at home and working to provide for the family in the following statement:

> Staying home is a full time responsibility. You stay home and you do housework, kids get home, feed them, do homework, husband comes home and feed him, work, clean, go to bed, fulfill your obligation as a woman... Y nosotros, we live the feed, feed, feed, work, work, work, and then we come home and fulfill... I think working mothers are a hundred percent good, they work because of them, because they need to provide. And I believe that my children when they grow they will say, my mom worked and not she was just there, dependent.

Despite their positive feelings about motherhood and employment, voluntary non-employed mothers decided to stay out of the labor force to take care of their children. A few younger Mexicans, however, have been involuntary non-employed at times when their children were pre-school age.

Involuntary Non-Employed Mothers' Attitudes

Figure 2 shows that almost thirty percent of non-employed younger Mexicans are involuntary non-employed mothers. These involuntary non-employed mothers remained out of the labor force when their children were pre-school age or older either for not having the proper papers to work in the U.S. or due to lay-offs. At an ideological level, these involuntary non-employed mothers view motherhood and employment as compatible social dynamics. They believe that employed mothers are as good as those who stay at

home. In Virginia's words: "I think it's the same, we are all mothers and I think it's the same."

Involuntary non-employed mothers in the sample, however, value the time they spent with their children when they were little. These women reported that the age of the children is an important factor for women to consider full-time employment although their own reasons to quit work were not family related. Virginia did not work when her children were pre-school age because she did not have the proper papers to work in the U.S. Given her circumstance, she spent a lot of time at home with her children and how she values this time is reflected in the next statement:

> As I see it now, I think that when they are babies one should be with them, when they are 4 or 5 years old then you can start looking for a job, because they are little, they get sick easily.

Employed Mothers: Ambivalent and Non-Ambivalent

The majority of Chicanas in the sample and some of the Mexicans, however, have been working mothers. Most Chicanas, irrespective of their age, have been employed mothers. Those who started working before marriage and stopped working when married reincorporated to the labor force when their first child was little, but had their other children while working. And others have been continuously employed. This reflects their belief, discussed in the previous section, that their mother and work roles are as well as important for Chicanas.

On the other hand, some of the Mexicans have also been employed mothers. But, are these ambivalent or non-ambivalent employed mothers? Rephrasing the question: Do

these women believe that employment interferes with motherhood and feel "guilty" when they work outside the home (i.e. ambivalent) or do these women view employment and motherhood as compatible social dynamics irrespective of the age of their children, although some believe employment could be problematic if a family member could not take care of their children (i.e. non-ambivalent)? Figure 3 shows the percentage of employed mothers in the sample by ethnic group and the "ambivalence"[11] or non-ambivalence reported by both groups of women.

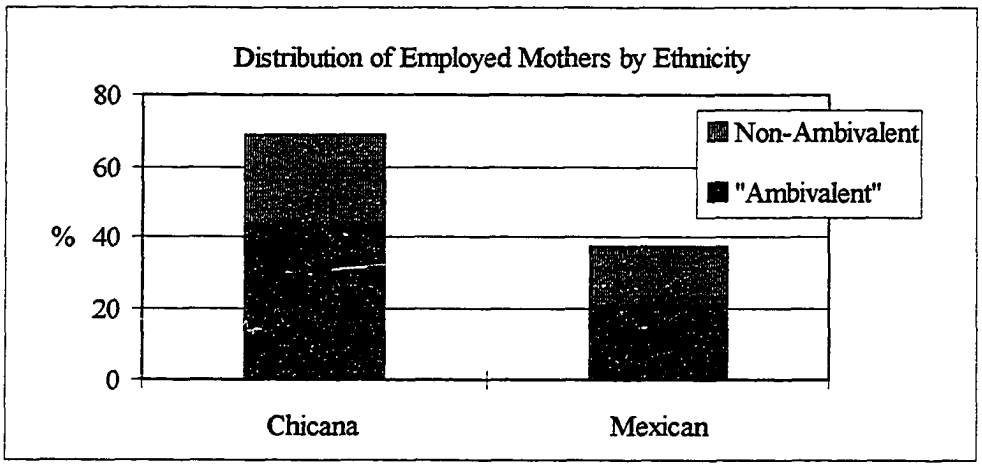

Figure 3

Figure 3 shows that the majority of employed mothers in the sample are "ambivalent" employed mothers. Over forty percent of Chicanas and over twenty percent of Mexicans in the sample expressed guilt feelings about leaving their children in the care of others while they worked. On the other hand, over twenty percent of Chicanas and less than twenty percent of Mexicans in the sample did not express guilt feelings, and these

[11] I quoted the word ambivalence because despite the guilt feelings reported by the majority of the employed mothers in the sample, these women are not totally ambivalent. I will further explain the "ambivalence" of these employed mothers later in this section.

women are considered non-ambivalent employed mothers. It is interesting to note that the "ambivalence" or non-ambivalence of both groups of women was related to age group. Figure 4 shows the percentage of employed mothers by ethnicity, age group, and their "ambivalent" or non-ambivalent status.

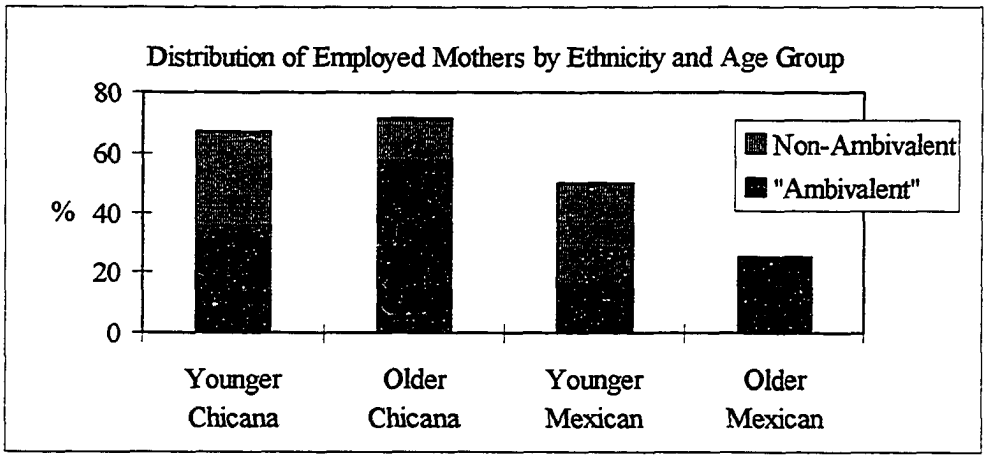

Figure 4

As shown in figure 4, more older than younger women reported guilt feelings. Almost sixty percent of older Chicanas and over twenty percent of older Mexicans (all of the older Mexican employed mothers) are considered "ambivalent" employed mothers. On the other hand, more younger women did not express guilt feelings. Over thirty percent of both younger Chicanas and Mexicans are considered non-ambivalent employed mothers.

"Ambivalent" Employed Mothers' Attitudes

As mentioned before, more than half of the Mexican employed mothers expressed guilt feelings, as well as the majority of Chicana employed mothers. These women either feel guilty about leaving their children in the care of others, felt guilty at the beginning but they got used to it, or do not feel guilty but they worry about their children or feel sad to

leave them behind. Priscila, a younger Chicana, expressed her guilt feelings in the next statement:

> Yes, I feel guilty because I think they are not getting the care I would give them.

Camila, a younger Mexican employed mother, asserts she does not feel guilty, but expressed her discomfort and worry about not being there with her children:

> I don't feel guilty, but I feel uncomfortable because they are very anxious and I fear that something will happen to them while I'm not there. But I know they are comfortable and that calms me down.

In addition, some of the Mexican employed mothers who expressed guilt feelings believe they do not spend enough time with their children, and they regret the limited time they can spend with them. Brenda, a younger Mexican, tells about the limited time she can spend with her children:

> When you get home from work you have very little time and you have to check that they take a shower, that they eat supper, you get their things ready for the next day...that is, you don't dedicate a time for them personally, you only prepare everything for them, but not to their persons, what did they do, if they had a good time at school. The afternoon is gone and you didn't ask them. When I found myself with this little time I regret about working, but I forget it the next day.

As their Mexican counterpart, some of the Chicana employed mothers who expressed guilt feelings believe they do not spend or did not spend enough time with their children, and they also regret. Selia, an older Chicana, regrets the limited time she spent with her children and expresses her guilt feelings in the next statement:

> Now I regret...now that I'm having problems with my youngest one. I blame myself, and people around tell me that if I had not worked...

However, the majority of the employed mothers who expressed guilt feelings believe that work and motherhood are compatible social dynamics. The majority of these women, for example, reported that working mothers are as good mothers as those who stay at home. Only one of these women believes that those mothers who stay at home are better mothers. However, in the particular case of Luz, an older Mexican employed mother, her guilt feelings as well as her perception that mothers who stay at home are better mothers is only a recent event. She developed these feelings once her children grew older. Luz explains how her perception of being a good mother changed over time in the following statement:

> I believe that those [mothers] who stay at home are better because they can give all the attention to their children, because now I realize that my children lacked attention...at that time I didn't feel that bad about working, because I knew they were well-taken care of, I worked for them and if I stayed home they would suffer because they lacked things.

On the other hand, all Chicanas who reported guilt feelings believe that working mothers are as good mothers as those who stay at home. These women believe that people who can do both things are great, and that it is the same because both have the same obligation to the family. In Ericka's words:

> It's the same because even when you are working you have the same obligation to the family, and you get home to do what all mothers do at home, attend the children, fix lunch...

Moreover, the majority of employed mothers who reported guilt feelings believe that a mother can work irrespective of the age of the children. Most Mexicans believe that when the mother needs to work, the age of the children is not an important factor for

women to stay at home. Only one of them asserted that leaving a pre-school child in the care of others could be problematic. Sandra, a younger Mexican, talks about the difficulties of leaving a baby in the care of others in the following statement:

> ... when they are babies it's very difficult, before they are a year old it's more difficult for the mother because you don't know how are they going to treat your baby, when they're older that's different.

