

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Employed Graduate Student Mothers: The Benefits, Challenges, and Perspectives of Women

Fulfilling Student, Family, and Worker Roles

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

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December 2014

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October 2014

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Tanisha Douglas DuBransky

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. – Romans 8:28

This undertaking was most certainly a calling, and one to which I could not have responded on my own. I am grateful for my advisor and committee chair, Dr. Sharon Conley, and my committee members, Drs. Jenny Cook-Gumperz and Cynthia Hudley. Thank you for your interest in my research and for your guidance, structure, and appreciation for students like me. Some might have “mommy-tracked” or declined to join the committee of a student managing family and work roles (including having two babies while in the program!), but you stuck with me and drew me closer to my goal, just as you would have with any other student.

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## DEDICATION

To my husband, Marc, with whom I have learned to appreciate the virtue of interdependence, thank you for your commitment, encouragement, reliability, and genuine desire for me to succeed. You freely give and ask for nothing in return. You consider your roles as husband and father first and do more than your fair share of almost everything, and without complaint. Your example of discipline is what got me here.

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## ABSTRACT

Employed Graduate Student Mothers: The Benefits, Challenges, and Perspectives of Women

Fulfilling Student, Family, and Worker Roles

by

Tanisha Douglas DuBransky

A rising number of students are pursuing graduate degrees while working and parenting young children. Gender differences in the experience of multiple roles are well-known, and graduate school and childbearing years tend to overlap. This study sought to discover how employed graduate student mothers (GSMs)--women fulfilling work, academic, and parenting roles--experience, perceive, and meet the demands of their multiple roles. Some of the work-family literature has explained the interface between the work and family domains using two contrasting perspectives--conflict and enrichment, and it is now known that role occupants can experience both throughout the course of meeting multiple role demands. The participants in the study were concurrently involved in the roles of parent of one or more preschool child(ren), graduate student (MA, EdD, or PsyD), and (full- or part-time) employee. Each woman completed a brief, structured demographic questionnaire and participated in a one-on-one, semi-structured, open-ended interview. A case-oriented, cross-case analysis using inductive and deductive methods was conducted. The findings indicated that employed GSMs experienced both challenges and benefits in the course of fulfilling student, family, and work role demands. However, an overall perspective of conflict or enrichment appeared to be related to the experience of role overload and certain student and family role factors, including the employed GSM's position in her graduate program, the role management technique she used, and the age(s) and number of her child(ren).



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## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

by Elizabeth Ralph Mertz (1975)

When Aristotle wrote his books,  
When Milton searched for rhyme,  
Did they have toddlers at the knee  
Requesting dinner time?

When Dante contemplated hell,  
Or Shakespeare wrote a sonnet,  
Did Junior interrupt to say  
His cake had ketchup on it?

When Socrates was teaching youth  
And Plato wrote the Phaedo,  
Were they the ones to clean the mess  
The children made with Play-doh?

If Edmund Burke had had to work  
On all his kid's ablutions  
Would he have had the time and strength  
To speak of revolution?

When Homer wrote his Iliad  
Or Aesop told a fable,  
Were they concerned about whose turn  
It was to set the table?

When Newton fussed with calculus  
Or labored in his lab  
Did he compare the whiteness of  
His laundry done with Fab?

Did food get bought when Darwin  
Sought the origin of a species,  
Or did he have to hush the tots  
And tell them not to tease please?

When Holmes and Brandies donned their robes  
And gave their wise opinions  
Was laundry piled four-feet high  
With socks mixed up with linens?

How much greater then the task  
Of those who manage both  
Who juggle scholarship with child  
Development and growth

And how much greater is the praise  
For those who persevere  
And finish their advanced degrees  
And take up a career!

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Prior to the 1970s, faculty and graduate students were primarily men from traditional, single-income families (Mason, Goulden, & Frasch, 2009). At present, men and women earn doctorates in equal numbers, tend to be from dual-earner families, and come from a more equally socialized generation which strongly values work-life balance (Mason et al., 2009; Mason & Ekman, 2007; Spade & Reese, 1991). This balance often includes the desire to pursue a graduate degree and sustain a family, concurrently.

### Statement of the Problem

Interest in multiple roles among graduate students gained momentum in the early 1980s as researchers took note of a decade-long increase in the number of married graduate students with children (Dyk, 1987). Currently, approximately 25 percent of doctoral students and 33 percent of masters students in the United States are parents, and the average age at which students complete the doctoral degree is 33 (Mason & Frasch, 2007; Springer, Parker, & Leviten-Reid, 2009). Much of the literature has focused on women specifically, as gender differences in the experience of multiple roles are well-known (Dyk, 1987; Mason & Frasch, 2007).

Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) define *role* as “a complex amalgam of expectations and actions that make up what you do, and should do, as a certain type of actor in a setting—a family, a classroom, a committee, a hospital, a police department, or a multinational corporation” (p. 162). Graduate student parents (GSPs) meet multiple role demands as they manage their family and academic roles, and each responsibility is considered paramount. It seems that graduate student mothers (GSMs) are more prone to many of the challenges of managing multiple roles. *Role conflict* is a process by which the demands of one role are

mutually incompatible with the demands of another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The gender and multiple roles literature suggests that women experience greater role conflict than men (Gilbert & Holahan, 1982; Hammer, Allen, & Grigsby, 1997; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992), therefore, among GSPs, an emphasis on mothers appears relevant for this study.

### **Background of the Problem**

A University of California survey of doctoral students with over 8,000 respondents found that 14 percent of women and 12 percent of men have children (Mason et al., 2009). Among doctoral students nationally, 24 percent of women and 28 percent of men are parents (Mason & Ekman, 2007). This is significant considering the responsibilities of parenting and graduate study both require substantial time and long-term commitment. The influx of female graduate students over the last four decades provides evidence for a rapidly changing student body (Evans & Grant, 2008; Mason et al., 2009; Springer et al., 2009). For instance, 12 percent of doctoral degrees were earned by women in 1966, but by 2002 that number had climbed to 42 percent (Evans & Grant, 2008). Further, the decade between 1995 and 2005 saw an almost 20 percent increase in the number of female PhD recipients—from 44 to 51 percent (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011). As of 2012, women earned 60 percent of masters and 52 percent of doctoral degrees (Gonzales, Allum, & Sowell, 2013, p. 12).

The surge of women pursuing graduate degrees is accompanied by other trends. In 2011, 70.9 percent of women with children under age 18 were in the workforce (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2013). This is compared with 47 percent in 1975 (BLS, 2011; Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2008). When we consider the organization of work and family, the traditional family model and its gender-specific division of labor between partners is apparently no longer the norm (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Galinsky & Matos, 2011). Because the division of work



inside the home has not kept in step with the division of labor outside the home (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Hammer et al., 1997; McElwain, Korabik, & Rosin, 2005), women are experiencing an increase in extra-familial demands (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991). On average, women spend more hours per week working—both paid and nonpaid, if one considers employment, housework, and caregiving—than men (Galinsky & Matos, 2011; Mason & Frasch, 2007; Springer et al., 2009). It is not surprising that employed women report difficulty meeting all their work and family obligations (Coverman, 1989).

Scholarship on gender and multiple roles suggests that gender differences exist, and it appears that women in the academy have similar issues. Seeking advanced education in an institutional structure not originally designed for women, while parenting simultaneously, may produce significant time pressures.

...Originally, higher learning was not intended to accommodate women. Not until the mid-nineteenth century did colleges begin to admit women, who faced discriminatory barriers...into the 1950s. Some schools refused to admit women even into the 1970s. (Evans & Grant, 2008, p. xviii)

The editors of *Mama, PhD: Women Write about Motherhood and Academic Life* remind us that institutional programs and policies have not caught up with the needs of GSPs, particularly women (Evans & Grant, 2008). Traditionally, the demands of graduate education required a linear trajectory, with full-time commitment, often for several years (Mason et al., 2009). This is not surprising as the norms within the academe were influenced mostly by male, non-primary caregivers and thus lacked the priorities of and protections for the life patterns of women (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2001; Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006).

In agreement with this perspective, Lynch (2008) stated that “[the] old patterns of support from the American academe...do not mesh with new patterns of enrollment” (p. 595). Arguably, this institutional structure can create opposition in the lives of academic parents that often results in the departure of considerable talent and skills from academia (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006).

As mothers continue attending college and university campuses in larger numbers (Dyk, 1987; Hooper, 1979), the need to learn more about how this group experiences and meets multiple role demands is evident. Furthermore, with few exceptions (Dyk, 1987; Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009), little research has focused on exploring ways in which GSPs experience their roles and whether GSMs experience conflict, enrichment, or both as a result of multiple role management.

### **Work and Family Roles**

Some of the work-family literature explains the interaction between work and family through two primary lenses: the conflict perspective and the enrichment perspective. Both perspectives focus on the quantity of roles fulfilled by a single individual and both emphasize the ‘spillover’ from one domain to another. The conflict perspective highlights the negative spillover, and the enrichment perspective highlights the positive spillover from one domain to the other.

From a conflict perspective, multiple responsibilities give rise to the potential for role interference. Indeed, the conflict perspective has been given the most attention in the work/family literature (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Goode, 1960; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The negative outcomes of multiple roles have been explored in midlife women (Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987), full- and part-time faculty (Bottiani, 1994; Trower, 2001; Weigt &

Solomon, 2008), dual-earner couples (Hammer et al., 1997), and a variety of other workers and professionals (Frone, 2000a; Frone, 2000b; Gilbert, Holahan, & Manning, 1981; Weigt & Solomon, 2008).

A smaller, but growing body of literature has asserted that multiple roles may, alternatively, enhance or enrich an individual's life (Baruch et al., 1987; Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). Variables such as role enrichment, job satisfaction, and role satisfaction for individuals managing work and family responsibilities have been explored in professors, mid-level managers (Tiedje et al., 1990), principals (Eckman & Kelber, 2009), nurses, and engineers (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Conley, 1991).

