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Depressive Symptoms Among Women Employed Outside the Home

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Researchers who attempt to explain why paid employment is a source of psychological distress for some women must consider how a number of factors in the work and nonoccupational environments influence a woman's reaction to employment outside the home. We examined four aspects of the job that may be a source of distress for working women: job dissatisfaction, pay dissatisfaction, commitment to the work role, and full versus part-time employment. Of these, pay dissatisfaction and commitment to the work role emerged as significant predictors of depressive symptoms. With regard to home-related roles, neither help with housework nor the presence of young children in the home exerted a significant direct effect on psychological distress. Young children at home did, however, have a significant interaction effect with a woman's sex role beliefs. Finally, the presence of a conflict between the work and home roles was also a significant predictor of depression.

As the proportion of women entering the labor force continues to grow (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1979), social scientists have shown an increasing interest in examining whether paid employment influences the psychological well-being of women who work outside the home (see Haw, 1982, for a review

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of this literature). Researchers now generally agree that merely examining the relationship between employment status and well-being represents an overly simplistic approach to this issue, and that a careful study of both the work and nonoccupational environments must be undertaken if we are to understand fully how working for pay affects women's well-being (Warr & Parry, 1982a).

A number of factors that may mediate the impact of work on well-being have been identified in several recent studies, including job satisfaction (Kessler & McRae, 1982), work/family conflicts (Warr & Parry, 1982b), and the presence of young children in the home (Cleary & Mechanic, 1983). Although these studies have contributed to our understanding of how work influences distress, many other features of the work and domestic environments remain to be explored. Three previously unexamined factors are of particular interest in this study: dissatisfaction with pay, commitment to the work role, and a woman's sex role orientations.

Although Warr and Parry (1982b) and Kessler and McRae (1982) found that global job satisfaction is an important predictor of psychological distress among employed women, they explicitly recognize that a detailed examination of more specific job conditions is needed if we are to demonstrate convincingly that work affects well-being. Dissatisfaction with pay represents one of the most important elements of a woman's attitude toward her job (Hinrichs, 1968). There are clear structural reasons why working women may be dissatisfied with their pay. Even though women have enjoyed increased participation in the labor force, they have also experienced a steady decline in earnings relative to men (Barrett, 1979). We expect this relative drop in earning power to be stressful for working women and that it will lead to increased feelings of psychological distress among them (Tebbets, 1982; Kanter, 1976).

Research further indicates that a person's reaction to their job is also determined in part by their commitment to that job. Warr and Parry (1982a) argue that women who work only because they need the money are less committed to their jobs and therefore less likely to receive any of the psychological benefits that outside employment may offer.[2] There have been no studies to date on the effects of job commitment on working women's well-being.

Scanzoni and Fox (1980) and Kessler and McRae (1982) maintain that women benefit psychologically from outside employment only if paid employment is consistent with their views regarding the appropriate behavior for females (see also Haw, 1982). A large proportion of our society still be-

[2]A similar argument has been made with respect to physical health status: Verbrugge (1983) maintains that voluntarism of employment status may influence physical well-being. Our measure of commitment to the work role appears to include an element of voluntarism.

lieves that women with children should devote the majority of their efforts to child-rearing and that women who have children should remain at home (Thornton, Alwin, & Camburn, 1983). To the extent that these norms are endorsed by working women, stress associated with engaging in paid employment while young children are at home may explain why some women experience psychological distress (Cleary & Mechanic, 1983).

Despite the strong theoretical support for expecting sex role orientations to determine how women react to paid employment, there has been virtually no empirical confirmation of this relationship. Those researchers who have attempted to explore this hypothesis have either used variables such as age and education as indicators of sex role beliefs (Kessler & McRae, 1982) or they have merely inferred sex role orientations from indicators of family composition (Cleary & Mechanic, 1983).[3]

While many factors of the work and nonoccupational environments remain to be explored, controversy surrounds many of the factors that have been examined. These controversies, which generally involve measurement problems, conceptual problems, or conflicting findings, have involved the use of the following concepts: help with household tasks, work/home conflicts, job dissatisfaction, full versus part-time employment, and the presence of young children in the home.