As their Mexican counterpart, the majority of Chicana employed mothers who expressed guilt feelings believe that a mother can work irrespective of the age of the children. For the majority of these women, if the mother needed to work to help the family it was fine for them to work. Only Hortencia, a younger Chicana who expressed guilt feelings, was undecided but finally asserted that leaving a pre-school child in the care of others is not right in the following statement:

> I don't know... I think it depends on how many hours you work... I don't know... I don't think it's right, you don't see them grow.

The majority of the employed mothers in the sample who expressed guilt feelings leave their kids in the care of a family member - grandmother, aunt or husband. Most of them believe that employment could be problematic if a family member could not take care of the children. For the majority of Mexicans the problem would be so that they would have to stop working. For these women, not having a family member taking care of their children could be problematic because they don't trust strangers, their husbands would not have consented that they worked if someone else would have to take care of the children, or they could not afford paying someone to take care of the children.

For the majority of Chicanas, not having a family member taking care of the children could be problematic because they do not trust strangers or they think it is difficult to find a sitter. However, some of them leave their children in day-care or with a baby sitter. These women do not believe that it would be problematic not having a family member taking care of their children. Even one Chicana who presently has a family member taking care of her children, believes that it would not be problematic. In Estela's words: "I have them [family to take care of her children], but didn't have to be family."

Despite the guilt feeling expressed by almost half of the Mexican employed mothers and by the majority of the Chicana employed mothers, these women can not be considered totally ambivalent employed mothers, but neither totally non-ambivalent employed mothers. These "ambivalent" employed mothers showed ambivalence in their guilt feelings, but showed non-ambivalence when they asserted that working mothers are as good mothers are those who stay at home and that women can be employed irrespective of the age of their children. The majority of these women, however, believe that employment could be problematic if a family member could not take care of their children.

Non-Ambivalent Employed Mothers' Attitudes

As shown in Figure 3, less than half of Mexican and Chicana employed mothers are considered non-ambivalent employed mothers. These women did not express guilt feelings and the majority believe they spend enough time with their children. The majority of these women assert that working mothers are as good mothers as those who stay at

home. However, a few Mexicans reported contradictory feelings and asserted that it is difficult to be a good mother when the mother is employed.

For Laura, a younger Mexican, employed mothers have to demand their children to think as adults and understand that their mother has to work. Laura explains how she feels about being an employed mother and how she manages the situation:

> Sometimes I feel bad, but I explain them the best way I can, that they need things that their dad on his own can't give them, and that I work so that they can have them.

In addition, the majority of non-ambivalent employed mothers believe that women can be employed irrespective of the age of the children. All Chicanas who did not express guilt feelings believe women can work irrespective of the age of the children. A few of their Mexican counterparts, however, believe that when children are little they need the care of the mother. In Consuelo's words: "When they are little and they can't talk it is better for the mother to take care of them."

Non-ambivalent employed mothers in the sample leave their kids in the care of a family member -grandmother, aunt or husband. Only a few Chicanas leave their children in day-care or with a baby sitter. For Chicana non-ambivalent employed mothers, not having a family member taking care of their children is not a problem, and even one of them who leaves her children with a grandparent said it would not be problematic. In Catalina's words: "There's always day-care."

However, for the majority of non-ambivalent employed Mexican mothers, employment could be problematic if a family member could not take care of the children because they do not trust strangers or do not like day-care. Some of these women said

that they would worry a lot, for others the problem would be so that they would have to stop working. Laura explains how difficult it would be for her in the following statement:

> First of all you don't know who is going to take care of your children, and you can't trust those you bring home and how they are going to take care of your children.

Of the Mexican employed mothers who did not express guilt feelings, only a few either indicated contradictory feelings about being employed mothers or mentioned children's age as an important factor for women in attaining full-time employment. The majority of these women, however, can be considered non-ambivalent employed mothers who view employment and motherhood as compatible social dynamics irrespective of the age of their children, although the majority believe employment could be problematic if a family member could not take care of their children. On the other hand, all Chicana employed mothers who did not express guilt feelings can be considered non-ambivalent employed mothers with only some believing that employment could be problematic if a family member could not take care of the children.

By and large, women in the sample who were able to combine work and mothering responsibilities, have to struggle to combine outside work with household responsibilities. The next section addresses the impact of women's outside employment in the distribution of household labor, parenting responsibilities, and decision making when women are employed.

Housewife Role: The Effects of Wives Outside Employment in the Distribution of Household Labor, Parenting Responsibilities and Decision Making

The purpose in isolating the housewife role is to analyze the impact of women's outside employment in the division of household labor, parenting responsibilities and decision making. Research on Chicano families where the wife is employed shows that when wives earn a substantial portion of the family income, their authority in the family increases (Baca-Zinn 1975) and this, in turn, shapes the distribution of household labor (Pesquera 1993). Furthermore, a few studies on Chicano families have suggested that Chicanas increasingly participate in egalitarian marital arrangements (Ybarra 1982, Baca-Zinn 1980), where decision-making, parenting responsibilities and housework are shared by wife and husband when the wife is employed.

The above mentioned studies suggest that women's outside employment increase husbands involvement in household labor and parenting responsibilities, and women's economic contribution to the household increase their involvement in decision making. However, Pesquera (1993) notes that research on the division of household labor demonstrates that married women continue to perform all or most household tasks even when they are employed. The double shift might be very conflicting for working women. However, research suggests that women's conflicting expectations at home and the work place might be reduced by negotiating household responsibilities with their husbands and children (Blood and Wolfe 1960, Scanzoni 1970, Safilios-Rothschild 1970).

Household Tasks Arrangements

Women in the sample showed different strategies to manage the conflicting demands of work and household tasks responsibilities. However, none of the household tasks arrangements described by the women in the sample was totally egalitarian. For women who negotiate household tasks with their husbands, husband's help does not mean that they get equally involved in the tasks as their wives. In addition, other women in the sample negotiate household tasks with other family members different than their husband and even their children. And others continue to perform all or most of the tasks. Figure 5 shows the different tasks arrangements described by the women in the sample and the percentage of women who described these arrangements by ethnic group.

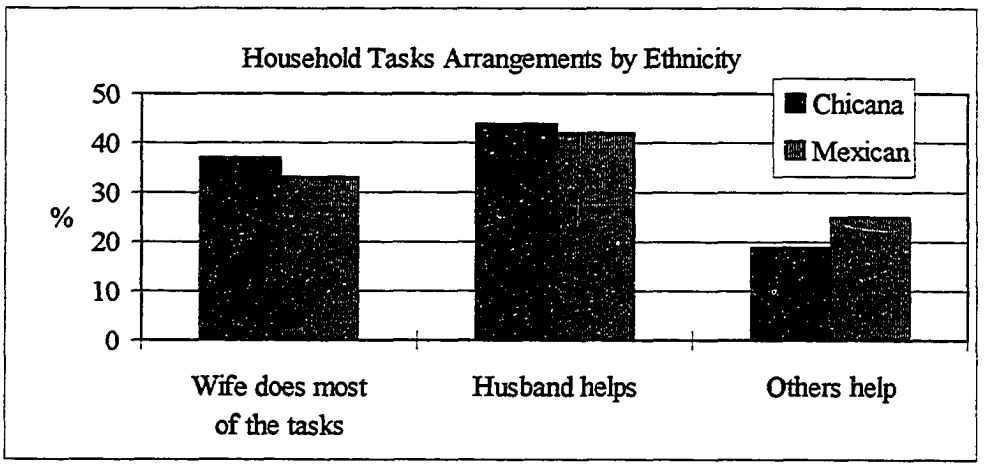

Figure 5*

* Labels for the categories listed in Figure 5 may not appear to be mutually exclusive. However, these labels should be interpreted as follows: <Wife does most of the tasks> refers to arrangements where the wife is responsible for over 90 percent of all the tasks; <Husband helps> refers to those arrangements where the husband shares responsibilities with wife and other family members; and <Others help> refers to those arrangements where the wife shares responsibilities with a family member, but the husband does not help at all. This explanation is applicable for the labels in Figures 6, 7 and 8.

As shown in figure 5, over thirty percent of both Chicana and Mexican women in the sample continue to perform all or most household tasks even when they are employed. However, close to fifty percent of both groups of women described semi-egalitarian household tasks arrangements where the husband helps. And an additional group of women described household tasks arrangements where the husband does not help, but they were not the only person responsible for all the tasks. In this last group, women either have an extended family where a sister or grandmother helps with the tasks or their children are old enough to help.

It is interesting to note that both, Chicanas and Mexicans, showed similar patterns. However, younger and older women of both groups differed in the ways they manage household responsibilities, and having or not having an extended family was also important. Figure 6 shows the different types of household tasks arrangements described by Mexicans and Chicanas of different age groups.

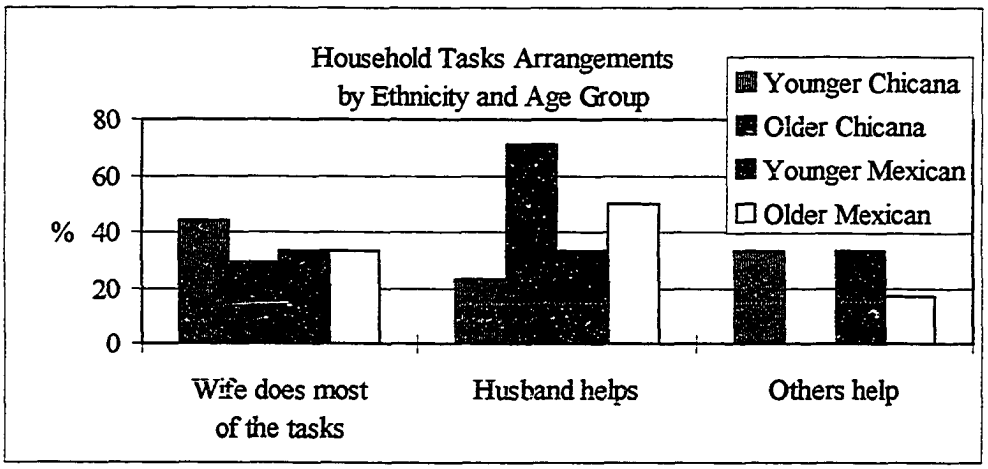

Figure 6

Figure 6 shows that more younger Chicanas (over forty percent) than any other women in the sample described non-egalitarian household tasks arrangements where they

do most or all the tasks. The majority of these women do not have extended families. Lisa, a younger Chicana, explains how only sometimes she gets help:

> I mostly do everything. My nine-year old sometimes is sent to her room so she can clean it. Sometimes my husband makes dinner for me during a week day, sometimes...When he is in a good mood he'll help me a little bit cleaning the living room, anything is appreciated.