The exploration of the interface between work and family among academics and working professionals has been conducted via quantitative means (Frone, 2000a; Frone, 2000b; Gilbert et al., 1981; Hammer et al., 1997; Weigt & Solomon, 2008), but relatively few qualitative studies focus on multiple roles (Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009). Furthermore, little is known about the benefits and challenges of women in the simultaneous roles of graduate student, parent, and employee.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to begin exploring the student/work/family interface—specifically how GSMs experience, perceive, and meet the demands of their roles as graduate student, mother, and employee. The overall perspective of GSMs regarding their involvement in these roles—either as conflicting experiences, enriching experiences, or a combination of both types—is of particular interest in his study. How are graduate student mothers experiencing concurrent involvement in these three roles? What practices do GSMs employ which help them meet the demands of their graduate programs, parental responsibilities, and work? A composite

sequence (Figure 1) was used to analyze and visually display the roles, role demands, challenges, benefits, and perspectives of the employed GSMs in this study (Chapter 5). Composite sequence analysis is used to “extract typical stories or scenarios from multiple individual cases to develop a collective network that represents their common and unique features in meaningful sequences and paths,” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 211).

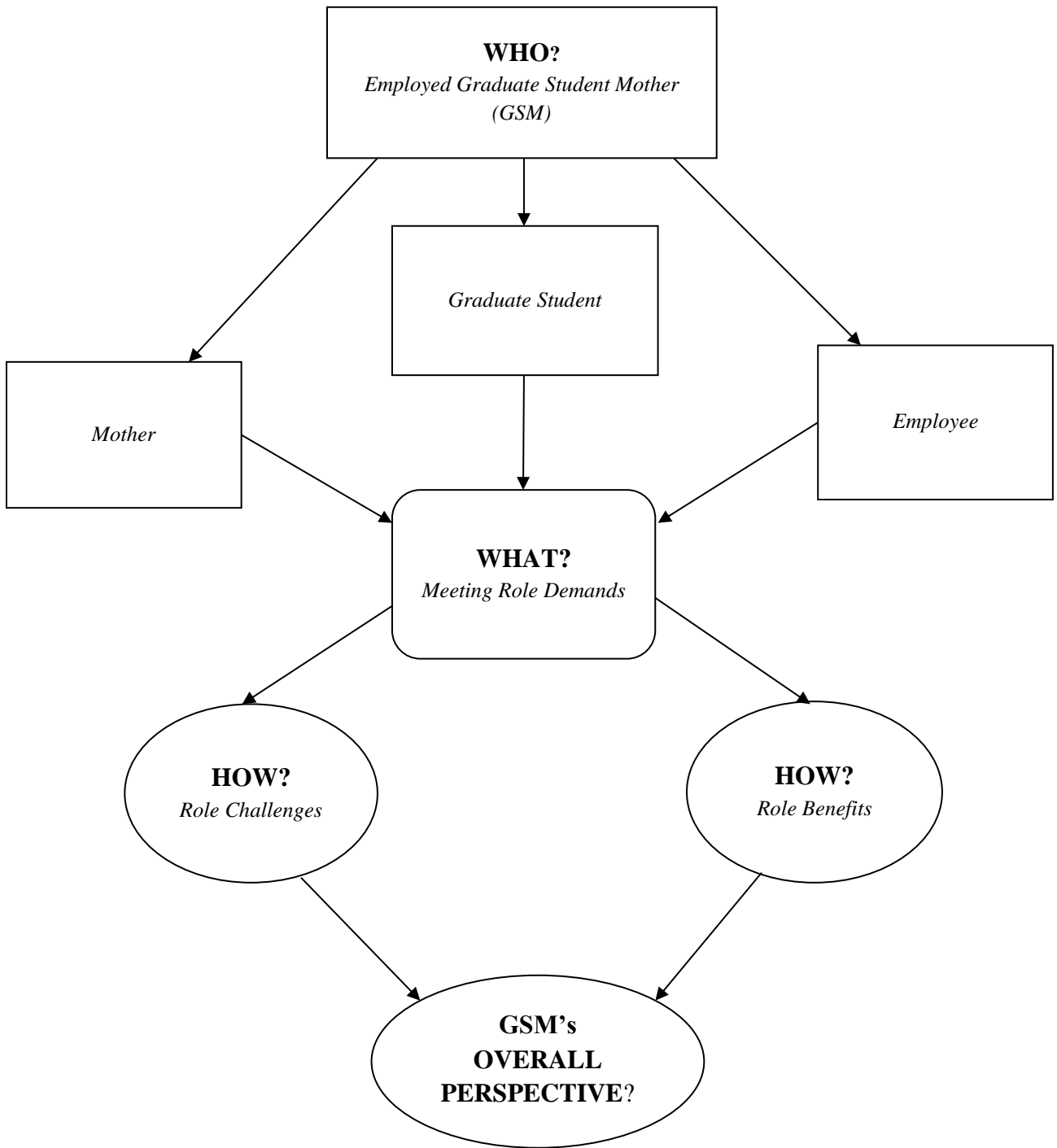
### **Research Questions**

The central question of this study is: How do employed GSMs experience and meet the demands of their multiple roles, and what perspective do they adopt in doing so? This question leads to the following research questions:

1. What overall perspective is reflected in the participant’s descriptions of their experience fulfilling the roles of graduate student, mother, and employee?
2. What practices do employed GSMs identify which help them meet the demands of their multiple roles?
3. What challenges and benefits of these roles do employed GSMs identify?

### **Overview of Method**

Qualitative research has origins in anthropology and sociology with studies of people through observation, artifacts, interviews, documents, and a focus on the sociocultural context of their environment (Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam (2009), qualitative studies “are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (p. 13). This study used a basic qualitative interviewing method to explore the experiences, practices, and multiple role demands of 6 employed GSMs. I selected this method because the research was exploratory in nature with a primary focus on understanding:



**Figure 1.** Composite Sequence Display: Benefits, Challenges, and Perspectives of Employed GSMs

1) the overall perspectives of a sample of employed GSMs, 2) the challenges and benefits employed GSMs experience, and 3) how, in practice, do employed GSMs respond to and meet the demands of their multiple roles. Several authors agree that exploratory studies are best carried out via qualitative means (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 1990). In particular, I subscribe to Creswell's (2009) definition of qualitative research as "a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2009, p. 4).

### **Significance of the Study**

The shape of postsecondary education is rapidly changing. Just as undergraduate programs are no longer reserved for only the young, parent-supported, recent high school diploma recipient, graduate programs are admitting more students with "non-traditional" characteristics. Non-traditional students are more likely to be age 25 and older, from an underrepresented group, and have family responsibilities—which may include being a single parent, or having a dependent spouse and/or children (Choy, 2002; Horn & Carroll, 1996). The non-traditional student population is expected to increase by 21 percent (for ages 25-34) between 2009 and 2020 (Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance [ACSFA], 2012).

Because non-traditional students are more likely to have dependents, they also tend to be employed during their enrollment (Horn & Carroll, 1996; Kasworm, 2003). In addition, adult students are typically financially independent, experience more financial barriers (ACSFA, 2012), and have more debt and financial burden than traditional students (Hart, 2003; Horn & Carroll, 1996). In fact, in 2006 only 16 percent of the 17 million postsecondary students met traditional student criteria (Allen, 2009).

These enrollment trends are believed to be in response to changing social, cultural, and economic forces (Allen, 2009; Kasworm, 2003; Schuetze & Slowey, 2002). Socially, there is an increasing demand for higher education (Flint, 2000; Schuetze & Slowey, 2002). Culturally, postsecondary education is commonly believed to be a right for every person (Allen, 2009). Economically, the job market has changed as global competition, the drive for information, professionalization of careers, and employment qualifications have increased (Allen, 2009; Flint, 2000; Kasworm, 2003; Pusser et al., 2007; Schuetze & Slowey, 2002). In addition, rapid technology changes and the development of new institutions and degree programs have allowed for mass participation in higher education online, in hybrid format, from long distances, and during the evenings, thereby granting access to a wider audience (Allen, 2009; Kasworm, 2003; Schuetze & Slowey, 2002).

A well-educated workforce is in high demand. More educated citizens benefit the nation with higher rates of employment, better working conditions and benefits, and higher annual earnings (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning [CAEL], 2008). Since 1970, there has been a nearly 60 percent increase in students age 25 and older (Ntiri, 2001). These adult students are “seeking degrees in a system built largely for—and around—traditional students” (Pusser et al., 2007, p. 3). The current non-traditional student enrollment trends coupled with the trends in women’s labor participation and degree seeking, it is reasonable to assume that many of these students are currently or may eventually enroll in graduate programs for various social, cultural, and economic reasons, and the majority of these students will be women (Evans & Grant, 2008).

Women’s experiences fulfilling work and family roles has been explored, but little is known about how GSMs experience their multiple roles. The literature has viewed the interface between work and family roles through the conflict and enrichment lenses, and the majority of

previous research has indicated that multiple roles lead to role conflict and result in negative outcomes. However, a growing body of literature has suggested positive outcomes of multiple roles, which lead to role enrichment. Overall, research on the experiences of GSMs is scarce. It is virtually unknown how this group manages student, work, and family roles and whether this population experiences conflict, enrichment, or both in the process.

This exploratory study adds to the work/family literature by providing descriptions of the experiences of a sample of employed GSMs and contributes to the understanding how employed GSMs meet the demands of their multiple roles. This study also informs female graduate students of the benefits and challenges of combining academic, family, and work roles, along with informing this population of the characteristics which may be associated with conflict and enrichment. Other groups who may benefit from this study include higher education administrators, faculty working with this population, and the families of employed graduate student mothers.

### **Study Limitations and Delimitations**

GSPs are in a unique position wherein three primary responsibilities merge: education, employment, and parenting. In addition to paid work and classes, many graduate students have a spouse and one or more dependent child(ren). Graduate students without children report spending about 75 hours per week in their paid and unpaid duties (Mason & Frasc, 2007). This is compared with 95 hours for graduate student fathers and 102 hours per week for GSMs (Mason & Frasc, 2007). The major difference is that GSMs report spending significantly more time on housework and caregiving than graduate student fathers. This discrepancy indicates that for mothers, the addition of an academic role and/or employment is followed by what Hochschild (1989) referred to as the ‘second shift,’ or an additional workload at home—a



physically demanding and unsustainable schedule (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006; Mason & Ekman, 2007). For these reasons, this study is limited to women, specifically those in the roles of graduate student, mother, and employee.

### **Definition of Terms**

The work-family interface is widely studied in the fields of psychology, sociology, family relations, human resources, management, vocational behavior, and organizational behavior. The following address the general operating definitions of terms used frequently in this study and are helpful for understanding the specific context and concepts referred to throughout the study:

**Employed.** Having compensated work in the form of wages, course units, or course credit.

**Family.** A group of individuals related by marriage or kin, living in the same household.

**Graduate student.** A person enrolled in a graduate program at a college or university that is authorized to grant advanced (masters or doctoral) degrees.