Although there has been evidence of dramatic changes in sex role orientations within certain segments of society (Thornton et al., 1983), there is some evidence that the division of labor in the home has been more resistant to change (Entwisle & Doering, 1981; Kanter, 1977). This is an especially important development because some researchers have found that those women who are most likely to experience distress because of outside employment are the women who receive the least amount of help with household chores (Zur-Szpiro & Longfellow, 1982; but see Kessler & McRae, 1982).

One limitation of these studies may be that researchers examined only help with household chores that was provided by the husband. Some women have a number of additional sources of help with housework besides their husbands. For example, recent studies show that as women enter the labor force they tend to spend more money on goods and services that ease the strain of combining work and family roles (Reynolds, 1980). In addition, working women may receive help from a number of sources, including older children, relatives, and friends. Clearly, studies that seek to examine the effects of help with household tasks on psychological distress must consider these additional sources of assistance.

[3]Recent studies by Krause (1982; 1983) show that not only must a woman's sex role beliefs be congruent with her employment status, but that her husband must also share similar views as well if she is to avoid psychological distress. The direct effects of wives' sex role beliefs were not examined in these studies.

Gove and Tudor (1973) hypothesize that women who work outside the home will experience psychological strain as they attempt to satisfy the conflicting demands of work and family roles. This hypothesis has been examined empirically, but the findings have been contradictory: on the one hand, Kessler and McRae (1982) failed to find a significant relationship between work/home conflicts and distress, while Warr and Parry (1982b) report that this conflict is a significant factor in distress. These differing findings may be explained, however, by the fact that Kessler and McRae (1982) measured work/home conflict with a single general item, and that Warr and Parry (1982b) examined working-class women only.

Warr and Parry (1982a) predict that women who actively dislike their occupational role will be less likely to receive psychological benefits from working than women who are more satisfied with their jobs. There is mixed support for this proposition in the literature: Cleary and Mechanic (1983) failed to find that job satisfaction influenced distress among working women, while Warr and Parry (1982b) found that it affects the well-being of part-time employees only, and Kessler and McRae (1982) report that the effects were restricted to women who were either very satisfied or very dissatisfied with their jobs. We reexamine this issue in the analyses presented below because of the controversy surrounding the role of job dissatisfaction in the development of psychological distress.

Warr and Parry (1982b) report that women who are employed on a part-time basis are at a greater risk of experiencing psychological distress than women who work full-time. Although the reason for this relationship is unclear in their discussion, perhaps part-time jobs are more stressful because they often involve low wages, few benefits, and are lacking in opportunities for advancement (Tebbets, 1982). In view of the fact that Warr and Parry (1982b) examine a restricted sample (working-class women only), we feel that this issue must be reexamined.

Finally, there is considerable controversy in the literature over the effects of young children in the home on the psychological well-being of working women: some researchers report that the presence of young children in the home is associated with greater distress (Pearlin, 1975; Brown & Harris, 1978; Cleary & Mechanic, 1983). Others, however, have been unable to replicate these findings (Kessler & McRae, 1982; Krause, 1982; Radloff, 1980). We believe that merely examining the association between the presence of young children in the home and distress is oversimplified, and that researchers should identify the conditions in which children in the home become a source of stress for working mothers. Two potentially important conditions have been identified in the literature: the first, which we discussed earlier, deals with the interface between sex role beliefs, the presence of children in the home, and distress. The second potentially important factor is discussed by Cleary

and Mechanic (1983), who argue that having children at home is particularly stressful when working mothers are from lower income groups.

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, we explore how dissatisfaction with pay, commitment to the work role, and sex role orientations determine how women react to employment outside the home. In addition, because of the problems discussed above, we also reexamine the relationship between distress and help with household chores, work/home conflicts, job dissatisfaction, full versus part-time employment, and the presence of young children in the home.

METHODS

The data for this study were gathered from a telephone survey of women residing in the Akron, Ohio area. The sample was limited to women who were currently married and living with their husbands. The names of potential respondents were randomly selected from the area phone directory and letters were sent to all selected persons explaining the nature and purpose of the study (see Dillman, Gallegos, & Grey, 1976, for a discussion of these procedures).