Over thirty percent of both older and younger Mexicans, who do not have extended families, also described non-egalitarian conjugal relationships where they either do all of the household tasks or they do most and the husband just takes care of the outside (i.e. yard). Tere, an older Mexican complains about the lack of help she gets in the following statement:

> Nobody wants to do anything, I have to do everything. My husband just takes care of the yard.

It is interesting to note that more older than younger women described household tasks arrangements where the husband helps. In the case of Mexicans this might be related to the fact that there are more younger Mexicans in the sample who live in extended households and there are other people besides their husband, or even their children, who help. For Chicanas this is not the case, since more older than younger Chicanas live in extended households. However, as shown in figure 6, more older Chicanas (seventy percent) than any other women in the sample said their husbands help a lot with household tasks. Selia, an older Chicana, describes her husband's help in the following statement:

> My husband sweeps and mops the floor, washes dishes, but he doesn't wash clothes cause he says he doesn't understand the washing machine.

For other women in the sample, however, their husbands' help at home depends on whether she is or she is not at home to do the work. Rosy, an older Mexican, said:

> When I'm not home, when I'm working, every one helps. But once I get there and on week-ends, I do everything. No one wants to do anything!

More younger than older women in the sample, as shown in figure 6, described household tasks arrangements where they are not the only person responsible for all the tasks but the husband does not help. The majority of these women have an extended family where a sister or grandmother helps with the tasks. Brenda, a younger Mexican, and her family live at her parent's home, and she shares household tasks with her mom and sister. Their household tasks arrangement is the following:

> Here my mom cooks, my sister takes care of cleaning down stairs, I pick up my room and my daughter's. And my husband...he never gets home early to help.

Claudia, a younger Chicana, also has an extended family. She and her family live at her mother in law's home and she comments on her household task arrangements:

> She [mother in law] takes care of the house every day. She gets home early from work and she does everything. I get home and only cook dinner, she washes the dishes. My husband is always studying and since my mother in law says: "they are men and they don't have to help"... I tell them [husband and brother in law] that they should at least wash the plate they use, and they do it, but only when my mother in law is not home. If she is there, she'll do it.

As shown in figure 6, a few older Mexicans also described household tasks arrangements where they share household responsibilities with family members other than

their husbands. These women have older children who help. Fanny, an older Mexican, talks about her household task arrangements in the following statement:

> My son cleans the kitchen, when I get home I cook my dinner and they cook their own dinner. My nephew vacuums his room and when I get home I do it in my room. My husband just takes out the garbage, I don't like him to help inside because when he decides to wash the dishes he does it only with water, without soap, so better that he doesn't help.

Parenting Arrangements

As was the case for household tasks arrangements, most of the women interviewed described parenting arrangements where they were not the only person responsible for all the tasks. Figure 7 shows the different parenting arrangements described by the women in the sample and the percentage of women who described these arrangements by ethnicity.

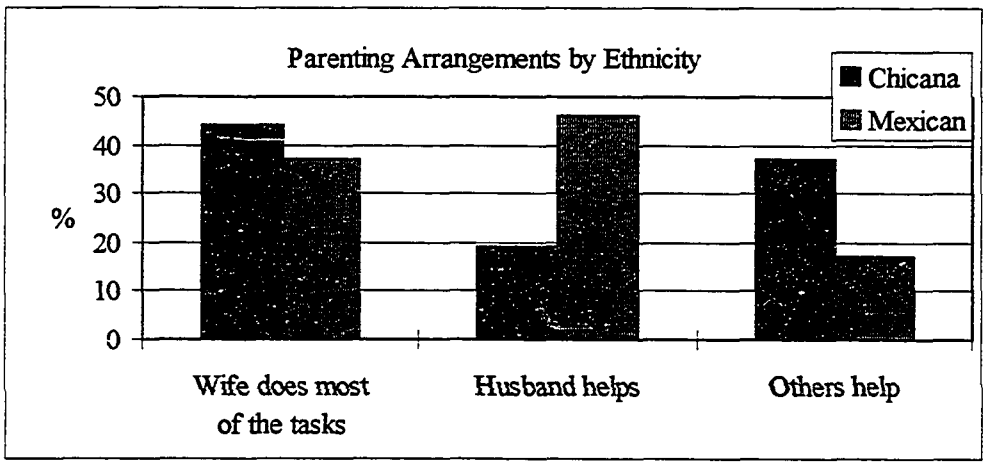

Figure 7

As shown in figure 7, less than fifty percent of both groups of women said they were the only person responsible for children's care. More Mexicans than Chicanas reported their husbands help (almost fifty percent of Mexicans, compared to almost

twenty percent of Chicanas). And more Chicanas than Mexicans reported child care arrangements where responsibilities were shared by the mother and a family member other than their husbands or were shared by the mother and a non-family member taking care of the children (almost forty percent of Chicanas compared to almost twenty percent of Mexicans).

As was the case for household tasks arrangements, younger and older women described different types of parenting arrangements. However, women's ethnicity was also important given the different mothering strategies described for each group in the previous section. Figure 8 shows the different parenting arrangements women in the sample reported and the percentage of women who described these arrangements by ethnicity and age group.

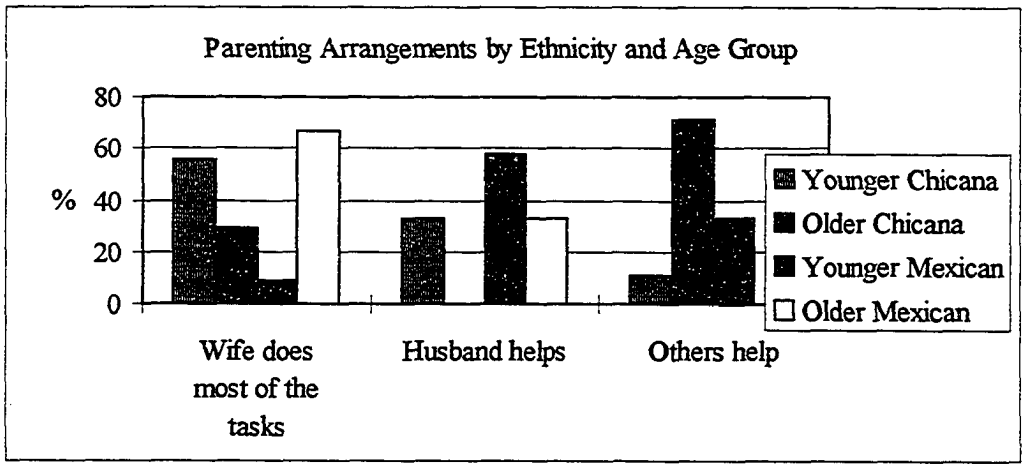

Figure 8

Figure 8 shows, for example, that over sixty percent of older Mexicans reported they did most of the tasks. This is not surprising since the majority of these women correspond to the voluntary non-employed mothers described in the previous section. In the same way, more younger than older Chicanas were voluntary non-employed mothers

and accordingly, more younger than older Chicanas said they did most of the tasks. Almost sixty percent of younger Chicanas described non-egalitarian arrangements to care for the children where they did all or most of the work. Victoria, a younger Chicana, observes:

> I do everything, I feed them, bathe them...well, he disciplines them, and sometimes when he goes farther than that, like hitting them or something, I'll go and you know, console them.

It is interesting to note that despite the fact that almost half of younger Mexicans were either voluntary non-employed or involuntary non-employed mothers, as shown in figure 8 almost sixty percent of younger Mexicans said their husbands are involved in child care. Brenda, a younger Mexican, explains how she and her husband share parenting responsibilities:

> In the morning he takes them to school. In the afternoon I bathe them and push the older one to get to the shower. They eat at school and they eat supper with us. If the boy wants to go to the bathroom at night, he [husband] wakes up and takes him to the bathroom. When they were babies he was very helpful.

Only a few Chicanas described semi-egalitarian conjugal relationships in terms of parenting involvement. Most Chicana employed mothers, described parenting arrangements where they shared responsibilities with a family member other than their husbands or a non-family member taking care of the children while they work. As shown in figure 8, this was the case for seventy percent of older Chicanas. Estela, an older Chicana, describes the help she gets with household tasks in the following statement:

> The old one helped bathe the little one. My husband never helped to feed them or else, just a little when I broke my ankle.

Despite the different arrangements reported by the women interviewed, almost fifty percent of Mexican women described semi-egalitarian conjugal relationships in terms of both household tasks and parenting involvement. On the other hand, almost fifty percent of Chicanas described semi-egalitarian conjugal relationships in terms of household tasks, but less than twenty percent in terms of parenting involvement (See Figures 5 and 7). It is interesting to note, however, that less than half of the women in the sample perceive that the increase of their husbands help in household tasks and parenting responsibilities has to do with their outside employment. More older Mexicans and younger Chicanas than any other group of women believe this is so. Hortencia , a younger Chicana, tells how her husband started helping more when she got a full-time job:

> When we both worked in the fields I did all the work, but now he does much more. If they [children] want pancakes, he makes them for them.

Most of the women in the sample, however, do not believe their outside employment has increased their husbands help in household tasks and parenting responsibilities. Some of the women reported that, regardless of their outside employment, their husbands have always helped and others said their husbands have never helped. Virginia, a younger Mexican, tells how her husband has always helped her:

> He's always helped the same, he vacuums, washes dishes, helps me to fold clothes, he helps me a lot.

Tere, an older Mexican, tells how her husband has never helped much:

> He doesn't help more, I get home and fix dinner, he takes care of the yard and the car, I leave him his dinner in the kitchen and he eats alone, he doesn't ask me to be there.

In addition, a few women reported things such as the husband has matured, the husband is disabled and stay home, or the husband likes to help, as reasons different than their outside employment to explain their husbands help. Cristina, a younger Mexican, explains how her husband likes to help her in the following statement:

> When he [husband] gets home earlier than me, he fixes dinner and it's ready when I get home. That's a lot of help, that's when I have the chance to wash a load of clothes. Pero el no se tulle. If there are dishes to wash he does it. He is like that, he likes to help me and do a lot around the house. I don't think it has to do with my working.