**Graduate student mother (GSM).** A woman enrolled in a graduate program who is the biological or adoptive parent of at least one child living in the home.

**Mother.** A woman/female parent of a child, by birth or adoption.

**Role.** A pattern of behavior in accordance with social position and others' expectations.

**Role conflict.** The process by which the demands of one role are mutually incompatible with the demands of another role.

**Role enrichment.** The process by which the demands in one role provide benefits for meeting demands in another role.

**Role resources.** Assets generated in the course of meeting role demands that can be used for coping or problem-solving.

**Role strain.** The pressure, or stress, generated in the course of meeting role demands.

**Role overload.** Occurs when role demands exceed available resources.

**Work.** Any employment for which an employee is compensated, either part-time or full-time, on or off campus.

**Work/family conflict.** The extent to which the demands and expectations of the work role are incompatible with the demands and expectations of the family role, and vice versa.

**Work/family enrichment.** The extent to which the experiences in the work role improve the quality of life in the family role, and vice versa.

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **Overview**

With some exceptions, there is little role management research with students as the focus (Dyk, 1987; Springer et al., 2009), but as non-traditional students continue pervading college and university campuses (Hooper, 1979), the need to study the experiences of parents is apparent. This literature review focuses first on graduate students and the challenges of multiple roles. The focus narrows to the experiences of women, beginning with women balancing academic work and motherhood. Then, I will review selected works on women in the academy, followed by the research on maternal employment and parenting. Finally, I will address classic works on role conflict and role enrichment, including the research of Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) and Greenhaus and Powell (2006) who proposed the prominent theoretical models of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment.

### **Graduate Study and Family Roles**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, American doctoral students complete their degrees at an average age of 33 (Mason & Frasch, 2007; Springer et al., 2009). In 2012, the median age of first-time mothers the United States was 25.3 (Arroyo et al., 2013). Because graduate school tends to coincide with childbearing years (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011; Mason & Frasch, 2007; Springer et al., 2009), it is not surprising that graduate study and the nature of the mothering role seem to conflict (Lynch, 2008). Many graduate students defer having children during their school years (Mason & Ekman, 2007). However, GSPs simultaneously managing academic, work, and family roles often experience financial, institutional, and cultural challenges (Lynch, 2008; Mason & Frasch, 2007).

## **The Challenges of Multiple Roles**

GSPs face many challenges as they attempt to balance student and family roles, as each is considered a primary responsibility. Further, as both parent and graduate student, women can experience an opposition between roles (Springer et al., 2009; Lynch, 2008). Research on *role strain*, a term first used by Goode (1960), is found throughout the literature and assumes that multiple roles lead to stress. Implicit in this assumption is that stress within one role creates strain within another role (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Hammer et al., 1997). The conflict hypothesis (Goode, 1960) as it is known, proposes that one individual occupying work and family roles will ultimately experience work and home pressures competing for the individual's resources (e.g., time and effort). According to this perspective, an incompatibility of work and family demands may arise from strain associated with each role (Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983). For example, stress caused by working long hours may create difficulty with a spouse at home.

The combined responsibilities of school and family may contribute to *role overload* for a growing number of women (Baruch et al., 1987; Coverman, 1989; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Van Meter & Agronow, 1982). Role overload occurs when too many role demands exceed a role occupants' available time and resources (Baruch et al., 1987; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006). In the context of graduate study and family roles, time spent with family can lessen the amount of time available for student responsibilities, just as the demands of schoolwork may diminish time spent with family members (Dyk, 1987).

The rigor of a graduate program requires extensive time demands and takes years to complete. Similarly, family roles are often considered primary and require a lifetime of

commitment and effort. In addition to role strain and role overload, GSPs are often faced with insufficient resources, support, and ultimately, career disadvantage.

**Insufficient resources and support.** Resources and support have been found lacking in institutions and departments, and this challenge makes it difficult for GSPs to remain enrolled (Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Mason & Frasch, 2007). Because fellowships, stipends, assistantships, and other types of financial aid are often not intended to provide for dependents, GSPs must often obtain employment in order to support their families (Lynch, 2008). A job with higher pay and dependent health benefits, most likely acquired outside the institution, further strains the already limited resources of GSPs and delays degree completion (Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009). Navigating graduate school is a substantial financial challenge for parents, especially when accompanied by a lack of departmental and institutional support.

Springer et al.'s (2009) survey of sociology doctoral students found that departmental support for GSPs was more common than institution-wide programs, but the available departmental support lacked formality. The majority of departments described their policies as “flexible” and cited an accommodation of GSPs on a “case-by-case” basis—which, as Springer et al. (2009) pointed out, requires negotiation (p. 444). Without the formality of official campus-wide programs and policies, implementation at the department level is inconsistent, discretionary, and difficult to dispute; these factors may heighten a GSP’s insecurity (Springer et al., 2009). Helpful institutional programs include a family-friendly culture and initiatives, faculty training on GSP resources and issues, dissertation support groups, child care subsidies, and paid parental leave (Mason & Frasch, 2007; Springer et al., 2009).

The ability for GSPs to take parental leave and receive years-to-degree extensions upon childbirth or adoption, without prejudice or penalty, is crucial (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006;

Mason & Frasch, 2007; Springer et al., 2009). The institutions Springer et al. (2009) surveyed were unclear in their parental leave policies. Some cited the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), but due to the minimum work hours requirement, most graduate students are not eligible for this federal benefit (Springer et al., 2009). Furthermore, when GSPs return to school after the birth of a child, securing affordable, satisfactory, and reliable child care is a challenge (Lynch, 2008; Mason & Frasch, 2007; Van Meter & Agronow, 1982), and without child care many GSPs struggle to make reasonable progress toward degree completion (Springer et al., 2009). The availability of quality childcare enhances positive outcomes for mothers with multiple roles (Gottfried, Gottfried, & Bathurst, 2002; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992). Moreover, in some departments and schools, parents may lose opportunities for future funding after parental leave is utilized (Lynch, 2008).

Many institutions and departments lack a family-friendly culture, which may result in a GSPs discomfort with taking advantage of available policies for fear of appearing uncommitted (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006; Mason & Ekman, 2007; Springer et al., 2009). Components of a family-friendly culture may include research support groups, means for networking, family inclusion at social events, parent resource centers, private lactation rooms, and changing tables (Brus, 2006; Mason & Frasch, 2007; Springer et al., 2009). Unfortunately, some institutions and departments with family-friendly resources and policies fail to properly disseminate this information to the graduate student community (Springer et al., 2009).

Finally, there is limited training available for faculty and graduate students on mentoring GSPs. These students need information and guidance on family formation in the academy, managing the demands of combining work and family, and navigating family issues on the job market (Connelly & Ghosdee, 2011; Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009). Without adequate

preparation and dialogue with a focus on supporting the changing student population, departments are missing opportunities to validate the significance of maintaining a healthy work-life balance (Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009).

The resulting problems of insufficient resources include dissatisfaction with department support of work-life balance (Mason & Frasch, 2007), including with doctoral advisors, and degree programs (Springer et al., 2009). Ultimately, without supportive departments, this population of students is also likely to experience career disadvantage (Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009; Trower, 2001). A full description of the differences in career achievement follows.

**Career disadvantage.** Degree completion and job attainment rates between GSPs and graduate students without children are different (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006; Springer et al., 2009). Higher attrition rates are prominent (Brus, 2006; Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009), and women are at a greater disadvantage than men. Although degree completion may be advantageous financially, childbirth may delay degree completion. Further, some suggest that GSMs are less likely to secure jobs at top research universities and earn tenure (Kennelly & Salter-Roth, 2006; Mason & Eckman, 2007). Due to the high demands of graduate programs, those GSPs who persist are less likely than their childless counterparts to reside in prestigious departments and less likely to have assistantships, fellowships, and other awards (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006). Fellowships can provide the experience and contact with faculty often needed for career advancement (Lynch, 2008).

Due to child care needs, GSPs may miss opportunities for conference attendance, networking, summer internships, assistance with publishing, and professional development (Brus, 2006; Mason & Ekman, 2007; Springer et al., 2009). Professional conferences and internships often facilitate career advancement through introductions to others in the field,

familiarity with their work, and opportunities for collaboration (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011; Mason & Ekman, 2007). Many colleges and universities have on-site child care, but campus child care facilities often maintain hours that are insensitive to fluctuating schedules and are too expensive for GSPs (Lynch, 2008). For pregnant women, mothers of young children, and those with primary caregiving responsibilities, Mason and Ekman (2007) summarized career disadvantage frankly, "...the professors and mentors who are in a position to advance women's careers may pass them over for special recommendation if they believe they'll be less likely to succeed" (p. 15).

Postdoctoral GSPs are more likely to be concerned about their future career plans and specify poor work-life balance and negative student experiences as reasons to consider a career off the tenure-track (Mason & Ekman, 2007; Mason & Frasch, 2007; Mason et al., 2009). While childless women secure their first tenure-track jobs on par with men, Mason and Ekman (2007) found that mothers in the sciences are 28 percent less likely than women without children to do so. Similarly, with data from a cohort of sociologists, Kennelly and Spalter-Roth (2006) found that even when they take advantage of institutional resources, the odds of immediate entry into a tenure-track job for women who have babies prior to graduation are significantly lower than childless women.

Several GSMs reported a struggle to be taken seriously after having a child because of the 'intensive mothering' ideology and the associated cultural expectations (Bottiani, 1994; Lynch, 2008). In fact, it is not uncommon for women to delay motherhood for fear of being 'mommy-tracked' during the graduate school years (Evans & Grant, 2008; Mason & Ekman, 2007). Moreover, GSMs often have few female role models who successfully combine work and



family (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Mason, Goulden, & Frausch, 2009; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011).

This section explained how the changing demographic of the workplace and higher education has coincided with an increasing number of GSPs. Research has shown that the conflicting nature of graduate study and family responsibilities presents financial, institutional, and cultural challenges. Lacking in time, money, and support, GSPs are more likely than graduate students without children to delay, defer, or drop out. Graduate students with children have trouble securing local, affordable child care and often seek jobs outside the institution for family wages and health benefits. To assist GSPs in their efforts to fulfill both student and family roles, researchers have recommended increased institutional aid, departmental support, parental leave, family friendly culture and policies, and work-life issues training as possible solutions.