A total of 300 married women were interviewed. The completion rate was 65.1%.[4] The analyses presented below were conducted on the responses of 129 of these women, who represent that portion of the sample that were presently working outside the home.[5] The average age of the women in this subsample was 40.4 years and they had an average of 13 years of education. Seventy-nine of these women had at least one child residing with them at home.

The dependent variable in this study—depressive symptoms—was measured with the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D). In the early 1970s the Center for Epidemiologic Studies (at NIMH) initiated a series of studies that were designed to develop a continuous measure of depressive symptoms that could be used in community surveys (Weissman, Sholomskas, Pottenger, Prusoff, & Locke, 1977). The 20-item CES-D Scale was developed from these studies (the items in this scale are listed in the Appendix). The items in this scale were selected from previously validated depression scales (e.g., Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Mock, & Enbaugh, 1961; Dahlstrom & Welsh, 1960; Zung, 1965) in such a way that they represented

[4]The completion rate was determined by calculating the ratio of completed interviews to the sum of interrupted interviews, respondents who could not be reached, refusals, and completed interviews.

[5]Listwise deletion of missing data was used throughout the analyses.

the major components of depressive symptomatology that had been identified in the clinical literature and in factor analytic studies (see Radloff, 1977, for a complete listing of these components).[6]

The reliability and validity of the CES-D Scale has been demonstrated in a number of studies. After examining the performance of this scale in three separate samples, Radloff (1977) found that it exhibited a high internal consistency (.85 to .90) and that it discriminated well between samples of psychiatric patients and persons in the general population. Weissman et al. (1977) report that acutely depressed patients scored higher on the CES-D Scale than did other psychiatric patients, recovered depressives, or people in the community. Furthermore, they report that scores on the CES-D Scale correlated highly with scores obtained on other depression scales and with clinical interviews. Further evidence on the reliability and validity of the CES-D Scale is provided by Roberts (1980), Markush and Favero (1974), and Craig and Van Natta (1976).

We conducted a maximum likelihood exploratory factor analysis of the responses to the CES-D Scale. This analysis produced four theoretically meaningful factors that correspond to the factor structure reported by Radloff (1977) and Roberts (1980). The first factor, depressed affect, assesses feelings of sadness, loneliness, and depression. The internal consistency of this subscale is good (α = .88). The next factor, positive affect, reflects feelings of happiness, hopefulness, and enjoyment of life. The internal consistency of this subscale is adequate (α = .71). The third factor, somatic and retarded activities (α = .65), contains items that assess trouble with appetite, sleep disturbances, and the general inability to "get going." The last factor reflects interpersonal difficulties (α = .62) and it is measured by items that assess the perceived unfriendliness of others and whether a respondent feels disliked by others.

The four subscales are used as separate outcome measures in the study. Although there is some disagreement about using the scale in this manner (see Roberts, 1980; Radloff, 1977), we maintain that subscale analysis in survey research is warranted if the independent variables in a study are differentially related to the subscales in an empirically and theoretically meaningful manner (see Carmines & Zeller, 1979). In the data analyses that follow, we also present results based on the total CES-D Scale scores in order to demonstrate the utility of the subscale approach. For the purposes of this study, a high score on each of the depressive symptom measures reflects greater psychological distress.

Job dissatisfaction was measured with a seven-item index that was taken from the work of Alderfer (1967). As Alderfer notes, these items assess the

[6]We view the scores of the CES-D Scale as measuring symptoms of depression and not clinically defined syndromes.

degree to which a job meets individual growth needs, which include the opportunity to use existing skills on the job as well as the chance to learn new skills. This may be an especially appropriate job dimension to assess when studying women because, as Gove and Tudor (1973) argue, married women who work are likely to hold positions that are not commensurate with their educational backgrounds and that they will have less opportunity to use their skills on the job (see also McLaughlin, 1978). As a result, work is likely to be a source of stress and frustration for these women (Miller, Schooler, Kohn, & Miller, 1979). A high score on the seven-item index reflects greater dissatisfaction with the job (the items in this scale are listed in the Appendix). The reliability estimate for this scale is .74.

The scale that was used to assesss work/home conflict was designed by Ilfield (1976) (the items are in the Appendix). A high score on this scale indicates a higher degree of conflict between work and home roles. The internal consistency of the scale is .59.