Decision Making

The majority of the women in the sample, irrespective of age or ethnicity, said that decision making was shared by both spouses. Others even asserted that they took all decisions and only a few said all decisions were made by their husbands. Could these findings corroborate previous research which shows that when wives earn a substantial portion of the family income women increase their authority in the family (Baca-Zinn 1975)? The majority of the women in the sample earn a substantial portion of the family income. Some women earn less than their husbands, but others are the sole providers, earn more than their husbands, or earn about the same as their husbands. Figure 9 shows wives' economic contribution to the household compared to their husbands' and the percentage of women in each category by ethnicity and age group.

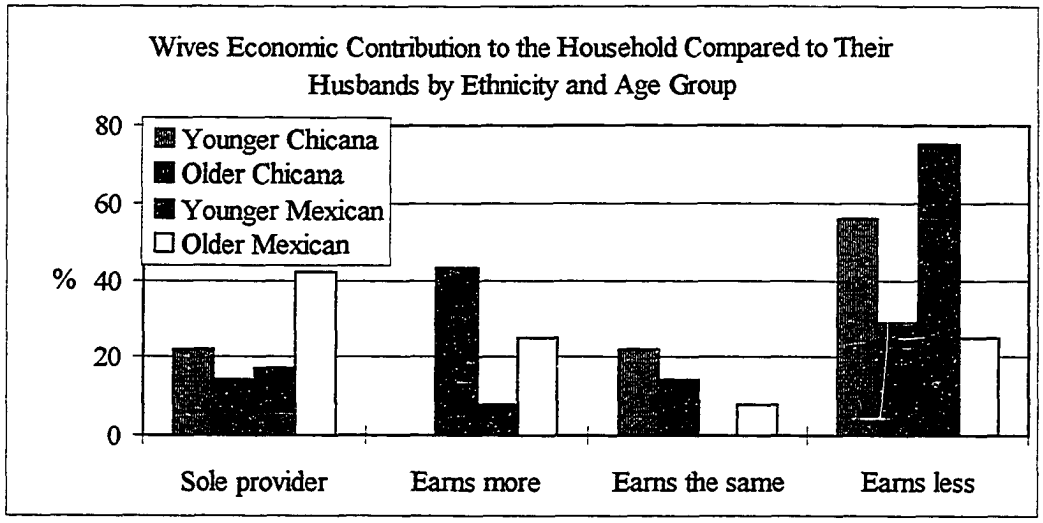

Figure 9

As shown in figure 9, the majority of the older women in the sample are either the only providers (over ten percent of Chicanas and over forty percent of Mexicans) because the husband is disabled or cannot find a job, earn more than their husbands (over forty percent of Chicanas and over twenty percent of Mexicans) or earn about the same (over ten percent of Chicanas and less than ten percent of Mexicans). The majority of these women perceive they have equal influence in decision making. A few believe they have more influence in decision making. None of the Chicanas whose contribution is equal or more than their husbands' said that her husband took all decisions. However, one older Mexican who is a sole provider, said that her husband took all decisions.

On the other hand, the majority of younger women earn less than their husbands. Figure 9 shows that almost sixty percent of younger Chicanas and almost eighty percent of younger Mexicans earn less than their husbands. However, the majority of them also perceive they have equal influence in decision making. Only a few said they took all the decisions or their husbands took all decisions.

The majority of the women in the sample perceive they have equal influence in decision making, even when some earn less than their husbands. However, even when most of the women earn a substantial portion of the family income, many women continue to perform most or all of the household and parenting tasks. Women in the sample are not the only person responsible for household and parenting tasks in their families, but the arrangements described by the women are non-egalitarian. Some women have negotiated household and parenting tasks with their husbands, but that does not mean that husbands get equally involved than their wives in these tasks. In addition, some women get help from other family members other than their husband. Although non-egalitarian, these household and parenting tasks arrangements allow women in the sample to combine their work role with their housewife role.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The thrust of this research was to identify and describe the processes through which blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women manage work and family responsibilities and to examine explanatory models that may allow us to explore and distinguish, were differences to exist, between these two groups of women. According to acculturation models and the dissimilar social locations approach, elaborated in Chapter one, Chicana and Mexican immigrant women in this study should have differed in the extent to which they experience and manage the conflicting roles of work and family. The acculturation models' perspective leads us to expect the most difficulties in combining work and family responsibilities among Mexican women, given their internalized traditional social and cultural expectations. On the other hand, the dissimilar social locations approach leads us to expect the most difficulties in combining work and family among Chicanas, since, as Segura (1991:121) explains, they are:

> ...raised in a society that celebrates the expressive functions of the family and obscures its productive economic functions, [hence, they] express higher adherence to the ideology of stay-at-home wife/mother and correspondingly more ambivalence to full-time employment.

My theoretical position throughout this research has been that both groups of women should be equally likely to manage work and family responsibilities as they are part

of a tradition that concomitantly identifies with both, work and familial roles. Thus, contrary to the two existing models, I assumed that blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women were socialized to manage work and family responsibilities. My assumption stemmed from historical and anecdotal accounts that observe that working-class women come from families where there is a long tradition of work by women in the formal and informal economic sectors, hence they would be likely to traditionally identify with both, work and familial roles. However, empirical data suggests an important household structural difference for the studied women.

The majority of Chicanas in the sample came from families where the mother worked or was the head of the household, while most Mexicans came from families where mothers did not work. Moreover, most Chicanas started to work before marriage, in contrast to only half of the Mexicans. In other words, Chicanas were socialized to manage work and family responsibilities, while Mexicans were socialized to reproduce the traditional division of labor (i.e. stay-at-home wife/mother). This difference appears to be related to acculturation models and to contradict the dissimilar social locations approach. However, the crucial differences in management of work and family responsibilities for the women in the study were not based on ethnicity, but rather on age and the timing of life events.

For example, although Mexican women in general did not expect to combine work and family in their adult lives, because they expected to reproduce their mother's lives, this expectation was particularly important for older women. On the other hand, younger Mexicans expected to combine work and family even when they themselves did not have

working mothers. Moreover, these younger women were employed before marriage (by the timing of work before marriage), and this early introduction to the labor force was an important factor in shaping their expectations.

Age and timing of life events was crucial in shaping attitudes towards work for Chicanas as well. Most Chicanas, socialized to manage work and family responsibilities and with a long working tradition of their own, expected to combine work and family when married. However, older Chicanas who had working mothers did not expect to combine work and family as did their Mexican counterpart. Similarly, some younger Chicanas who did not have working mothers, but who began to work before marriage, expected to combine work and family as did their Mexican counterpart.

Despite differences in role expectations and socialization, women in the sample were able to successfully combine work, family responsibilities, and identity investment. However, the second assumption that guided this study needs to be revised since originally a unidimensional process was hypothesized to explain the way in which women in the sample manage work and family responsibilities. The process implied in this earlier assumption was that if women view their work role as a means of survival for the family, they would likely perceive their outside employment as one more component of their familial responsibilities. This would result in the blending of the work role into the family roles, making it easier for women to manage work and family responsibilities by reducing commitment to the work role.

In this last chapter, I will synthesize the major findings, address the research questions that guided this study, and argue that results from the study that point to critical

differences in the management of work and family responsibilities are based on age and the timing of life events. Finally, the chapter ends by highlighting the two major processes identified by this study and their relevance for sociological research on gender and work.

Research Questions and Main Findings

The Work Role

The work role dimension was explored through several research questions designed to grasp the relationship between traditional familial roles, economic motivations to work, and women's commitment and identification with the work role. The first research question probed the extent to which traditional familial roles shape work related behavior. Among the women interviewed, internalized traditional familial roles had a strong influence on their willingness to attain employment and sustain a work role. This was evidenced by their labor force behavior. Life events such as marriage and childbearing kept women from working, but no important difference was found among ethnic or age groups.

For example, the majority of the women who began to work before marriage, irrespective of their age or ethnicity, stopped working either with marriage or childbearing. In addition, another group of women started to work only after marriage. These women showed a strong familial ideology in their labor force behavior. They either began to work when their children were already of school-age or stopped working either for childbearing and/or to take care of the children. Marriage and childbearing were thus crucial life events for the work related behavior of the majority of the women in the study.

If marriage and childbearing were critical to exiting the labor force for the majority of these women, then, economic motivation was critical for them to enter or re-incorporate themselves to the labor force. Most of the women re-incorporated or entered the labor force as full-time operatives because the family needed the money. The second question addressing the work role probed the extent to which economic motivations account for the consistency and commitment to the work role for blue-collar women. For the majority of the women in the sample, economic motivations were important in determining their future work expectations and their preference for either a part or full-time job. However, age and timing of life events were crucial for their future work expectations. For example, the majority of the women in the sample who expected to work until they could no longer work were older women and had to retire. More younger women, however, gave the specific number of years they expected to work (ranging from 0 to 15) for different reasons and future expectations. For most of these women, their future work plans were determined by the present economic situation of their families and the age of their children.

Of interest here is that women in the sample did not seem to have had a strong commitment toward work when they first engaged in full-time paid employment. The level of work commitment for both groups of women was shaped by familial roles/ideology (i.e. stop working to take care of children or start working when children were already at school) and their economic reasons to attain full-time employment. However, once they became employed full-time for economic reasons, Chicanas developed a strong work

commitment in which their willingness to continue employed was no longer solely shaped by economic reasons.

The third research question investigated the extent to which internalized social and cultural expectations shape and/or influence women's identification with the work role. It was found that internalized social and cultural expectations shape women's identification with the work role to a large extent. Nonetheless, given their different socialization processes, women of different ethnic groups identify differently with their work roles. For example, internalized traditional social and cultural norms that instill the reproduction of traditional domestic roles shaped the way most Mexicans identify with their work role. The majority of them identify primarily with the wife/mother role and perceive their economic contribution as that of "helping their husbands." This perception shapes in turn the personal benefits they gain from their work. The majority of Mexicans gained self-esteem and pride from their role as economic providers. They feel good about their work which helps their husbands through its economic contribution to the household.