The next section presents some of the cultural ideologies and perceptions of motherhood and academia, including the approaches mothers involved in these roles may take towards multiple role management. The section concludes with a brief discussion of parenting perspectives, child outcomes, and job satisfaction for women in dual-earner couples.

### **Women in Academe**

Some of the challenges of multiple roles affect GSMs more than graduate student fathers (GSFs). Indeed, having children is associated with negative effects on women's, but often not men's, careers—especially when children arrive early in a woman's academic career (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011; Lynch, 2008; Mason & Ekman, 2007). The gender and role conflict research suggests that women experience greater role conflict than men (Gilbert & Holahan, 1982; Hammer et al., 1997; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992), likely as a result of societal expectations and the greater cultural and physical demands of mothering (Evans & Grant, 1998; Spade & Reese,

1991; Springer et al., 2009). In the following sections, gender and role conflict are discussed, with an emphasis on women managing family and academic roles.

### **Cultural Ideologies and Perceptions**

In her case study of women navigating graduate school and motherhood, Lynch (2008) identified the opposition between roles as culturally imposed, wherein student-mothers struggle with “dual identities” in their sociocultural interactions (Lynch, 2008, p. 595). The perception of mother and the perception of graduate student are similar in standards and expectations, yet incompatible in practice (Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009). Motherhood comes with the cultural expectation of a stable, primary caretaker at every stage of development and consistent placement of the child’s needs above her own (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Lynch, 2008). Known as intensive mothering, this concept identified by Hays (1996) is the ideology of a ‘good mother.’ Likewise, graduate students are expected to be fully devoted to their studies in the same way mothers are to their children, continually progressing through research, projects, and dissertations with comparable intensity in order to be a ‘good student’ (Lynch, 2008). Both roles come with a similar set of expectations, and performance in each role is culturally appraised by the GSMs’ level of commitment.

### **Protective Strategies**

Lynch (2008) found that GSMs used strategies to combat the role conflict and institutional challenges that accompany motherhood in the academy. In her study, Lynch (2008) conducted 30 in-depth interviews with doctoral GSMs in several academic departments from five northeastern universities. To avoid the conflict of ‘good mother’ and ‘good student,’ the respondents used two personal identity strategies that Lynch (2008) described as ‘maternal invisibility’ and ‘academic invisibility.’ Each strategy was used as a way to minimize one role

when the GSM was in the midst of the opposing role. This minimization allowed GSMs to downplay or highlight their positions as ‘good student’ or ‘good mother,’ depending on the social environment (Lynch, 2008). For example, a GSM may choose not to discuss her dissertation with her mom’s group, and elect not to mention her child(ren) in the presence of her colleagues.

Strategies for maintaining maternal visibility included volunteering at the child(ren)’s school, routine school pick-up (or being home after school), caring for preschool children during the day, and teaching or studying at night—all these made the maternal public, and downplayed the academic (Lynch, 2008). To maintain academic visibility, GSMs avoided public displays of motherhood, and maintained high visibility, and thereby projected availability and commitment, in the office (Lynch, 2008). These strategies went hand-in-hand as GSMs reported using both to publicly reinforce their commitment to each role, while simultaneously preserving disintegration.

Additionally, the GSMs in Lynch’s (2008) study depended on family for financial support and child care to combat the institutional challenges of the academe. Most of the GSMs interviewed were married and relied heavily on their spouses for financial security, and some expressed feeling dissonance in regard to their ‘traditional’ marriage arrangements (Lynch, 2008). Because most of the respondent’s spouses worked full-time, child care was necessary. The price of campus facilities was described as excessive and not viewed as an appropriate allocation of funds for grant and fellowship applications (Lynch, 2008). Therefore, 90 percent of Lynch’s (2008) participants had preschool children and either relied on spouses, family, babysitters, or paid the full cost of private child care out-of-pocket. The remaining GSMs had children in the public school system.

Lynch (2008) suggested that an identity guided by the ‘good student’ and ‘good mother’ ideologies may be associated with high GSM attrition rates. Furthermore, when these identity strategies are used, “the academy, in turn, cannot respond effectively to the needs of student mothers’ blended identities when those identities are kept hidden” (Lynch, 2008, p. 597). The preservation of these institutional challenges may also be a factor in GSM attrition rates. In agreement with Lynch (2008) and others, Springer et al. (2009) suggested that in order to reduce the structural tensions, academic departments and institutions can better assist GSMs in dealing with “...the incompatibility of idealized mothers and idealized academic expectations” (p. 445).

On the other hand, Lynch (2008) found that high levels of satisfaction were reported by respondents with supportive and encouraging faculty advisors, close friendships or associations with other GSMs, and emotionally supportive spouses. If satisfaction suggests that support networks may provide role enrichment, then perhaps a perception of overall satisfaction with family and academic roles contributes to persistence for women in the academe.

### **The Benefits of Multiple Roles**

Sieber (1974) challenged the assumption that participation in multiple roles, referred to as *role accumulation*, is an inevitable source of psychological stress. Instead, he posited the benefits of role accumulation and the use of a measure of both the rewards and consequences, with the net outcome as the concluding factor (Sieber, 1974). Indeed, research suggests that when satisfied with both work and family roles, role participants experience greater well-being than individuals who are displeased with their role(s), or manage just one role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). The enrichment perspective suggests that the rewards and privileges that accompany multiple roles provide *role enrichment* (or enhancement)—the positive outcomes

from one domain to the other, which ultimately outweigh the consequences of multiple roles (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974).

### **Role Combination**

In agreement with Marks (1977) and Sieber (1974), Tiedje et al. (1990) and her colleagues examined alternative theories of the relationship between role conflict and role enrichment (or enhancement). Since previous research had found that conflict and enhancement have weak associations (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), they likely coexist independently, within separate dimensions (Tiedje et al., 1990). Accordingly, Tiedje et al. (1990) proposed a typology model (Figure 3) using both the role conflict and role enhancement frameworks. This model suggested that women may perceive their role combinations as both conflicting and enriching, and these perceptions are known to be related to mental health outcomes (Frone et al., 1992; McElwain et al., 2005; Tiedje et al., 1990).

Tiedje et al. (1990) addressed role satisfaction and mental health in their study of how women perceive their multiple roles. The sample included 158 married, highly educated, fully employed women with preschool children (108 university professors and 50 mid-level managers), with an average age of 34.6 years. No significant differences were found between the faculty and managers on any of the psychosocial variables (e.g. personality factors, resources, coping), so the groups were combined in the analysis (Tiedje et al., 1990). A pilot study consisting of 69 in-depth qualitative interviews yielded information about objective and subjective sources of stress, coping, health, and role functioning (Tiedje et al., 1990). Using the most frequently occurring responses as items, the researchers developed a scale to measure conflict and enhancement and then grouped the items into three “role combinations”—overall career-family, career-marriage, and career-parenting (Tiedje et al., 1990, p. 66). An example of

an item which measured conflict includes: “having a career often causes me to be tired, irritable or short-tempered with my child(ren)” (Tiedje et al., 1990, p. 66). An example of an item which measured enrichment includes: “having a career helps me better appreciate the time I spend with my children” (Tiedje et al., 1990, p. 66). Additional quantitative measures of depression, well-being, work functioning, and domain and life satisfaction were also used for the study.

Next, Tiedje et al. (1990) examined a cross-section of role conflict and role enhancement (independent variables), and depression, satisfaction within the domains of work, marriage, and parenting, well-being, and overall life satisfaction (dependent variables). The researchers controlled for “dispositional optimism” (p. 67), which is a personal tendency to expect good, since optimism is associated with coping and may have an influence on role perceptions (Tiedje et al., 1990). Overall, the participants had high levels of role satisfaction, mental health, and role enhancement, and the women in the study reported overall satisfaction with their parenting and work roles (Tiedje et al., 1990). While optimism and life satisfaction scores were also high, the overall scores on depression and well-being indicated tension and slightly higher than average rates of depression for the sample (Tiedje et al., 1990).

		<b>Enhancement</b>	
		Low	High
<b>Conflict</b>	High	Low Enhancement High Conflict	High Enhancement High Conflict
	Low	Low Enhancement Low Conflict	High Enhancement Low Conflict

**Figure 2.** Tiedje et al.’s Interrole Concurrence Typology: Family and Career Roles<sup>1</sup>

However, the participants’ scores were evenly distributed among the four groups in Figure 2 (Tiedje et al., 1990). In determining the relationship between role satisfaction and

<sup>1</sup> From Tiedje et al., 1990, p. 65

mental health with placement in the typology, women with low role conflict and high role enhancement had the lowest depression scores, highest scores on job satisfaction and well-being, and were the most satisfied with their role as parents (Tiedje et al., 1990). This finding suggests that women who perceived their roles as highly beneficial and low in opposition were more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, parenting, and with life overall, and less likely to be depressed. Conversely, the participants in the high conflict, low enhancement group had the highest depression scores, lowest scores on job satisfaction and well-being, and were least satisfied with their role as parents (Tiedje et al., 1990). In other words, the women who perceived their roles as highly conflictual and low in rewards were more likely to experience depression, and less likely to be satisfied in their jobs, as parents, and with life overall. The other two participant groups were in the middle, with the low conflict/low enhancement group scores just slightly higher than the high conflict/high enhancement group (Tiedje et al., 1990).

Tiedje et al.'s (1990) results contradicted the mutual exclusivity of the conflict and enrichment perspectives and suggested that both can occur simultaneously. The typology model was supported by the data. That is to say, women can derive either conflict or enhancement, both, or neither from their multiple roles (Tiedje et al., 1990). The results of this correlational study suggested a large variation in how women can perceive their roles as wives, mothers, and employees. It appears that the experience of conflict is negatively related to satisfaction among female faculty and professional women with children. Briefly, I turn to secondary education and Eckman and Kelber's (2009) study on female principals' experience of role conflict and job satisfaction.

## **Job Satisfaction**

As the complexity of the principalship has evolved, the number of candidates both qualified and willing to fill the role has become more limited (Eckman & Kelber, 2009). In a study that examined job sharing as a model of employment among professional women, role conflict and job satisfaction were measured for 102 female principals (51 traditional principals and 51 co-principals). The traditional principal leadership model consists of one individual at the top of the school hierarchy, while the co-principal model involves two principals sharing the role of school leadership (Eckman & Kelber, 2009).