Help with housework was assessed by asking respondents who usually performs each of 15 common household tasks (see Appendix). The items were presented in an open-ended format, which allowed us to determine if help came from diverse sources such as the husband, older children, relatives, friends, or others. A high score on this variable indicates that a woman performs more of the household tasks herself without help from anyone.

Pay dissatisfaction was measured with a single item that asked respondents how strongly they agreed or disagreed that, "the income I earn is just about right for the job I have." Responses to this item were initially coded in a five-point Likert format. Preliminary data analyses revealed, however, that the item performed best when it was coded as a binary variable, with a score of 1 indicating dissatisfaction with pay and a score of 0 indicating satisfaction with pay.

Commitment to the work role was also measured with a single indicator. The women in this study were asked whether or not they would work if they did not need the money. A score of 1 was assigned to those women who said they would work even if they did not need the money while a score of 0 was assigned to respondents who would work only for the money. This variable was analyzed in a dichotomous format because the original data contained only binary (yes/no) responses.

A binary variable was also constructed to determine whether a woman worked full or part-time. A score of 1 was assigned to women who worked full-time while a score of 0 was assigned to all part-time workers.

Sex role orientations were measured with a seven-item scale (see Appendix for a listing of these items). The items in this scale were drawn from the work of Motz (1952), Tobin (1976), and Brogan and Kutner (1976). The internal consistency of the scale was .75. A high score on this measure indicates that a respondent holds less traditional views of the female role.

Table I. The Effects of Work and Home Factors on Depressive Symptoms ($N = 129$)

Independent variables	Dependent variables[a]				
	Somatic and retarded activities	Positive affect	Interpersonal difficulties	Depressed affect	Global CES-D scale[a]
Pay	.204	.214[c]	.168[b]	.210[b]	.242[c]
dissatisfaction	2.414	2.793	.478	2.877	9.543
Commitment to	−.199[b]	.061	.159	−.036	−.068
work role	−2.812	.950	.540	−.596	−3.212
Job	.037	.182	.067	.110	.136
dissatisfaction	.046	.252	.020	.161	.569
Full/part-	−.045	.027	−.028	.012	.011
time	−.570	.372	−.086	.181	.461
Work/home	.258[d]	.184[b]	.082	.230[c]	.265[c]
conflict	.791	.624	.060	.818	2.703
Help with	.023	.018	.152	.131	.044
housework	.048	.040	.075	.311	.301
Young	−.042	−.026	−.047	−.036	−.045
children	−.621	−.419	−.165	−.612	−2.202
Sex role	.017	−.094	−.117	.003	−.011
orientations	.023	−.139	−.038	.005	−.050
Age	−.222[b]	−.014	−.321[d]	−.043	−.123
	−.009	−.0006	−.003	−.002	−.016
Education	−.203[b]	−.081	−.066	−.109	−.159
	−.574	−.253	−.045	−.355	−1.494
Multiple R^2	.227	.137	.188	.136	.200

[a]Standardized coefficient/metric coefficient.
[b]$p < .05$.
[c]$p < .01$.
[d]$p < .001$.

The women in this study were asked for the ages of all children who were currently residing with them. A binary variable was constructed to indicate whether any children 6 years of age or younger resided at home.[7] A score of 1 on this measure indicates that young children were present at home.

Finally, age and education were entered into the data analyses as demographic control variables. Age (calculated in the total number of months) was computed from the respondent's date of birth. Education reflects the exact number of years of education that a respondent completed and for which she received credit.

RESULTS

The results of the regression analyses that were conducted to assess the impact of the work and nonoccupational factors on the psychological well-being of employed women are presented in Table I. This table contains the

[7]The 6-year cutoff point was based on findings reported by Radloff (1977) and others.

results from five separate ordinary least squares multiple regression analyses. Each column in Table I contains the results from a single regression equation. For example, the regression coefficients in the first column were derived from an equation that evaluated the effects of pay dissatisfaction through education on the somatic and retarded activities subscale.