For most Chicanas, on the other hand, internalized social and cultural expectations had more to do with reproducing the life style in which they were socialized, where the mother worked to help the family out and where the mother's work was part of her familial duties. Although the majority of them identify primarily with their wife/mother role, almost half identify with both, wife/mother and work, roles. Moreover, the majority perceive their economic contribution as part of their own familial obligation and separate from that of "helping their husbands." For them, besides being a familial obligation, work

also provides a means to attain a degree of economic independence and personal identification apart from the family.

Despite the differences in work commitment and work identity among the women, both groups were able to successfully combine work, family responsibilities, and identity investment. Chicanas, better socialized to manage work and family responsibilities and with a longer working tradition, identify with both, work and familial roles. For them, *role conflict*, the perception that demands associated with different roles are difficult to negotiate and reconcile, does not exist since their work role is perceived as an extension of the familial roles. In Catalina's words: "You can't be a good mother without being able to provide."

Although Mexicans identify primarily with familial roles and they do not blend as early their work role into the familial roles, role conflict was reduced through a successful *management* of work and familial roles. In other words, Mexicans demonstrated an ability to combine work, family responsibilities and identity investment by successfully manipulating their commitment to one role or the other as demanded by the situation at hand. Mexicans reduced work involvement when their children were young, became full-time employed for economic reasons once their children grew older, and, according to their role expectations, will quit work when their economic situation improves.

The Mother Role

Two research questions explored the relationship between motherhood and employment. One question explored the extent to which long traditions of working in the

formal and informal economic sectors ease management of work and motherhood responsibilities. This question was formulated following one of the dominant themes in analyzing women and work, that is, the "guilt" of the employed mother based on "espousing something different" from their own mothers (Berg 1986: 42).[12] As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the majority of Chicanas had working mothers while most Mexicans had mothers who never worked. Nonetheless, the guilt of the employed mothers in the sample was not based on espousing something different from their own mothers, but having or not having working mothers was important for women to be employed or non-employed mothers when their children were of pre-school age.

The majority of the women in the sample who were non-employed when their children were of pre-school age were Mexicans who had mothers who never worked (see Figure 1). However, age and the timing of life events accounted for crucial differences among these non-employed mothers. For example, it is not surprising to find that the majority among the voluntary non-employed mothers were older Mexicans who did not expect to combine work and family and who began to work only after marriage and childbearing (see Figure 2). On the other hand, some younger Mexicans were involuntary non-employed at times when their children were of pre-school age, either for not having the legal papers to work in the U.S. or due to lay-offs (see Figure 2). These women began to work before marriage and, despite not having working mothers, their earlier work experience shaped their expectations of combining work and family in their adult lives.

It is not surprising to find that the majority of Chicanas in the sample were employed when their children were of school-age (see Figure 3). This reflects not only

[12] Cited in Segura (1991:123).

their expectations of combining work and family when married, but also their socialization process. However, almost forty percent of the Mexicans in the sample were also employed when their children were of school-age (see Figure 3). This could be surprising if we consider that the majority of these women did not have working mothers, thus, were not socialized to combine work and motherhood responsibilities. Even though a large number of employed mothers in the sample expressed guilt feelings, these were not based on espousing something different from their own mothers. The majority of these "ambivalent" employed mothers were older and younger Chicanas whose mothers worked (see Figure 4). In addition, only a few younger Mexicans whose mothers did not work expressed guilt feelings. However, all older Mexican employed mothers expressed guilt feelings and these did not have working mothers (see Figure 4). Older Mexican employed mothers is the only group of women in the sample whose guilt feelings could be based on espousing something different from their own mothers.

However, neither older Mexican employed mothers nor the other women who expressed guilt feelings in the sample could be considered totally ambivalent employed mothers. Although these women expressed ambivalence about guilt, they indicated non-ambivalence when they asserted that working mothers are as good mothers as those who stay at home and that women can be employed irrespective of the age of their children. In other words, women who expressed guilt feelings do not perceive that work and motherhood are conflicting roles difficult to negotiate and reconcile; they just experience these feelings. However, the majority believe that employment could be problematic if a family member does not take care of the children.

Some employed mothers in the sample, however, did not express guilt feelings. It is interesting to note that the majority of these were younger Mexicans and Chicanas (see Figure 4). Once again, having or not having working mothers does not seem to have a strong influence on guilt. This group of younger women can be considered non-ambivalent employed mothers who view employment and motherhood as compatible, irrespective of the age of the children. The majority of Mexicans in this category, however, believe that employment could be problematic if a family member does not take care of the children. On the other hand, only some Chicanas believe that employment could be problematic if a family member does not take care of the children.

The second question addressing the mother role probed the extent to which internalized traditional social and cultural expectations account for the perception of work and motherhood as conflicting roles difficult to negotiate and reconcile. Despite the fact that the majority of the women who were employed when their children were of pre-school age expressed guilt feelings, the majority of the women in the sample were able to successfully combine work and motherhood responsibilities and they believe that working mothers are as good mothers as those who stay at home. However, the labor force behavior of almost half of the women reflects their perception of work and motherhood as conflicting roles with demands difficult to negotiate and reconcile. Nonetheless, for these voluntary non-employed mothers (older Mexicans), role conflict was reduced by avoiding work involvement when their children were pre-school age or older.

The Housewife Role

Three questions addressed the housewife role dimension. The first one probed the extent to which women's outside employment accounts for variations in the division of labor in parenting and household tasks. It is interesting to find that less than half of the women in the sample perceive that the increase of their husbands help in household tasks and parenting responsibilities is related to their outside employment. More older Mexicans and younger Chicanas than any other group of women believe this is so. Most of the women in the sample, however, do not believe their outside employment has increased their husbands help in household tasks and parenting responsibilities. Some of the women reported that, regardless of their outside employment, their husbands have always helped and others said their husbands have never helped.

The second research question probed the extent to which changes in the division of household labor ease management of work and household responsibilities. Even though women in the sample do not perceive that changes in the division of household labor should be attributed to their outside employment, they were able to manage the conflicting demands of work and household labor through different strategies. However, none of the household tasks arrangements described by the women in the sample was totally egalitarian. For women who negotiate household tasks with their husbands, husband's help does not mean that they get equally involved in the tasks as their wives. Other women negotiate household tasks with other family members different than their husbands. These women either have an extended family where a sister or grandmother helps with the tasks

or their children are old enough to help. In addition, other women continue to perform all or most of the tasks.

The crucial differences in management of work and household responsibilities once again was not based on ethnicity, but rather on age and having or not having an extended family. For example, more younger Chicanas than any other women in the sample described non-egalitarian household tasks arrangements where they do most or all the tasks (see Figure 6). The majority of these women do not have extended families. Some older and younger Mexicans who do not have extended families also described non-egalitarian conjugal relationships where they either do all of the household tasks or they do most and the husband just takes care of the outside (i.e. yard).

It is interesting to note that more older than younger women described household tasks arrangements where the husband helps (see Figure 6). In the case of Mexicans this might be related to the fact that more younger Mexicans in the sample, compared to their older counterpart, live in extended households and there are other people besides their husband, or even their children, who help. For Chicanas this is not the case, since more older than younger Chicanas live in extended households. However, more older Chicanas than any other women in the sample said their husbands help a lot with household tasks.

More younger than older women in the sample described household tasks arrangements where they are not the only person responsible for all the tasks but the husband does not help (see Figure 6). The majority of these women have an extended family where a sister or grandmother helps with the tasks. A few older Mexicans also described household tasks arrangements where they share household responsibilities with

other family members different than their husband. These women have older children who help.

As was the case for household tasks arrangements, most of the women interviewed described parenting arrangements where they were not the only person responsible for all the tasks. Less than half of the women said they were the only person responsible for children's care. More Mexicans than Chicanas reported their husbands help a lot (see Figure 7). And more Chicanas than Mexicans reported child care arrangements where responsibilities were shared by the mother and another family member different from the husband or were shared by the mother and a non-family member taking care of the children (see Figure 7).

As was the case for household tasks arrangements, younger and older women described different types of parenting arrangements. However, women's ethnicity was also important given the different mothering strategies described for each group in the previous chapter. For example, most older Mexicans reported they did most of the tasks (see Figure 8). This is not surprising since the majority of these women correspond to the voluntary non-employed mothers described before. In the same way, more younger than older Chicanas were voluntary non-employed mothers and accordingly, more younger than older Chicanas said they did most of the tasks (see Figure 8). More than half of younger Chicanas described non-egalitarian child care arrangements for which they were solely responsible.

It is interesting to note that despite the fact that almost half of younger Mexicans were either voluntary non-employed or involuntary non-employed mothers, more younger

Mexicans than any other group of women in the sample said their husbands are involved in child care (see Figure 8). Only a few Chicanas described parenting arrangements where the husband was involved in child care. Most Chicana employed mothers, described parenting arrangements where they shared responsibilities with a family member different than their husband or a non-family member taking care of the children while they work. This was the case for the majority of older Chicanas (see Figure 8).

The last question which guided this study probed the extent to which earning a substantial portion of the family income increases women's authority in the family. The majority of the older women in the sample perceive they have equal influence in decision making even when they either are the only providers because the husband is disabled or cannot find a job, earn more than their husbands or earn about the same (see Figure 9). On the other hand, even when the majority of younger women earn less than their husbands (see Figure 9), the majority of them also perceive they have equal influence in decision making.

Nonetheless, even when most of the women earn a substantial portion of the family income, many women continue to perform most or all of the household and parenting tasks. Women in the sample are not the only person responsible for household and parenting tasks in their families, but the arrangements described by the women are non-egalitarian. Some women have negotiated household and parenting tasks with their husbands, but this does not mean that husbands spend as much time as their wives on these tasks. In addition, some women get help from family members other than their husbands. Although husbands and wives do not get equally involved in household and

parenting tasks, the arrangements described by the women in the sample allow them to combine their work role with their housewife role.

Concluding Remarks

The specific processes involved in the management of work and family responsibilities among blue-collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women have been identified and discussed in this and the previous chapter. In this last section I want to make reference to three important concepts observed throughout the laborious task of organizing the empirical data analyzed in this study. First, the concept of *role conflict* or the perception that demands associated with different roles, such as work and family, are difficult to negotiate and reconcile. Second, the concept of *negotiation* which implies the presence of role conflict and involves a win-lose situation in balancing work and family. And finally, the concept of *reconciliation* which implies a reduced presence or absence of role conflict and thus involves a win-win situation in balancing work and family responsibilities.