Through surveys and written comments, Ekman and Kelber (2009) found that traditional principals "...had significantly higher levels of role conflict in regard to time for social commitments, household management, child-raising, and feelings of guilt than the co-principals" (p. 211). One co-principal cited the stress of work demands and time away from her own children as the reason she delayed becoming a traditional principal (Ekman & Kelber, 2009). Co-principals reported less role conflict between their professional and personal lives, and higher levels of job satisfaction than the traditional principals, likely due to the balance of a shared workload, divided job responsibilities, and shared decision-making (Ekman & Kelber, 2009). Other benefits reported included less isolation, greater ability to meet family demands, more interaction time at the school, and opportunities to participate in school activities and professional development (Eckman & Kelber, 2009). The findings of this study suggested that the structure of the work role may also influence levels of role conflict and job satisfaction.

This discussion of gender and role conflict included some of the challenges of balancing family, work, and academic responsibilities. For women in academic and professional roles, research has found the experience of conflict: a) may be associated with the use of protective



strategies identified by Lynch (2008) to cope with the cultural expectations and institutional challenges of motherhood in academia, b) can occur simultaneously with enhancement as affirmed by Tiedje et al.'s (1990) study of faculty and mid-level managers, and c) may be influenced by the structure of the work role, as proposed by Eckman and Kelber's (2009) study of school principals. These studies also suggested that a woman's satisfaction with her roles as parent, employee, and/or student is related to personal and institutional support, role perception, and the organizational structure surrounding the role.

### **Child Outcomes**

Indeed, "role satisfaction is associated with more favorable maternal mental health and child-related outcomes" (Gottfried et al., 2002, p. 219). Nonetheless, for academic women, authors and researchers alike warn that there is no good or great time to have a baby (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011; Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006). For GSPs in particular, an unfortunate outcome of the extensive requirements of doctoral programs is significant stress in their parenting roles (Mason et al., 2009). For some, the stress results in delayed academic progress and for others, culminates with the sacrifice of graduate education for good parenting (Mason et al., 2009). Lynch (2008) goes as far to say that "...graduate student mothers conform to the ideals of 'intensive motherhood' both because they find it satisfying and because they believe that refusing to assume the responsibilities convention assigns them would harm their children" (p. 603). Connelly and Ghodsee (2011) are more optimistic, declaring that "...the academy as an institution is slowly waking up to the need to make changes to help all parents better balance work and family.

But, even in places where the old rules are still in effect, it is possible to have your tenure and your family, too” (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011, Chapter 1, Location 331). In their comprehensive review of the maternal employment literature, Gottfried et al. (2002) declare:

Maternal employment is not detrimental to children’s development...any effects that are due to mothers’ employment can be understood only through parenting and environmental processes that mediate between mothers’ employment on the one hand and children’s development on the other... (p. 224)

Looking beyond conflict and culturally imposed parenting ideals, in some studies, maternal employment and education have been linked with more optimal parenting styles and better economic, academic, and social outcomes for children (Demo, 1992; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Gottfried et al., 2002). The primary emphasis of the remainder of this section is maternal employment and parenting within dual-earner couples.

### **Maternal Employment and Parenting**

As mentioned earlier, women’s participation in the workforce and higher education has increased over the last 40 years and is now considered the norm (BLS, 2011; Evans & Grant, 2008; Mason et al., 2009; Gottfried et al., 2002; Springer et al., 2009). Additionally, the US Department of Education projects that women will earn the majority of all undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees by 2016 (as cited in Galinsky & Matos, 2011). Maternal employment and degree-seeking have increased, but these trends still deviate from the traditional social-cultural beliefs and expectations of the male-earner and female-caretaker roles (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Gottfried et al., 2002; Lynch, 2008). However, recent research has indicated a changing gender role ideology, as men are increasing time spent on housework and child care (Demo, 1992), and fewer men and women report endorsing traditional gender roles (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Galinsky & Matos, 2011).

Although the number of dual-earner families has increased significantly, women have not dramatically reduced the amount of time spent with their children (Galinsky & Matos, 2011; Gottfried et al., 2002; Hochschild, 1989). For this reason, it is not surprising that research on maternal employment in dual-earner families has become linked with parenting. The remainder of this section includes a brief overview of parenting in dual-earner couples, including the experience of motherhood, and a review of the research on maternal employment. Then, I discuss perspectives on maternal employment and parenting. I conclude the discussion with an overview of selected factors related to parenting in dual-earner families.

### **Parenting Perspectives**

Each perspective on parenting is imbedded with certain presumptions of parental roles and implications for children's development. In the early to mid-1900s emerged the maternal deprivation perspective, which implies that a mothers' absence as primary caregiver is detrimental to a child's development (Barnard & Solchany, 2002; Gottfried et al., 2002). This perspective gained attention as institutionalized children, and children with parents who could not care for them, demonstrated similar dysfunctions, which were believed to be caused by the lack of a mothering relationship (Barnard & Solchany, 2002).

These findings prompted John Bowlby's research, which instigated our current awareness of the importance of infant attachment. This knowledge brought forth a belief in the importance of mothering on a child's life trajectory (Barnard & Solchany, 2002) and for some, a concentration on 'intensive mothering' (Hays, 1996). Even though the maternal deprivation perspective is no longer the major focus of parenting research, the ideal that a 'good mother' is equivalent to an 'intensive mother' subsists (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011; Gottfried et al., 2002; Hays, 1996; Lynch, 2008).

With more women entering the labor force, the compensation perspective emerged. This perspective infers that increased paternal involvement with childrearing makes up for a mother's absence, which implicitly presumes a deficit (Gottfried et al., 2002; Zick, Keith, & Osterbacka, 2001). Research in this area addresses the impact of employment on a mother's time involvement with her children and the data are consistent—there is no dramatic difference between employed and non-employed mothers' time spent with children (Gottfried et al., 2002).

The developmental impingement perspective presumes neutrality (no deficit or benefit to children of working mothers/dual-earner families) and considers the child's characteristics and the effects of alternative family structures on parenting and child development (Gottfried et al., 2002). Longitudinal research using this perspective has suggested that fathers are more involved in child care, play, and nurturing when mothers work and that earlier maternal employment increases the chances of the development of a pattern of early paternal involvement (Gottfried et al., 2002). This was also found to be the case for families in which the mother held nontraditional attitudes toward parenting, as paternal involvement with child care was more likely (Gottfried et al., 2002, p. 215).

Finally, Gottfried et al. (2002) described the family adaptations perspective as one that considers the various "...practices and changes that support effective family functioning" (p. 210). Such support includes the increased participation of fathers in childrearing, increased child independence and involvement with household tasks, and parental work schedules that allow more flexibility (Gottfried et al., 2002). Similar to developmental impingement, family adaptations also requires a shift away from a deficit/compensation presumption to a neutral perspective (Gottfried et al., 2002).

Conceptualizations of parenting differ across the literature (Hoff, Larsen, & Tardiff, 2002). The parenting literature is extensive and often separated into either a focus on mothers or, not until more recently, fathers. For the purpose of this study examining the experiences and demands of graduate student mothers, I will review two factors that influence parenting, including attitudes and stress.

### **Parental Attitudes**

Parenting is influenced by social and cultural childrearing attitudes and parental stress, among other variables. Attitudes refer to internal cognitive states which “bias or predispose an individual toward reacting favorably or unfavorably to the entity or object” (Holden & Buck, 2002, p. 537). The literature suggests that parents develop attitudes about gender roles, motherhood, and various childrearing tasks, and in turn, use those attitudes as guidance for forming opinions and making decisions about having and raising children (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Holden & Buck, 2002).

These opinions and decisions are believed to be linked to parental behavior, and thereby, child outcomes (Holden & Buck, 2002). For example, maternal attitudes toward the dual responsibilities of work and parenting are related to (among other things) the child’s behavior, and the emotional climate of the home environment (Gottfried et al., 2002). Gender role ideology, motherhood aspirations, child care decisions, and maternal satisfaction with work and family roles are each reflective of parental attitudes.

**Gender role ideology.** Societal views about combining employment and motherhood are reflected in changing gender role ideology. In traditional couples, with an earner-husband and homemaker wife, the husband works outside the home and the wife is the primary household laborer (Demo, 1992; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006). Dual-earner couples (wherein both partners have

jobs) tend to have a more equal division of household labor than traditional couples, but not as equal as dual-career couples, in which each partner is deeply invested in their work (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006). When making decisions about child care for preschool children, Hertz (1999) found that dual-earner couples use one of three general approaches.

**Child care decisions.** The mothering approach assumes a stay-at-home mom will care for children (the mother leaves full-time work), and the market approach entails employing others for child care, while both parents continue full-time work (Hertz, 1999). The new parenting approach, in which both parents are full participants in child care, involves two working parents organizing the family around the care of the children (Hertz, 1999). New parenting can include the reorganization of employment, the tag-team method (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Hertz, 1999) which involves alternate shift work, or underemployment, wherein one parent works part-time (Hertz, 1999). Each approach to child care is presumed to be a representation of the parents' attitudes about gender roles, with the new parenting approach being the most challenging to traditional gender roles (Hertz, 1999). Nevertheless, Hertz (1999) found that couples who co-parent full-time either agree on the importance of shared parenting, or co-parent due to economic necessity.

Galinsky and Matos (2011) believe that changing gender role ideology is a result, at least in part, of the increased dependence on women's wages—which account for an average of 44 percent of the total family household income. In one study (Taylor et al., 1999 as cited by Etaugh & Bridges, 2006), the majority of an ethnically diverse group of respondents believed that both women and men should contribute financially to the household—not surprising since education is inversely related to traditional gender attitudes (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006). However, the approval rates of women working full-time without children in the home are higher than the

approval rates of working mothers with preschool children (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006). Though gender role ideology is changing, the literature suggests that motherhood is still socially and culturally perceived and judged to be the highest priority for women with young children.

**Motherhood aspirations.** When asked about their desires for a career or motherhood, most college-aged women want both, but expect to interrupt employment for a period of time during the preschool years (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006). Even though college students desire both career and family equally, both men and women expect asymmetry when it comes to responsibilities at home (Spade & Reese, 1991). Similar attitudes are reflected in the belief that women should take time off work after having a child, with mothers who take shorter leaves viewed less favorably (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006).