Earlier we hypothesized that women who were dissatisfied with their pay would be more likely to experience depressive symptoms than women who report that they were satisfied with their wages. The data in Table I support this hypothesis: women who are dissatisfied with their pay report more difficulties with somatic and retarded activities ($\beta = .204$; $p < .01$), positive affect ($\beta = .214$; $p < .05$), interpersonal difficulties ($\beta = .168$; $p < .05$), and depressed affect ($\beta = .210$; $p < .05$). The impact of dissatisfaction with pay has not been demonstrated previously in the literature.

A woman's reason for working, which we use as a proxy for commitment to the work role, was also related to depression. The data suggest that compared to women who would work if they did not need the money, women who work only for the money report more symptoms associated with somatic and retarded activities ($\beta = -.199$; $p < .05$). The data in Table I further indicate that we would not have observed this effect if we had relied solely on global CES-D scores. As the findings in the last column of Table I suggest, commitment to the work role does not exert a significant impact on global depressive symptom scores ($\beta = -.068$; ns). These findings illustrate the advantage in using the CES-D subscales as separate outcome measures.

We were unable to demonstrate that job dissatisfaction is related to psychological distress, which is not consistent with the results reported by Kessler and McRae (1982) and others. Perhaps the differences between our findings and those of other researchers arise from differences in the way job dissatisfaction is measured. Our measure assessed the extent to which a job met individual growth needs, while other researchers, such as Kessler and McRae (1982), measured job dissatisfaction with a single global item.

In contrast to the findings of Warr and Parry (1982b), we were unable to demonstrate that women who worked part-time were more distressed than full-time working women. One reason for these contradictory findings may be related to the fact that Warr and Parry (1982b) studied a sample of working-class women, while our respondents came from all social class levels.

In addition to examining purely work-related factors, we also explored how conflicting demands between the home and work roles influenced the well-being of women who were employed outside the home. The data in Table I indicate that the greater the perceived conflict between home and work roles, the more likely a woman was to report difficulties with somatic and retarded activities ($\beta = .258$; $p < .001$), positive affect ($\beta = .184$; $p < .05$), and depressed affect ($\beta = .230$; $p < .01$). We were unable to find any sig-

nificant effects of work/home conflicts on interpersonal difficulties. By examining the CES-D subscales individually we have been able to demonstrate that while work/home conflicts have important intrapersonal effects, they fail to exert a direct influence in the interpersonal sphere. Had we relied totally on the global CES-D scores (see Table I), we would not have been able to make this distinction.

We included two aspects of the home environment in our data analysis that had been idetified in the literature as being important determinants of how women react to working for pay: help with housework and the presence of young children in the home.

The data in Table I reveal that neither of the home factors had a significant direct effect on psychological distress. We tried a number of ways of coding help with household tasks to see if a different conceptualization of household assistance might help explain depressive symptom scores: for example, besides merely counting the number of chores a woman performed alone, we also computed how many she did with assistance from others and how many she did relative to the number of tasks her husband performed. The latter coding procedure was pursued to determine if the husband's willingness to perform an equal share of the household tasks might not have some symbolically important value to the working wife (see Kessler & McRae, 1982). None of these alternative scoring procedures produced any significant findings.

These results are consistent with the findings of Kessler and McRae (1982), but they conflict with the results reported by Zur-Szpiro and Longfellow (1982). Perhaps the discrepancy between our findings and those reported in the latter study may be attributed to the fact that they studied only lower class women.

We also tried a number of different ways of coding the presence of children in the home,[8] but we were unable to find any significant direct effects of children in the home on depressive symptoms.

Earlier, we argued that merely examining the direct effects of children in the home on distress may obscure important nonadditive relationships. Based on the speculations of Cleary and Mechanic (1983), we tested the hypothesis that children in the home are only a source of stress when mothers endorse traditional expectations for the female role. When we predict that sex role beliefs combine with the presence of young children in the home to produce psychological distress, we are specifying statistical interaction effects.

[8]We tried a number of alternative coding schemes to explore the ways in which children in the home influence well-being. Among the schemes we tried were the total number of children at home regardless of age, any children at home regardless of age or number, and the number of children at home under 6 years of age. We were unable to find any significant effects using these measures.