The empirical data analyzed in this study identifies specific areas of conflict, negotiation, and reconciliation for the studied women. In general, the most important source of conflict stems from the perception that family well-being and family economic gain are difficult to negotiate and reconcile. Family well-being refers to dimensions of family interactions separated from financial support, such as affection and caring. For example, most of the women in the sample feel guilt when they leave their children in the care of others while they work, particularly non-family members, because they are not

caring for their children themselves. On the other hand, family economic gain refers to the economic need of blue-collar women to work. For example, most of the women in the sample perceive that when there is severe economic need the mother has to leave their children in the care of others, despite the guilt feelings they might experience. The conflict women experience between the need for caring and affection on the one hand, and economic survival on the other, shapes their attitudes towards work. Hence, women look at work as temporarily conditioned by childbearing and/or family economic need.

In order to balance family well-being and family economic gain, women engage in a win-lose situation. Women negotiate their family and work roles when it comes to childbearing and/or caring for their infants. They stop working for childbearing or childcaring when a family member cannot take care of the children, thus reducing the anguish related to family well-being. But, by quitting their jobs, they lose the economic and personal benefits they gain from their economic contribution to the household, which is the most important reason for their work. Women also engage in negotiations when they reincorporate to the labor force once their children are of school age. These women contribute to the household, but experience guilt in leaving their children in the care of others while they work.

Finally, women reconcile the competing demands of work and family when they perceive that work is an extension of their familial obligations and that family well-being is not in conflict with family economic gain, but these are rather complementary to the role of mother. Reconciling work and family roles involves a win-win situation where women do not experience guilt feelings and being a good mother means that women can provide

for their children. Women reconcile their familial and work roles under the following circumstances: when their work involves family economic gain; when they have or had working mothers and work outside the household is accepted and expected; and when their mother or another family member acts as the children's care provider.

As noted above, the conceptual distinction between negotiation and reconciliation, identified by this study, is useful in explaining the different processes women engage into in order to manage work and family responsibilities. This study thus revealed that management of work and family responsibilities is not unidimensional, as originally expected, but rather multi-dimensional. Two important processes were identified in this study. First, women who experience role conflict engage in a process of negotiation in order to manage the conflicting demands of work and family. This process involves a win-lose situation and women have to decide between family well-being or family economic gain when it comes to childbearing and/or childcaring, particularly when a family member cannot take care of the children. Finally, women who do not experience role conflict engage in a process of reconciliation. This process involves a win-win situation where women blend family well-being and family economic gain, and their work role becomes an extension of their familial obligations.

The conceptual distinction between negotiation and reconciliation as presented here, allowed the identification of two ideal-typical processes in which women engage in order to manage work and family responsibilities. The ideal-typical processes proposed here should prove useful and helpful in doing empirical research and in the understanding of the nature of the management of work and family responsibilities, not only among blue-

collar Chicana and Mexican immigrant women, but across women of various ethnic backgrounds and occupations.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

English Version

I am presently conducting a study about the ways in which married women who have children and work outside the home combine their role of worker with their roles of wife and mother. This study is an important requirement to finish my studies in The University of Texas Pan American.

If you are married and have children, I am asking you to participate in my study. This participation is on a voluntary basis. The study consists of an interview. I will ask you questions and note down your answers. These questions will be about your family, your work, and the ways you combine both.

All information will be kept strictly confidential and you will only be identified by a number I will assign to you. Your name will never be used in this study

I will greatly appreciate your participation. If you are interested in participating or know someone in your workplace who is married and has children, please call me at 380-3012 or 381-2138. I will be glad to answer all your questions and if you decide to participate, set an appointment for the interview.

María Olivia Villarreal-Solano

Spanish Version

Estoy conduciendo un estudio sobre las maneras en que las mujeres casadas que tienen hijos y trabajan fuera de la casa combinan su rol de trabajadoras con sus roles de madre y esposa. Este estudio es un requisito muy importante para poder terminar mis estudios en la Universidad de Texas PanAmerican.

Si usted esta casada actualmente y tiene hijos, le estoy pidiendo que participe en mi estudio. Su participación es enteramente voluntaria. El estudio consiste de una entrevista. Yo le voy a hacer preguntas y voy a anotar sus respuestas. Las preguntas serán sobre su familia, sobre su trabajo, y sobre la forma en que usted combina ambos.

Toda la información que me proporcione será confidencial. Usted sólo será identificada por medio de un número. Su nombre nunca será utilizado en este estudio.

Le agradecería mucho su participación. Si usted está interesada en participar o conoce a alguien que trabaje con usted que sea casada y tenga hijos, por favor llámeme al 380-3012 o al 381-2138. Con mucho gusto contestaré cualquier pregunta que tenga y si usted decide participar, hacer una cita para la entrevista con usted.

María Olivia Villarreal-Solano

APPENDIX B: LETTERS OF INFORMED CONSENT

English Version

NAME:_____I.D. #_____
ADDRESS:_____
TELEPHONE:_____

CONSENT FORM

I am presently conducting a study about the ways in which married women who have children and work outside the home combine their role of worker with their roles of wife and mother.

I am asking you to participate in my study. This participation is on a voluntary basis. The study consists of an interview. I will ask you questions and note down your answers. These questions will be about your family, your work, and the ways you combine both.

All information will be kept strictly confidential and you will only be identified by a number I will assign to you. Your name will never be used in this study.

The decision to participate is yours. If you decide to participate and later change your mind for whatever reason, you can stop the interview at any time. If you should have any questions, please feel free to ask or call me at 380-3012.

I, the undersigned, accept to participate in this study conducted by María Olivia Villarreal-Solano. All the information in this letter has been explained to me and I understand it well.

_____	_____	_____
SUBJECT	INTERVIEWER	DATE AND TIME

Spanish Version

NOMBRE:_____CODE# _____
DIRECCION:_____
TELEFONO:_____

FORMA DE CONSENTIMIENTO

Estoy conduciendo un estudio sobre las maneras en que las mujeres casadas que tienen hijos y trabajan fuera de la casa combinan su rol de trabajadoras con sus roles de madre y esposa.

Por medio de esta carta le estoy pidiendo su participación--enteramente voluntaria--en este estudio. El estudio está constituído por una entrevista. Yo le haré preguntas y anotaré sus respuestas. Las preguntas serán sobre su familia, su trabajo, y la manera en que usted combina ambos.

Toda información que me proporcione será confidencial y solamente será identificada por medio de un número. Su nombre nunca será utilizado en este estudio. Si decide participar y después se arrepiente, usted tiene el derecho de detener la entrevista en cualquier momento.

Por favor siéntase libre de hacerme cualquier pregunta o llámeme al 380-3012.

La persona cuya firma aparece a continuación aceptó participar en este estudio conducido por María Olivia Villarreal-Solano. La información que aparece en esta carta ha sido explicada y la persona la entiende.

_____ _____ _____

SUJETO ENTREVISTADOR FECHA Y HORA

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDES

English Version

Socio-Economic Indicators

1. How old are you?: A{}Under 24; B{}24-39 years old; C{}40-55; D{}55 years or older.

2. What is your marital status: A{}single; B{}married; C{}separated; D{}divorced; E{} widowed.

3. At what age did you marry? A{}15 or younger; B{} 16-20; C{} 21-25; D{} 26-30; E {} 31 or older.

4. Do you have children?: A{ } no; B{ }yes.

5. How many years after marriage did you wait to have your first child? A{}less than 1; B{}1-2; C{}3-4; D{}more than 4.

6. How many children do you have?____________________________________

7. What are the ages of your children____________________________________

8. How many of your children live in the household__________________________

9. Who lives in the household?: A{} parents and children only; B{}parents, children and grandparents; C{} Other____

10. Who is the head of household? A{}husband; B{}wife; C{}grandfather; D{}grandmother; E{}Other ____

11. What was the highest grade in school you completed?: A{}Did not attend school; B{}1-6; C{}7-9; D{}10-12; E{}More than 12.

12. What was the highest grade in school completed by your husband or partner?: A{}Did not attend school; B{}1-6; C{}7-9; D{}10-12; E{}More than 12.

13. What was the highest grade in school completed by your father?: A{}Did not attend school; B{}1-6; C{}7-9; D{}10-12; E{}12 or more.

14. What was the highest grade in school completed by your mother?: A{}Did not attend school; B{}1-6; C{}7-9; D{}10-12; E{}12 or more.

15. Where was your father born? A{}Rio Grande Valley; B{}Elsewhere in Texas; C{}Elsewhere in U.S.; D{}Mexico; E{}Other______________________________

16. Where was your mother born? A{}Rio Grande Valley; B{}Elsewhere in Texas; C{}Elsewhere in U.S.; D{}Mexico; E{}Other_____

17. Where were you born?: A{}Rio Grande Valley; B{}Elsewhere in Texas; C{}Elsewhere in U.S.; D{}Mexico; E{}Other _____

18. Where were you raised?: A{}Rio Grande Valley; B{}Elsewhere in Texas; C{}Elsewhere in U.S.; D{}Mexico; E{}Other_____

19. Where was your husband born?: A{}Rio Grande Valley; B{}Elsewhere in Texas; C{}Elsewhere in U.S.; D{}Mexico; E{}Other_____

20. Where was your husband raised?: A{}Rio Grande Valley; B{}Elsewhere in Texas; C{}Elsewhere in U.S.; D{}Mexico; E{}Other_____

(If she was born in the U.S. go to question 25)

21. How old were you when you first arrived to the United States? A{}younger than 5; B{}5-10; C{}11-15; D{}16-20; E{} 21 or more.

22. Why did you come to the United States? A{}following your parents; B{}following your husband or partner; C{}for your own economic improvement; D{} for the economic improvement of your children; E{} Other_____

23. What is your migratory status? A{}U.S. Citizen; B{} Resident; C{} Other_____

24. When did you legalize your migratory status?_____

25. Which of the following terms do you prefer to describe your own ethnic or racial status?: A{}Mexican; B{}Mexican American; C{}Chicano; D{}Hispanic; E{}Latino; F{}American.