Aspirations for motherhood and work may be related to upbringing. Etaugh and Bridges (2006) suggested that a woman's childhood experience with an employed mother likely affects her attitudes about maternal employment, with positive experiences leading women to consider the role combination acceptable. In addition to previous experiences, the other parents' views are important as well. Marshall and Barnett (1993) suggested that partners with egalitarian views are more likely to experience gratification from multiple roles than those with traditional views of gender roles. Overall, it appears that the most effective parenting is likely when a mother's roles are consistent with her attitudes about employment (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006).

**Maternal satisfaction.** The emotional climate in the home, parent-child relationships, child behaviors, school-related behavior, and most notably, work conditions are consistently related to maternal attitude (Gottfried et al., 2002). Mothers reported significantly more positive attitudes, and were therefore most satisfied, when their work schedules were more flexible, as reflected by fewer work hours (Gottfried et al., 2002). An increase in working hours was

associated with more negative attitudes toward the dual responsibilities of employment and motherhood (Gottfried et al., 2002).

### **Parenting in Dual-Earner Families**

Although dual-earner couples are now the norm, traditional sociocultural beliefs and expectations of male and female gender roles continue to influence maternal employment and degree-seeking—to such an extent that the parenting literature is often coupled with the research on employed mothers. Because women tend to be primary caregivers, their increased workforce participation has been accompanied by various changes in perspectives on parenting. The perspectives on employment and parenting have evolved continuously. The influence of the increased participation and involvement of fathers with childrearing, along with flexible work schedules for parents, have likely encouraged more equalitarian parenting roles. Because more mothers are employed outside of the home, we are learning more about how dual-income families balance their work and family roles.

The current maternal employment research considers a host of variables which mediate indirectly between mother's employment and children's development. These variables include the home and work environments, involvement and role division between parents, work schedules, maternal attitudes, and well-being. Though this phase focuses more than previous phases on the adaptiveness of dual-earner families and is moving away from detrimental investigations, Gottfried et al. (2002) called for more research with specific attention paid to the benefits of dual-earner and maternal employment.

This section discussed the relevant literature on maternal employment and parenting. Although more women are contributing to household income, mothers still spend more time on caregiving than fathers. Women's increased workforce participation has been accompanied by



changes in parenting perspectives, but cultural perceptions still view mothers as the primary caretakers for children. Due, in part, to an increased reliance on women's wages, dual-earner families are now the norm. As such, many GSMs must continue to work throughout their academic programs and managing multiple roles may bring challenges and benefits. A discussion of the perspectives on work and family, the theoretical framework of this study, follows.

### **Work and Family: Conflict and Enrichment Perspectives**

Increased interest in the work-family interface has emerged along with the rise of dual-earner couples (Allen et al., 2000; Frone et al., 1992; McElwain et al., 2005; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrin, 1996; Tiedje et al., 1990). This interest underscored the need for integration of the literature on work and family (Frone et al., 1992).

First, in the discussion of role conflict, I focus primarily on the research of Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), who proposed the most prominent theoretical model of work-family conflict. I present the related terms and definitions found in the work-family literature and review selected qualitative and mixed methods studies on the antecedents and outcomes of the work-family interface. Then, the more recent enrichment perspective, which considers the resources that cross between work and family domains, primarily the work of Greenhaus and Powell (2006) is discussed. Theoretical and empirical works on the rewards of multiple roles are included in the enrichment discussion.

### **The Conflict Perspective**

*Organizational Stress: Studies on Role Conflict and Ambiguity*, a seminal work published in 1964 by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal, defined role conflict as “the simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would

make more difficult compliance with the other” (as cited in Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77 and Kopelman et al., 1983, p. 199). Throughout the literature, *role* typically refers to a pattern of behavior in accordance with social position and others’ expectations (Rahim, 2001; Sieber, 1974), and according to Rahim (2001), a general term used to “represent behavior and attitudes expected of the occupant of a given position or status” (p. 98).

### **Role Conflict**

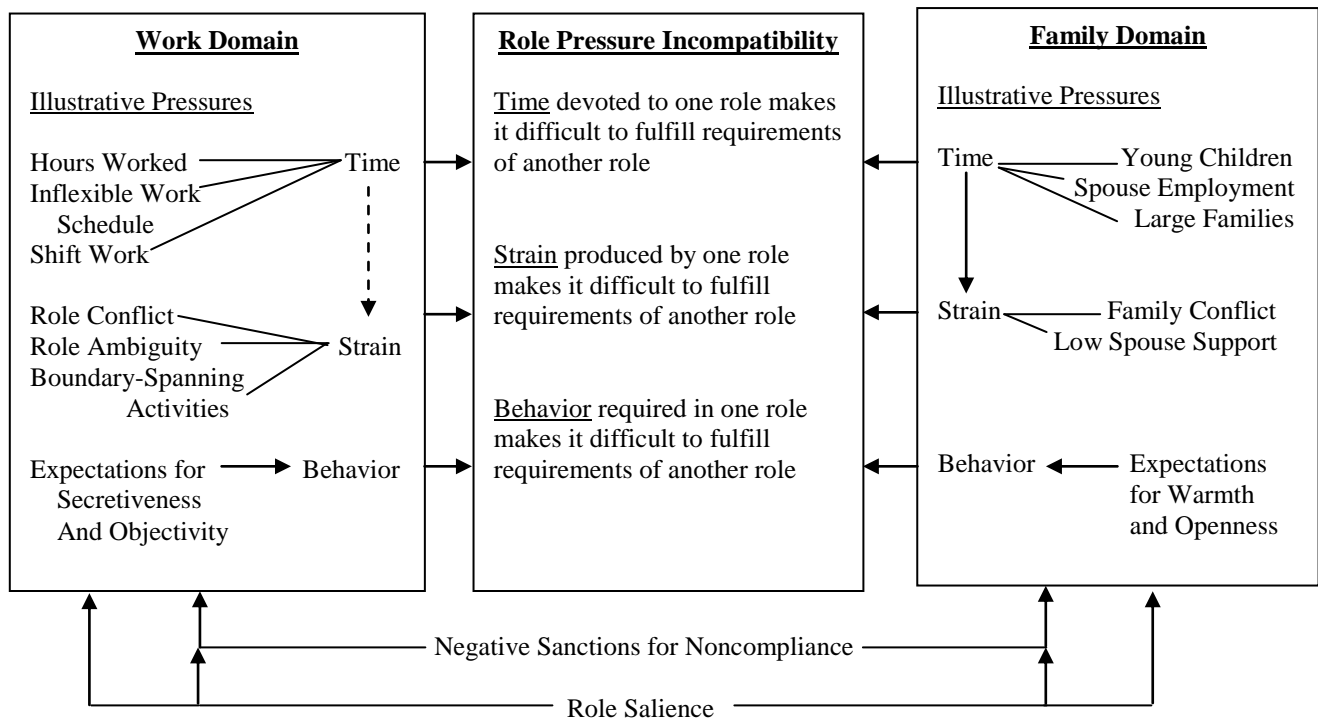
Role conflict results when demands to meet the expectations of each role are mutually incompatible (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This role incompatibility results when participation in one role makes participation in another role more difficult (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kopelman et al., 1983). The three types of role conflict relevant to the work family interface identified by Kopelman et al. (1983) will be discussed—work, family, and interrole.

Work conflict is role pressure incompatibility experienced within the work domain, and family conflict is experienced when role pressure incompatibility occurs within the family domain (Kopelman et al., 1983). Role incompatibility can stem from one source, multiple sources, or result from a poor fit between an individual and his or her responsibilities (Kopelman et al., 1983). Furthermore, interrole conflict is “the extent to which a person experiences pressures within one role that are incompatible with the pressures that arise within another role” (Kopelman et al., 1983, p. 201). Work-family conflict, also referred to as work-family interference (Carlson & Frone, 2003), is the primary focus of this section.

**Work-family conflict.** Kahn et al. defined work-family conflict (WFC) as a type of interrole conflict in which the demands and expectations of the family role are incompatible with the demands and expectations of the work role, and vice versa (as cited in Greenhaus & Beutell, 1983, p. 77; Kopelman et al., 1983). For individuals who occupy more than one role, for example

the role of spouse and the role of employee, each role has a set of expectations and psychological pressures to meet those expectations. I begin with a discussion of Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) model of work-family conflict.

**Types of work-family conflict.** In their discussion on the conflict between work and family roles, Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) identified three major forms of interrole conflict/role incompatibility: time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based (see Figure 3). *Time-based* conflict occurs when the time dedicated to one role creates difficulty in fulfilling the requirements of another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Marks, 1977). An example of time-based conflict is when a mother must decide whether or not to leave work early in order to keep a child's medical appointment before the doctor's office closes. She must leave before the end of the work day in order to do so, which may leave some work undone. Pressures from time-based conflict arise from the type of vocation, work schedules, marriage, children, and family activities (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).



### **Figure 3. Work-Family Role Pressure Incompatibility<sup>2</sup>**

*Strain-based* conflict arises when the strain produced by one role creates difficulty in fulfilling the requirements of another role (Goode, 1960; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). When a new fathers' reduced concentration at work due to sleep deprivation then results in mistakes in his duties at work is considered a source of strain-based conflict. The presence of role ambiguity, high work demands, long hours, burnout, and the absence of family support may contribute to strain-based conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992).

*Behavior-based* conflict occurs when the behavior required in one role creates difficulty in fulfilling the requirements of another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). For instance, an attorney may spend her days in court arguing aggressively on behalf of her clients, but is expected to be warm and nurturing when interacting with her husband and children at home, demonstrates behavior-based conflict. Such incompatibility requires an adjustment in behavior between roles in order to avoid this type of conflict.

### **Bi-directional Approach**

The majority of the previous work-family literature focused mainly on work interfering with family, in a single direction. However, with Greenhaus and Beutell (1985)'s model emerged the importance conceptualizing work-family conflict using a *bi-directional approach*—one which distinguishes between work interfering with family (WIF) and family interfering with work (FIW)—such that conflict may originate in either domain (Frone et al., 1992; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; McElwain et al., 2005). Work/family conflict (WFC) is a brief way to identify two separate constructs: work-to-family conflict ( $W \rightarrow F$ ) and family-to-work ( $F \rightarrow W$ ) conflict, differentiating the domain of origination. Similarly, work/family enrichment (WFE) is a brief way to identify the constructs of work-to-family ( $W \rightarrow F$ ) enrichment, and family-to-work

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<sup>2</sup> From Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 78

(F→W) enrichment. Studies addressing the limits of a unidirectional focus suggested more comprehensive models which examine domain-specific variables and the simultaneous nature of WFC. Related studies of note are those in which a relationship with depression (Frone et al., 1992) and life satisfaction (McElwain et al., 2005) were explored.