Tests for these interaction effects were conducted by estimating a series of mutiple regression equations that contained a multiplicative term that was constructed by multiplying the sex role orientations scores by the presence of young children in the home. In addition to containing the multiplicative terms, the following variables were also included in the equations: job dissatisfaction, pay dissatisfaction, commitment to the work role, full/part-time employment, help with housework, the presence of young children in the home, sex role orientations, age, and education.

The results of the tests for the interaction effects are presented in Table II.[9] This table contains only the information that is needed to interpret the interaction effects. Information on the additive effects of the variables listed above is not presented although these variables were included in the analyses.

The data in Table II reveal that when young children reside in the home, women with nontraditional sex role beliefs report fewer symptoms of somatic and retarded activities than women with traditional sex role orientations. More specifically, the impact of young children at home for nontraditional women is -2.981, while the corresponding effect for more traditional women is 2.192 (the interaction effect is significant at the .054 level).[10] Similarly, when young children are present, nontraditional women have fewer problems (-3.102) with positive affect than women with traditional sex role orientations (2,827; $p < .057$).

Returning to Table II, we can see that the interaction effect between sex role orientations and the presence of young children in the home is sig-

[9]Only unstandardized regression coefficients are reported in Table II because, as Southwood (1978) demonstrates, the values of the standardized regression coefficients are without any inherent meaning.

[10]The interaction effects were calculated with the formulas provided by Stolzenberg (1980), that may be illustrated through the following example: assume that the purpose of the analysis is to determine the interaction effects of young children at home and sex role beliefs on depression. The regression equation used to estimate these effects would be:

$$D = a + b_1YC + b_2SR + b_3 (YC \times SR) + \Sigma c_i z_i + e \quad (1)$$

In this equation, depressive symptoms (D) are predicted by young children at home (YC), sex role beliefs (SR), a multiplicative term representing the interaction of young children and sex role beliefs (YC $\times$ SR), and the control variables (z_i) plus a residual (e). If the interaction is significant, then the impact of young children at home cannot be interpreted independently of the multiplicative term (YC $\times$ SR). As Stolzenberg (1980) shows, however, the effects of YC on D are given by:

$$\delta D/\delta YC = b_1 + b_3(SR) \quad (2)$$

Note that in equation 2, the effects of YC are dependent on the values of SR. Technically, one could derive an estimate of the effect of YC for each value of SR. Following Stolzenberg's (1980) advice, we chose to estimate the effects of young children at home and sex role beliefs on depressive symptoms based on sex role orientation scores at plus one standard deviation from the mean (less traditional) and minus one standard deviation from the mean (more traditional).

Table II. The Interaction Effects of Young Children at Home and Sex Role Orientations on Depressive Symptoms ($N = 129$)

Effects of young children at home on depressive symptoms when women have:	Dependent variables				
	Somatic and retarded activities	Positive affect	Interpersonal difficulties	Depressed affect	Global CES-D scale
Traditional sex role orientations[a]	2.192[c]	2.827	.034	2.033	7.095
Nontraditional sex role orientations[b]	−2.981 $p < .054$[d]	−3.102 $p < .057$	−.357 $p < .561$	−2.802 $p < .142$	−10.627 $p < .041$

[a]Effect parameter computed at −1 standard deviation from the mean.
[b]Effect parameter computed at +1 standard deviation from the mean.
[c]Metric (unstandardized) coefficient.
[d]Significance level for the interaction effect.

nificantly related to global CES-D scores. Nontraditional women with young children report fewer symptoms of depression (−10.627) than traditional women with young children at home (7.095; $p < .041$). While this information is important, it is also somewhat limited because it fails to indicate which components of depression are most likely to be affected.

Cleary and Mechanic (1983) attribute these effects to the fact that traditional women who work feel more guilt than less traditional mothers when they leave young children at home. Although we do not have a measure of guilt in our data, we did test an alternative explanation for the interaction effects of sex role beliefs and young children on distress.

Using three indicators of involvement in chid-care chores,[11] we tested the hypothesis that traditional working mothers with young children experience more distress than their less traditional counterparts because traditional mothers will be more likely to perform more child-care activities alone. This, in addition to other household and work responsibilities, may lead to greater psychological distress.