26. What language is spoken at home? _____

27. What language is spoken at work with your supervisors?_____

28. What language do you use with your co-workers?_____

29. Do you think you lack of English skills?_____

30. With what language do you feel more comfortable: Spanish or English?_____

Socio-Cultural Background

When you were a child:

31. Who was the head of the household?_____

32. Who was included in the household?_____

33. What kind of work did your father do?_____

34. Did your mother work?_____

(If the answer is NO go to question 39)

35. What kind of work did she do?_____

36. Do you think your mother's work helped you out? How? _____

_____

37. Do you think her work did not allow her to be a good mother? Explain _____

_____

38. Did you have to take care of your brothers and sisters while your mother worked?

_____

39. Who took care of you when you were a child?_____

40. How do you feel about your parents occupations and their care for you?_____

_____

41. Who did the housework?_____

42. Did you have to do household work? If yes, at what age did you start doing these tasks?

Labor Force Participation

43. At what age did you start working outside the home?_____

44. What were your reasons for entering the labor force? Personal attainment? Solely economic reasons? Other_____

_____

45. Was it difficult for you to get a job? Explain_____

_____

46. What kind of job did you do?_____

47. What did you do with the money? Share it with the family? You save it for you? Other?_____

48. Who made decisions as to what you should do with your earnings? Explain_____

_____

49. Did your work give you any kind of independence? Explain_____

_____

50. Was your employment part of your familial responsibility? Explain_____

_____

Work Commitment

51. When you thought about marriage did you expect to combine employment and family? Explain_____

52. Is your husband presently employed?_____

53. What kind of job has he done most of the time?_____

54. Do you believe that your earnings are essential to maintain a comfortable lifestyle? Explain

_____

55. Presently, who brings more money to the household your husband or you? _____

56. If presently you bring more money than your husband to the household, how do both of you feel about that? Explain _____

_____

57. Have you been continuously employed since you started working?_____

58. If not, what were the reasons you left your work? How long did you remain outside the work force?_____

59. What were the reasons for your re-incorporation?_____

60. Was it difficult for you to re-incorporate to the labor force? Explain_____

_____

61. If you could choose between a part-time job and a full-time job which would you prefer and why?_____

62. For how long do you expect to work? Explain_____

_____

63. Would you quit work if it was not longer economically necessary?Explain_____

_____

Work identity

64. How do you feel about your work outside the home? good, liberated, pressured? Do you feel it only as your responsibility? Do you feel it provides you personal autonomy or

independence? Other _____

_____

65. Do you like the type of work you now perform? What do you like and what do you dislike about it?_____

66. Do you consider your present job better than the one you previously had? Explain

_____

67. Would you prefer to have a different type of job? What type and why?_____

_____

68. What does earning your own money means to you? an obligation, an economic contribution to the household, a degree of economic independence, pride, self esteem? Explain

_____

_____

69. Do you consider your economic contribution as "helping your husband" or as a component of familial obligation? Explain_____

_____

70.Which role is more important for you, worker or wife/mother? Why?_____

_____

71. Do you think your work has a negative impact on family well-being? Explain_____

_____

72. Do you feel social pressure to stay at home rather than work outside?_____

73. How is this pressure evident? Who pressures you? Other women, your husband, your kids, other? Explain_____

Motherhood and Employment

74. In your opinion, working mothers are as good mothers as those that stay at home? Explain

_____

_____

75. If in your opinion working mothers cannot be as good mothers as those that stay at home, what are your feelings about being employed?_____

_____

76. Where do you leave your children while you work?_____

77. Do you feel guilty about leaving your children in the care of others while you work? Explain_____

78. Do you think that women can be employed and be mothers at the same time despite the age of the children? Explain_____

_____

79. Can employment be problematic for you if a family member can not care for their children or be at home for the children when they arrive from school? Explain_____

_____

80. Do you think you spend enough time with your children? If you don't spend enough time with them, do you regret about the limited time you can spend with them? Explain_____

_____

Sex Role Attitudes

81. Please describe for me all the things you do on a common working day, since you wake up until you go to sleep:_____

_____

_____

_____

82. Please describe for me all the things you do on a common week-end day, since you wake up until you go to sleep:_____

_____

_____

_____

83. How do you arrange household tasks? Who does what?_____

_____

_____

84. How do you arrange childbearing responsibilities? Who does what?_____

_____

_____

85. Do you think that your husband's help in household tasks and childbearing responsibilities has increased since you started working? Explain_____

_____

86. How satisfied are you with your husband's help? Explain_____

_____

87. How are decisions made in your family? Who takes what decisions?_____

_____

_____

88. Who decided you were going to work?_____

89. What was your husband's reaction to your employment outside the home?_____

_____

90. In your opinion, what has been the effect of your outside employment on your relationship with your husband? Gained his respect? Gained his cooperation? Animosity? Explain_____

_____

_____

Labor conditions

91. How many hours do you work?_____

92. Do you have breaks?How long are these?_____

93. How are you paid? peace-rate wage?per hour?_____

94. How long is your lunch time?_____

95. Where do you eat?_____

96. Do you always work for the same shift?_____

97. Do you work over-time? How are you paid for this work?_____

98. Have you had any accident at work? Who took care of you?_____

_____

99. Have you had maternity leave? How was it?_____

_____

100. Have you ever been fired for reasons out of your control? Specify: plant closures, poduction cut-backs, etc._____

101. Have you experienced any kind of discrimination? Was this based on ethnicity or gender? For example, employers refusing to hire women due to their lack of work commitment and their absences to care for the children...Explain_____

_____

102. Do you communicate personal or work-related with your co-workers?_____

_____

103. When do you communicate with them? Outside work? During work? (Breaks, lunch time, while you work)_____

104. Is there competition among workers? Why?_____

105. Are new workers entering frequently and others leaving? Are these immigrant workers?

_____

106. Do you know the laws that protect you? (labor laws and immigration laws) How do you know about them?_____

107. Do you fear about complaining? Why? (getting fired or deported)_____

108. Are you unionized?_____

109. How do you organize to get more benefits or defend from abuses?_____

110. Who leads: males or females? Mexicans, Chicanos or Anglos?_____

111. Did you have past union experience in your country of origin or other state?_____

112. What do you think must be changed in the workplace?_____

113. What are your immediate needs? Child-care?_____

END OF THE INTERVIEW

_____ _____

INTERVIEWER TIME AND DATE

Spanish Version

Indicadores Socio-Económicos

1.¿Qué edad tiene?: A{}Menos de 24; B{}24-39; C{}40-55; D 56 o más.

2.¿Cuál es su estado civil? A{}soltera; B{}casada; C{}separada; D{}divorciada; E{} viuda.

3.¿Qué edad tenía cuando se casó? A{}15 o menor; B{} 16-20; C{} 21-25; D{} 26-30; E {} 31 o mayor.

4.¿Tiene hijos?: A{ } no; B{ }si.

5.¿Cuántos años se esperó, después de casada, para tener a su primer hijo? A{}menos de 1; B{}1-2; C{}3-4; D{}más de 4.

6.¿Cuántos hijos tiene?_____

7.¿Cuáles son las edades de sus hijos?_____

8.¿Cuántos de sus hijos viven en su casa?_____

9.¿Quién vive en su casa? A{} solamente padres e hijos; B{}padres, hijos y abuelos; C{} Otro

_____

10.¿Quién es el jefe de la familia? A{}esposo; B{}esposa; C{}abuelo; D{}abuela; E{}Otro

_____

11.¿Hasta qué año llegó usted en la escuela?: A{}No fue a la escuela; B{}1-6; C{}7-9; D{}10-12; E{}Más de12.

12.¿Hasta qué año llegó su esposo o pareja en la escuela?: A{}No fue a la escuela; B{}1-6; C{}7-9; D{}10-12; E{}Más de12.

13.¿Hasta qué año llegó su padre en la escuela?: A{}No fue a la escuela; B{}1-6; C{}7-9; D{}10-12; E{}Más de12.

14.¿Hasta qué año llegó su madre en la escuela?: A{}No fue a la escuela; B{}1-6; C{}7-9; D{}10-12; E{}Más de12.

15.¿En dónde nació su padre? A{}El Valle del Río Grande; B{}En otro lugar de Texas; C{}En otro lugar de Estados Unidos; D{}México; E{}Otro_____

16.¿En dónde nació su madre? A{}El Valle del Río Grande; B{}En otro lugar de Texas; C{}En otro lugar de Estados Unidos; D{}México; E{}Otro_____

17.¿En dónde nació usted?: A{}El Valle del Río Grande; B{}En otro lugar de Texas; C{}En otro lugar de Estados Unidos; D{}México; E{}Otro_____

18.¿En dónde creció usted?: A{}El Valle del Río Grande; B{}En otro lugar de Texas; C{}En otro lugar de Estados Unidos; D{}México; E{}Otro_____

19.¿En dónde nació su esposo?: A{}El Valle del Río Grande; B{}En otro lugar de Texas; C{}En otro lugar de Estados Unidos; D{}México; E{}Otro_____

20.¿En dónde creció su esposo?: A{}El Valle del Río Grande; B{}En otro lugar de Texas; C{}En otro lugar de Estados Unidos; D{}México; E{}Otro_____

(Si ella nació en E.U. pasar a la pregunta 25)

21.¿Qué edad tenía usted cuando llegó por primera vez a los Estados Unidos? A{}menos de 5; B{}5-10; C{}11-15; D{}16-20; E{} 21 o más.

22.¿Por qué vino a los Estados Unidos? A{}siguiendo a sus padres; B{}siguiendo a su esposo o pareja; C{}para mejorar su situación económica; D{} para mejorar la situación económica de sus hijos; E{} Otro_____

23. ¿Cuál es su status migratorio? A{} Ciudadana; B{} Residente; C{} Otro_____

24. ¿Cuándo arregló sus papeles?_____

25.¿Con cuál de los siguientes términos se identifica usted? A{}Mexicana; B{}México-Americana; C{}Chicana; D{}Hispana; E{}Latina; F{}Americana.