The conflict perspective of the work-family interface is based on the "...scarcity approach to human energy, stressing the over-demanding nature of multiple roles" (Marks, 1977, p. 921). This perspective emphasizes role strain, which makes role incompatibility implicit and places limited time and energy at the forefront of the work-family interface (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006). A review of the enrichment perspective, a newer and emerging body of the work-family literature, follows.

### **The Enrichment Perspective**

Although the conflict hypothesis has dominated the literature, some researchers have called for an enrichment perspective (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). This perspective places primary emphasis on the beneficial effects of multiple roles and suggests role enrichment as the outcome of the work-family interface (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). Building on the finding that work-family conflict and work-family enrichment are separate constructs (Frone, 2003), several studies have found that (overall) interesting, challenging, and fulfilling (or 'high quality') multiple roles actually enhance life by providing additional skills, higher self-esteem, and protection from depression (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Marks, 1977). This section begins with a brief review of Sieber's (1974) seminal work on role enrichment, followed by Barnett and Hyde's (2001) principles of role enrichment, and concludes with a discussion of Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) theory of work-family enrichment.

## **Role Enrichment**

Sieber's (1974) theory classified the rewards of role accumulation into four types: Role privileges, overall status security, resources for status enhancement and role performance, and personality enrichment and ego gratification (p. 569). First, role privileges are the inherent and emergent rights that accompany a role and serve as inducements for the role occupant's recruitment and continuance (Sieber, 1974). For example, part-time faculty may view work flexibility as an inherent right, and the potential for continued work and advancement through commitment and good performance as an emergent right. When a role occupant has accumulated fewer obligations than rights, net gratification occurs (Sieber, 1974).

Second, overall status security, allows a role occupant to compensate for role strain by buffering failure in one role with success, satisfaction, or relationships in another role (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Sieber, 1974). For instance, a school teacher who overhears a negative comment from a colleague may seek moral support from a sympathetic spouse at home. In this example, the spousal relationship acts as a buffer and therefore provides a sense of security (i.e. maintaining multiple roles reduces dependency on other roles). Because relationship maintenance tends to have fewer time and obligation demands than role overload/conflict, net gratification may result when role occupants maintain multiple relational roles (Sieber, 1974).

A third reward of role accumulation is the unearned, but expected returns or "by-products" of role relationships. These are known as resources for status enhancement and role performance, and may include opportunities for networking, access to and use of company property, and various other perks (Sieber, 1974). Net gratification from status enhancement occurs when the benefits of the role detract from any strain caused by conflict (Sieber, 1974).

The fourth reward of role accumulation discussed by Sieber (1974), enrichment of the personality and ego gratification, occurs when a role satisfies a dispositional characteristic or enhances the self-concept, or ego (p. 576). The ability to work with diverse groups and the experience of a sense of appreciation by others are examples of this benefit (Sieber, 1974). When a role occupant perceives that their value has increased, net gratification from personality enhancement occurs.

Reinforcing Sieber's (1974) positive treatment of multiple roles, Marks (1977) built his energy-expansion theory on the premise that humans produce as well as consume energy, implying an abundant (rather than scarce) resource. Therefore, in cases of multiple roles, participation in one role may create or expand energy for use in another role (Marks, 1977, p. 926). In their cross-sectional review, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) found that work-family conflict and work-family enrichment do not correlate, which indicated that each is a separate, unrelated construct. This supported the suggestions of Frone et al. (1992) and McElwain et al. (2005) to study the two constructs separately. In the remainder of this section, work-family enrichment is defined and Barnett and Hyde's (2001) expansionist theory is discussed. This section concludes with Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) theoretical model of work-family enrichment.

**Work-family enrichment.** Work-family enrichment (WFE), also called facilitation, integration, and positive spillover (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), is "the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role" (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006, p. 73). For example, the positive experiences in one role can buffer distress, increase well-being, and produce beneficial outcomes in a second role, and vice versa. This differs from WFC in that the focus is on the benefits and rewards of multiple roles rather than the challenges. In

agreement with Marks (1977) and Sieber (1974) that multiple roles are beneficial, Barnett and Hyde (2001) cited few pervasive differences between men and women, and proposed an expansionist theory to encompass work, family, and gender.

*Types of work-family enrichment.* Noting that work-family life and roles have changed dramatically since the 1950s, Barnett and Hyde (2001) saw the need for empirically derived principles applicable to the lives of men, women, and families of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The researchers examined the results of several correlational studies which focused on the consequences of multiple roles and advanced four basic principles, which they believe provide a better framework for research and policy (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). The principles assert that: 1) multiple roles are beneficial, 2) certain processes may contribute to the beneficial effects of multiple roles, 3) certain conditions moderate the effects of multiple roles, and 4) gender differences are generally small (Barnett & Hyde, 2001, p. 784). Their extensive literature review provided evidence for each the following principles.

First, Barnett and Hyde (2001) posited the mental, physical, and relational benefits of multiple roles. They reviewed several studies which supported psychological health, most notably reduced depression rates in women employed outside of the home and higher ratings of well-being for men with husband, father, and worker roles (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Both men and women with multiple roles have been found to experience fewer physiological symptoms, and relationship health is evident for both genders when family engagement is high (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). The authors did mention that the research on the health outcomes of role accumulation primarily focused on couples with non-traditional roles—those of wives/mothers employed outside the home and of employed, but highly engaged husbands/fathers.



For principle two, the processes which contribute to the beneficial effects of multiple roles, Barnett and Hyde (2001) classified eight moderators and mediators. Processes moderate between roles by “affecting the magnitude of the relationship between multiple roles and beneficial effects” (Barnett & Hyde, 2001, p. 786). Through buffering, the negative effects of one role can be reduced when a role participant experiences success in another role (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Sieber, 1974). Multiple roles mean the benefit of time off from problems in one role while attending to the responsibilities of another role. This allows role occupants to put worries into perspective and helps protect self-esteem (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006).

Likewise, the more roles an individual manages, the more opportunities for success (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Sieber, 1974). Of course, this also means more opportunities for failure, but the vulnerability to failure is decreased if enhanced self-concept or satisfaction in other roles is experienced (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Role accumulation also provides an expanded frame of reference which, through the benefit of multiple perspectives, offers additional opinions and opportunities for encouragement (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

In agreement with Seiber’s (1974) reward of personality enrichment, Barnett and Hyde (2001) cited that increased self-complexity seems to buffer against strain and negative mood and emotions. The researchers suspect that an increase in cognitive structures about oneself (e.g., more pursuits, interests, social roles and relationships) may contribute to a more complex self-concept (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Sieber, 1974).

As mentioned earlier, Barnett and Hyde (2001) integrated gender in their theory. As such, they conceived that similarity of experiences among men and women occurs when both genders combine work and family roles (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). This similarity is believed to contribute

to the beneficial effects of multiple roles by easing marital communication, combining interests, and through the maintenance of equal parenting responsibilities (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

Through the process of added income, a mediator that explains “the factors through which multiple roles have an effect” (p. 786), Barnett and Hyde (2001), postulated that vital income from wives in dual-earner couples helps reduce financial stress and may improve marital quality. The way each partner perceives male and female roles, known as gender role ideology, also moderates the relationship between roles (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Couples with non-traditional ideologies tend to gain more advantages from role accumulation than traditional couples (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

Finally, social support serves to moderate and mediate the association between occupying multiple roles and health outcomes. In terms of well-being, this process serves as a mediator because multiple roles mean additional opportunities for social support. Social support also serves as a moderator in terms of health when acting as a defense against the negative effects of stress (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992).

Similar to the processes which provide the benefits described above, Barnett and Hyde (2001) also hypothesized that certain conditions moderate the effects of multiple roles. This third principle of the outcomes of role accumulation pertains to “upper limits” to the advantages of multiple roles and the importance of role quality (p. 789). The benefits of role accumulation have limits. Role overload, and thereby psychological distress, has been found to result when role demands become extreme and/or the roles too numerous (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). For both men and women, role quality moderates the influence of role accumulation when the experiences are satisfactory (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

Barnett and Hyde (2001) concluded their review and theoretical assertions with emphasis on how overall, the psychological differences between men and women are minimal. Though stereotypes pervade, meta-analyses find that men and women tend to be more similar than different in personality, workplace behavior, and family behavior (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). With regard to personality traits, behaviors, and emotions are similarly experienced and exhibited by both sexes (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

The gender-controlled studies Barnett and Hyde (2001) reviewed indicated that it is most likely opportunities (e.g., working conditions, pay, etc.), rather than gender, that influence behavior at work, and both sexes are vulnerable to the same work stressors. In the family, the multidimensionality of men and the importance of the paternal role have been revealed in more recent research (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). For both genders, problems in any of the three main social roles (employee, spouse, or parent) correlated with distress, without any differences in magnitude (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

Barnett and Hyde's (2001) expansion theory supports the enrichment perspective. Their empirically derived approach provided additional evidence for an alternate framework through which multiple roles can be conceptualized. More recently, studies addressing role enrichment recommend more comprehensive models to examine the method(s) by which work-family enrichment occurs. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) also built on Sieber (1974) and Marks (1977) in their discussion of work-family enrichment.

Influenced by the enrichment process described by Marks (1977) and Sieber (1974), Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed a model of WFE to illustrate how experiences in one role can improve the quality of life (as measured by high performance and positive affect) in a second role. As background for the construction of their model, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) analyzed

nineteen WFE studies which used self-report assessments and conducted a cross-sectional review of several studies examining the relationship between work and family related variables.

Although the studies reviewed provided support for the potential of WFE, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) sought a deeper understanding of how the experiences within one domain enriched the experiences in the other. Their model included a description of the types of role resources and proposed enrichment pathways and moderators of WFE.