The additional exploratory analyses revealed that among women with young children at home, endorsing more traditional sex role beliefs was associated with performing more child-care tasks alone ($r = -.534$; $p < .003$).[12] Furthermore, among women with young children at home, performing more child-care activities alone was associated with more symptoms of somatic and retarded activities ($r = .586$; $p < .05$).

[11]The child-care items were: "Who sees to it that the children get out of bed at the right time? Who disciplines the children? Who sees to it that the children get washed and dressed?" Obviously these items measure only a very limited aspect of child-care. We consider this aspect of our analyses to be highly speculative and exploratory.

[12]We use zero-order correlation coefficients here because the repeated partitioning of the sample has produced groups with only 25 cases, which is too small for multiple regression analysis.

Although these additional analyses do not test whether guilt is an important factor in explaining the joint impact of young children in the home and sex role beliefs on depressive symptoms, they do suggest that at least part of the reason why this interaction effect exists is because traditional mothers bear the added burden of performing child-care tasks alone. Replication of these findings is clearly needed.

Earlier, we also hypothesized that young children may be a source of stress to working mothers if these women are members of the lower income groups. In additional analyses (not shown here), we tested this proposition.[13] We were unable to find any significant interaction effects between the presence of young children in the home and the total family income of the respondent.

Returning to the data in Table I, the data reveal that a woman's sex role beliefs did not have any direct effects on her psychological well-being.

Overall, the work and nonoccupational measures appear to be more strongly related to the somatic and retarded activities subscale than to any of the other depressive symptom subscales. They are least effective in predicting a woman's interpersonal difficulties score. These general trends in the data seem to suggest that rather than expressing their frustrations outwardly in interpersonal relations, the women in this sample tend to communicate their distress through more inward, psychosomatic avenues. These findings illustrate why it is advantageous to treat the CES-D subscales as separate variables. When these observations are combined with the earlier findings that showed that the global CES-D Scale failed to pick up the effects of commitment to the work role, we feel justified in recommending that researchers should consider using the subscales as separate outcome measures in future studies.

A presentation of cross-sectional data would not be complete without recognizing explicitly the problem of reciprocal causation. It is possible that indicators like job and pay dissatisfaction are confounded with depressive symptoms. One could argue easily that rather than being a cause of depression, dissatisfaction with pay among working women is nothing more than another symptom of depression that emerged after the onset of psychological distress.

We have no data to conclusively refute this argument. There are, however, several factors that lead us to believe that we have specified the correct causal ordering among the variables in our analyses. If depression influences a woman's perceptions of her roles, then we could expect a woman to be equally dissatisfied with all the roles in which she is engaged. That is, a woman who is dissatisfied with her pay because of her preexisting depressed state should express dissatisfaction with her job as well. The data

[13]Tables from these additional analyses are available on request from the first author.

in Table I reveal that only pay dissatisfaction, and not job dissatisfaction, is related to depression. Furthermore, our data suggest that women who are dissatisfied with their pay are not dissatisfied with their jobs ($r = .084$; $p < .168$). Why would dissatisfaction that is induced by depression be limited to one, and not both forms of disenchantment? Obviously, only longitudinal data can provide more conclusive evidence on the problem of reciprocal causation. We can only speculate on the issues until such data are available.

CONCLUSIONS

Our analyses have demonstrated that women's psychological reactions to paid employment are determined by a complex interaction between both work and nonoccupational factors.

Pay dissatisfaction and commitment to the work role emerged as important job-related determinants of well-being. The fact that job dissatisfaction was not related to depression, while dissatisfaction with pay was a predictor of depression seems to suggest that researchers should continue to examine the effects of specific aspects of job dissatisfaction on depressive symptoms. In view of the fact that women are underemployed as well as underpaid (Barrett, 1979), it may be useful to examine if depression is influenced by the fit between a woman's education and training and the skills required to perform her job (see French, Rogers, & Cobb, 1974, for a discussion of person-environment fit).

The home-related factors (help with housework tasks and the presence of young children in the home) did not have any significant direct effects on depressive symptoms. Previous researchers restricted their investigations to help with housework that was received only from the husband. Although our analyses probed this relationship further by considering help from all possible sources including the husband, we were unable to demonstrate that assistance from any help source was significantly related to depression. Perhaps help per se is not the important factor. Help with housework may only become an important predictor of depression when it is examined within the normative framework of the household members.