26.¿Qué idioma se habla en su casa?_____

27.¿Qué idioma se habla en su trabajo con sus supervisores?_____

28.¿Qué idioma habla con sus compañeras de trabajo?_____

29.¿Usted piensa que tiene problemas para comunicarse en inglés?_____

30.¿Con cuál idioma se siente usted más cómoda: español o inglés?_____

Antecedentes Socio-Culturales

Cuando usted era niña:

31.¿Quién era el jefe de la casa en su familia?_____

32.¿Quiénes vivían en su casa?_____

33.¿Qué tipo de trabajo hacía su padre?_____

34.¿Su madre trabajaba?_____

(Si la respuesta es NO pasar a la pregunta 39)

35.¿Qué tipo de trabajo desempeñaba su madre?________________________________

36.¿Usted piensa que el trabajo de su madre la ayudó a usted de alguna manera? Cómo?

____

____

37.¿Usted piensa que el trabajo de su madre le impedía ser buena madre? Explique.

____

____

38.¿Usted tenía que cuidar de sus hermanos y hermanas mientras su mamá trabajaba?

____

39.¿Quién la cuidaba a usted cuando era niña?____________________________________

40.¿Cómo se siente con respecto a la ocupación de sus padres y los cuidados que le daban a usted cuando era niña?____

____

41.¿Quién hacia las labores del hogar?____

42.¿Usted tenía que ayudar con las labores del hogar? Si la respuesta es sí, ¿a qué edad empezó a ayudar en estas labores?____

Participación en la Fuerza de Trabajo

43.¿Qué edad tenía usted cuando empezó a trabajar fuera de la casa? __________________

44.¿Cuáles fueron sus razones para empezar a trabajar?¿Superación personal?¿Solamente por razones económicas? Otro____

____

45.¿Le fue difícil conseguir empleo?____

46.¿Qué tipo de trabajo desempeñaba?____

47.¿Qué hacía con el dinero que ganaba?¿Compartirlo con su familia?¿Lo guardaba para usted? Otro____

____

48.¿Quién tomaba la decisión sobre lo que usted debía hacer con su sueldo?_____________

49.¿Su trabajo le dió algún tipo de independencia? Explique__________________________

50.¿Su trabajo formaba parte de su responsabilidad con su familia? Explique_____

Compromiso con el trabajo

51.Cuando usted pensaba en casarse, ¿usted esperaba combinar su trabajo con sus responsabilidades familiares? Explique_____

52.¿Su esposo está actualmente empleado?_____

53. ¿Qué tipo de trabajo ha desempeñado su esposo la mayor parte del tiempo?_____

54.¿Usted cree que su salario es esencial para tener un estilo de vida más confortable? Explique_____

55. ¿Actualmente quién aporta más a la casa, su esposo o usted?_____

56. Si actualmente usted aporta más que su esposo a la casa, ¿Cómo se sienten los dos al respecto? Explique_____

57. Desde que usted empezó a trabajar, ¿ha trabajado todo el tiempo?_____

58. Si no, ¿cuáles fueron las razones por las que dejó de trabajar?¿Por cuánto tiempo dejó de trabajar?_____

59.¿Cuáles fueron sus razones para volver a trabajar?_____

60. ¿Fue difícil para usted volver a conseguir trabajo? Explique_____

61. Si pudiera escoger entre un trabajo de medio tiempo y uno de tiempo completo, ¿cuál preferiría y porqué?_____

62.¿Por cuánto tiempo espera seguir trabajando? Explique

63.¿Usted dejaría de trabajar si ya no fuera económicamente necesario que usted trabajara? Explique

Identificación con el trabajo

64.¿Cómo se siente usted al trabajar fuera de casa?¿Bien, liberada, presionada?¿Llo siente sólo como su responsabilidad?¿Siente usted que su trabajo le da independencia o autonomía personal? ¿Otro?

65.¿Le gusta el tipo de trabajo que ahora desempeña? ¿Qué le gusta y que no le gusta de su trabajo?

66.¿Considera que su trabajo actual es mejor que el que desempeñaba antes? Explique

67.¿Preferiría tener otro tipo de trabajo? ¿Cuál y por qué?

68.¿Qué significa para usted ganar su propio dinero?¿Una obligación, una contribución económica al hogar, un grado de independencia económica, orgullo, autoestima? Explique

69.¿Usted considera su contribución económica como "una ayuda a su esposo" o como parte de su obligación familiar? Explique

70.¿Qué es más importante para usted, trabajar o ser madre y esposa? Por qué?

71.¿Usted piensa que su trabajo fuera de la casa perjudica el bienestar de su familia? Explique

72.¿Usted siente algún tipo de presión social para quedarse en casa en lugar de salir a trabajar?

73.¿Cómo es esta presión?¿Quienes la presionan?¿Otras mujeres, su esposo, sus hijos, otro? Explique

Maternidad y Empleo

74.En su opinión, ¿las mujeres que trabajan son tan buenas madres como las que se quedan en casa? Explique

75.Si en su opinión las madres que trabajan no pueden ser tan buenas madres como las que se quedan en casa, ¿cómo se siente al estar empleada?

76.¿En dónde deja a sus hijos mientras trabaja?

77.¿Se siente culpable al dejar a sus hijos al cuidado de otras personas mientras usted trabaja? Explique

78.¿Usted piensa que una mujer puede trabajar y ser madre al mismo tiempo sin importar la edad que tengan los hijos? Explique

79.¿Sería problemático para usted trabajar si algun miembro de la familia no pudiera cuidar a sus hijos o estar en casa cuando sus hijos regresaran de la escuela? Explique

80.¿Usted piensa que pasa suficiente tiempo con sus hijos? Si usted no pasa suficiente tiempo con sus hijos, ¿se arrepiente del poco tiempo que puede pasar con ellos? Explique

Actitudes en cuanto a roles sexuales

81. Por favor descríbame todas las cosas que hace en un día de trabajo común, desde que usted se despierta hasta que se va a dormir:

82. Por favor descríbame todas las cosas que hace en un día de fin de semana común, desde que usted se despierta hasta que se va a dormir:

83.¿Cómo se organizan en su familia para hacer el quehacer de la casa?¿Quién hace qué?

84.¿Cómo se organizan en su casa para cuidar a los niños y atender sus necesidades? ¿Quién hace qué

85.¿Usted cree que la ayuda de su esposo en el quehacer de la casa y la crianza de sus hijos ha aumentado desde que usted trabaja? Explique

86.¿Qué tan satisfecha esta usted con la ayuda de su esposo? Explique

87.¿Cómo se toman las decisiones en su familia?¿Quién toma qué decisiones?

88.¿Quién tomo la decisión de que usted trabajara?

89.¿Cuál fue la reacción de su esposo sobre su trabajo fuera de la casa?

90. En su opinión, ¿cuál ha sido el efecto de su trabajo fuera de la casa en su relación con su esposo?¿ha obtenido su respeto?¿ha obtenido su cooperación?¿le ha generado conflicto? Explique_____

_____

_____

Condiciones de Trabajo

91.¿Cuántas horas al día trabaja?_____

92.¿Tiene descansos en su trabajo?¿Cuánto duran los descansos?_____

_____

93.¿Cómo le pagan?¿por hora?¿por pieza?_____

94.¿Cuánto dura su tiempo de comida?_____

95.¿En dónde come usted?_____

96.¿Siempre trabaja el mismo turno?_____

_____

97.¿Trabaja tiempo extra?¿Cómo le pagan por ese trabajo?_____

_____

98.¿Ha tenido algun accidente en el trabajo?¿Quién se encargó de usted?_____

_____

99.¿Le han dado incapacidad por causa de embarazo (maternity leave)?¿En qué consistió?

_____

_____

100.¿Alguna vez la han desocupado de un empleo por causas fuera de su control? Especifique: clausura de una planta, reducción en la producción, etc._____

_____

101.¿Ha experimentado algún tipo de discriminación en su tabajo?¿La discriminaron por ser mujer o Mexicana? Por ejemplo, que no quieran dar empleo a mujeres porque no se comprometen con su trabajo o porque se ausentan para cuidar a sus hijos...Explique_____

_____

102.¿Se comunica usted de cosas personales o relacionadas al trabajo con sus compañeras de trabajo?_____

103.¿Cuándo se comunica con sus compañeras?¿Fuera del trabajo o durante el trabajo? (Descansos, hora de comida, mientras trabajan)_____

104.¿Existe competencia entre las trabajadoras?¿Por qué motivo?_____

_____

105.¿Frecuentemente entran trabajadoras a trabajar y salen otras?¿Estas trabajadoras son imigrantes?_____

106.¿Conoce usted las leyes que la protegen? (leyes sobre el trabajo e imigración) ¿Cómo sabe de ellas?_____

107.¿Siente temor de quejarse en su trabajo?¿Por qué? (ser desocupada o ser deportada)

_____

108.¿Está usted sindicalizada?_____

109.¿Cómo se organizan en su trabajo para obtener más beneficios o defenderse de abusos?

_____

110.¿Quién las dirige: hombres o mujeres?¿Mexicanos, Chicanos o Anglos?_____

_____

111.¿Tuvo alguna experiencia sindical en su país o estado de origen?_____

112.¿Qué cree que debe cambiar en su trabajo para que éste sea más agradable?_____

_____

113.¿Cuáles son sus necesidades inmediatas en su trabajo?¿Una guardería para niños?_____

_____

FIN DE LA ENTREVISTA

_____ _____

FIRMA DEL ENTREVISTADOR HORA Y FECHA

VITA

María Olivia Villarreal-Solano was born on October 15, 1969 in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. She entered The University of Monterrey in the Fall of 1987 where she received the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in International Studies in June, 1991. After receiving her degree she worked for Cigarrera la Moderna, S.A. de C.V. (Monterrey) as International Purchasing Agent until July 1993.

In the Fall of 1993 she joined The University of Monterrey as Lecturer in the Social Sciences Department. She entered the Graduate School of Social and Behavioral Sciences in the University of Texas-Pan American in January, 1994. While completing her graduate work, she served as Teaching and Research Assistant. From 1995 to 1996, she served as Student Representative for the Southwestern Sociological Association. She became a member in the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi in April, 1996. She completed her Masters of Science in Sociology in the Spring of 1996.

PUBLICATIONS:

Villarreal-Solano, María Olivia, et al. 1994. "Anglo Hispanic Relations in South Texas Schools from 1945 to 1993: A Triangulated Profile." *Rio Bravo* 3(2): 114-134.

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