In fact, our analyses did point to one possible way in which objective household demands interact with normative beliefs to determine how women react to paid employment. We found that the presence of young children in the home could be a source of stress to working mothers if they endorsed more traditional views of the female role. Under these circumstances, working women are more likely to take sole responsibility for child-rearing tasks, thereby placing themselves in a role overload situation.

In addition to examining only home- or only work-related factors, our analyses also suggest that the combination of home and work roles may be

an important determinant of a woman's psychological reaction to paid employment. We found that women who experience conflict between work and family roles are more likely to be distressed than women who do not experience a work/home conflict. We assessed work/home conflicts with a brief three-item scale that was limited mostly to the lack of free time associated with role overload. It may be useful for researchers to pursue the effects of other forms of work/home conflicts such as declines in the quality and quantity of interpersonal relations due to the demands of the work and home roles.

We view our research as only a prelude to a greatly needed series of studies that probe how the multiple roles which working women perform (worker, wife, mother) affect their psychological well-being. In the future, researchers must examine both the additive and interactive impact of these multiple roles to gain a full understanding of why paid employment becomes a source of psychological distress for some women.

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APPENDIX

CES-D Scale Items (Radloff, 1977)[a]

1. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.
2. I did not feel like eating, my appetite was poor.
3. I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from my family or friends.
4. I felt that I was just as good as other people.
5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.
6. I felt depressed.
7. I felt that everything I did was an effort.
8. I felt hopeful about the future.
9. I thought my life had been a failure.
10. I felt fearful.
11. My sleep was restless.
12. I was happy.
13. I talked less than usual.
14. I felt lonely.
15. People were unfriendly.
16. I enjoyed life.
17. I had crying spells.
18. I felt sad.
19. I felt that people disliked me.
20. I could not get "going."

Job Dissatisfaction Index (Alderfer, 1967)

A. I have the opportunity to use many of my skills at work.
B. Careful planning is necessary on my job.
C. My job requires that a person use a wide range of abilities.
D. In my job I have the same things to do over and over.
E. My job is constantly changing.
F. My job requires making one or more important decisions every day.
G. I am rarely asked to try new ways of doing things at work.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Uncertain
5. Strongly disagree

[a]The respondents were asked to indicate the number of days in the past week in which the item described how they felt.

Work/Home Conflict (Ilfield, 1976)

A. How often do you just have more to do than you can handle?
B. How often do you have too little for household jobs?
C. How often do you have free time for yourself?
   1. Always
   1. Often
   3. Sometimes
   4. Never

Help with Housework[b]

A. Who repairs things around the house?
B. Who does the grocery shopping?
C. Who clears the table?
D. Who does the dishes?
E. Who does the laundry?
F. Who cooks the meals?
G. Who does the cleaning and dusting?
H. Who takes out the garbage or trash?
I. Who plans the menu?
J. Who does the ironing?
K. Who keeps track of the money and bills?
L. Who washes the car?
M. Who feeds the pets?
N. Who mows the lawn?
O. Who shovels the sidewalk?

Sex Role Orientations

A. I think it should be my duty as a wife to do practically all of the housework (Mortz, 1952).
B. Wives who don't have to work should not (Tobin, 1976).
C. A woman is a better wife and mother if she spends most of her time with her family and has few interests outside the home (Tobin, 1976).
D. Married women should not be expected to get involved in politics and community affairs since a woman's place is in the home (Tobin, 1976).
E. The husband should take primary responsibility for major family decisions such as the purchase of a home or car (Brogan & Kutner, 1976).
F. A woman should refrain from being too competitive with men and keep her peace rather than show a man he's wrong (Brogan & Kutner, 1976).

[b]The relationship to the respondent of the person performing the chore was recorded.

G. Women should be able to compete with men for jobs that have traditionally belonged to men, such as telephone lineman (Brogan & Kutner, 1976).
   1. Strong agree
   2. Agree
   3. Uncertain
   4. Disagree
   5. Strongly disagree