### **Role Resources**

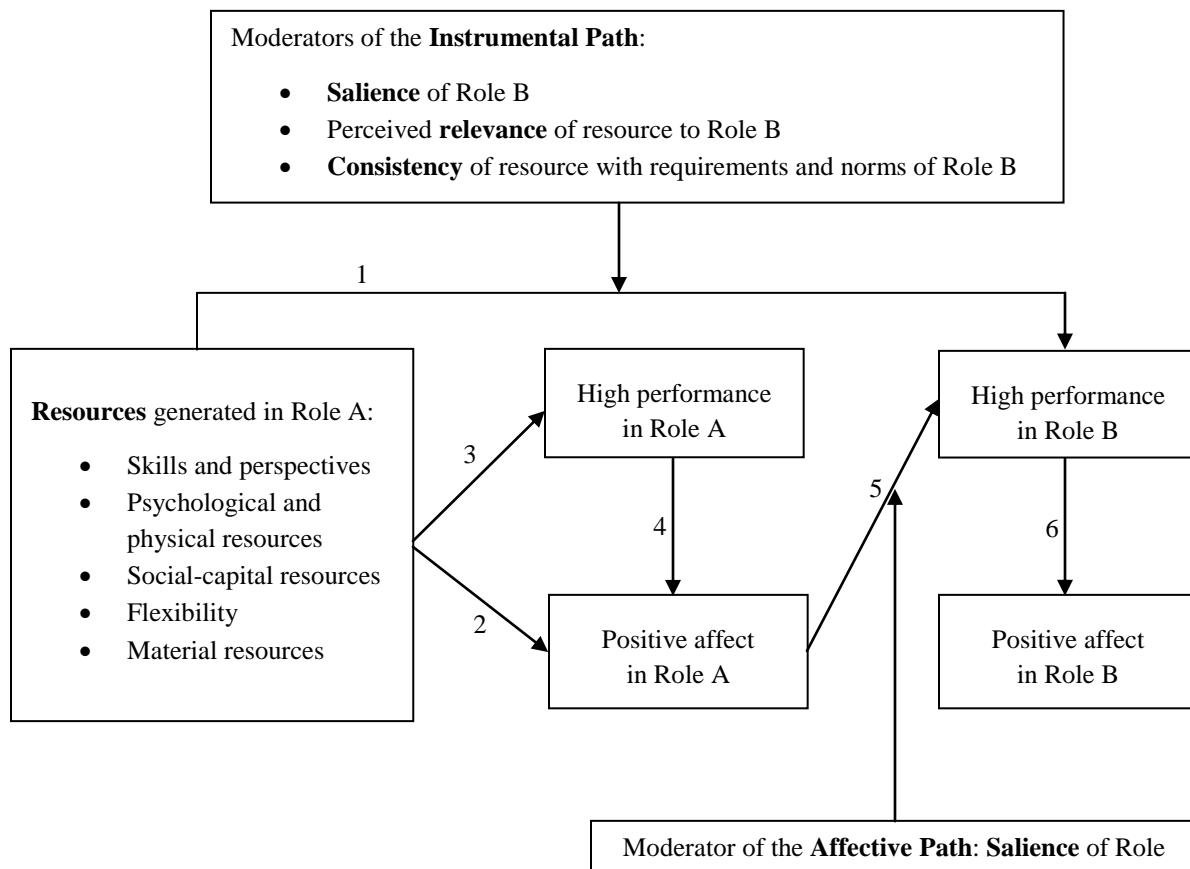
Greenhaus and Powell (2006) identified a set of potential resources that can be generated in a role. Resources are “asset[s] that can be drawn upon when needed to solve a problem or cope with a challenging situation” (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 80). The idea is that multiple roles provide multiple resources to use as we choose—both within and across work and family domains. The resources include skills and perspectives, which are the knowledge, wisdom, task-related skills, and ways of interpreting and responding to situations that role participants gain from experiences in each domain (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 80). For example, multitasking skills honed within the family domain may expand time-management skills in the work domain.

Psychological and physical resources such as self-reliance, esteem, satisfaction, and physical well-being generated in Role A can be drawn upon when faced with emotional hardship in Role B (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Influence and information, termed social capital, come from beneficial interpersonal relationships within the work and family domains (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). For instance, through networking at a professional development activity, an employee might find a tutor for her teenaged son. Flexibility is a resource that allows an individual autonomy with regard to the where, when, and how of role requirement completion

(Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Finally, material resources are the money earned and benefits received for paid work (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

### Enrichment Pathways and Moderators

After identifying potential resources, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed two pathways through which resources generated in one role can be used in a second role (Figure 4). Through the instrumental path resources are directly transferred from Role A to Role B (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 80). They are referred to as such because of their direct, related effect on role execution in Role B (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). For example, when viewed instrumentally, a pay increase at work (material resources generated in Role A) can directly improve the quality and ease of family life at home (high performance in Role B).



**Figure 4.** Greenhaus and Powell's Theoretical Model of Work-Family Enrichment<sup>3</sup>

Via the affective path, resources generated in Role A which, through indirect means, promote positive mood or emotions in Role A—then yield enhanced performance, emotions, and mood in Role B (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). When viewed affectively, a pay raise (material resource generated in Role A) can trigger positive feelings regarding the additional resources available for child care—which, in turn, may indirectly result in the ability and desire to put in more hours at work (high performance in Role B).

In their discussion of WFE, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) cited several correlational studies that supported the transfer of resources from one domain to another. In their analysis of corroborating research they offered seven propositions which reflected the two pathways of WFE. The first three propositions relate to the resources generated through the instrumental and affective pathways. First, through the instrumental path, they proposed that the resources generated in Role A (see Figure 4, #1) directly augment performance in Role B (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 82). Second, through the affective path, the resources generated in Role A produce positive mood and emotions in that role (Figure 4, #2). And third (Figure 4, #5), the positive mood and emotions experienced in Role A indirectly enhance performance in Role B (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

The final four propositions describe the moderators of the instrumental and affective pathways of WFE. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed salience, relevance, and consistency as moderators of the instrumental path. Role participants organize their social identities by importance (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Roles deemed highly salient to a person's self-concept, and which generate resources considered relevant to and consistent with the requirements and norms of Role B, are more likely to directly promote high performance in Role B (Greenhaus &

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<sup>3</sup> From Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 79

Powell, 2006). The final moderator of the affective path is role salience, in that positive mood and emotions garnered from one role tend to enhance functioning in a second role, when the second role is particularly significant to the self-concept (Greenhaus & Beutell, 2006).

Contrary to Greenhaus and Beutell's (1983) model of WFC, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) included the bi-directional approach in their model of WFE. In doing so, they considered that work may enrich family and family may enrich work and thus, similar to WFC, separated the WFE constructs as work-to-family enrichment and family-to-work enrichment. They declared that work-to-family enrichment "occurs when work experiences improve the quality of family life" and family-to-work enrichment "occurs when family experiences improve the quality of work life" (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 73).

The enrichment perspectives' emphasis on role enhancement highlights the positive outcomes of role resources across both domains of the work-family interface. Sieber (1974) presented a theoretical approach which outlined the benefits of multiple roles and the four types of rewards as net outcomes of role accumulation. Marks (1977) argued for a more comprehensive approach to human energy, conceiving that energy expansion occurs through the accumulation of multiple roles.

Barnett and Hyde's (2001) inductive theory of expansion included four basic principles regarding work, family and gender. Although their theory was inclusive of gender, overall they found few differences between men and women and recommended an enrichment-based, gender neutral framework for work-family research and policy. Informed by previous research and a desire to discover how role enrichment occurs, the theoretical model of Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) model presented two pathways through which resources can cross domains. Their study

supported the enrichment perspective of WFE, with role resources generated as antecedents and high performance and positive affect viewed as the outcomes (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

As illustrated by the preceding studies, the enrichment perspective is based on the “expansion approach to human energy...stressing the energy-producing element of social activity” (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Marks, 1977, p. 926). These studies are in contrast with the conflict perspective, which focused on role strain as the outcome of the work-family interface.

The work-family literature views the interface between the two domains through two contrasting perspectives, conflict and enrichment. The conflict perspective (Goode, 1960; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) emphasizes the strain caused by the incompatibility of multiple roles, and the enhancement perspective (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974) emphasizes the rewards and privileges of role accumulation. The difference between the perspectives is the focus on the results of the spillover between the domains of work and family, with conflict highlighting the challenges and enrichment emphasizing the benefits of multiple roles. Ultimately, the literature supports each perspective, as researchers have found that occupying multiple roles can be both challenging and enriching.

### **The Current Study**

This study sought to discover how employed graduate student mothers—women simultaneously managing work, student, and family roles—experience, perceive, and meet the demands of their multiple roles. This literature review included discussions of four key areas: graduate study and family roles, women in the academy, maternal employment and parenting, and the perspectives on work and family. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the relationship between the literature reviewed here and the current study, along with an explanation of the unit of analysis for the study.



The maternal employment and parenting literature highlights current parenting attitudes and stressors that might affect employed GSMs' experience of their multiple roles. Empirical and theoretical works on the work-family interface have identified some of the challenges and benefits of multiple roles. Research on women in the academy connects the literature with the study through the identification of potential challenges and benefits employed GSMs might experience when managing their multiple roles and the overall perspective they have on multiple role management.

The work-family literature, the theoretical framework of this research, has extensively examined the interface between work and family via quantitative means, but qualitative research is lacking. This study sought to qualitatively connect the work/family literature with higher education through the exploration of employed GSMs' experiences in their multiple roles. In addition, this study helps inform women of the benefits and challenges of combining education, parenting, and work roles. The theoretical foundation represented under the current study presents an opportunity to explore the application of the conflict and enrichment perspectives to a *student-work-family* interface.

### **Conflict Perspective**

This study attempted to gain a qualitative perspective on potential issues of role conflict for employed GSMs, by answering questions such as: Does participating in the graduate student role make participation in the mother and/or worker roles more difficult for employed GSMs? In other words, are employed GSMs experiencing any role pressure incompatibility? If this is the case, then what type(s) of role challenges are employed GSMs experiencing? Are they (a) unable to devote the necessary amount of time to one or more of these roles, (b) experiencing strain in one role making difficult their other roles, and/or (c) exhibiting behaviors in one role

which make it difficult to fulfill the requirements of their other roles? Is role overload evident in their descriptions?

If role pressures, and the resulting role conflict, are predominant, then what are the sources of such conflict, according to Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) model? In order to draw out possible descriptions of role conflict, the interview protocol included questions such as: "How do you think graduate school is challenging you in your role as an employee?"

### **Enrichment Perspective**

There was also potential for this study to assist with answering the following questions: Are employed GSMs primarily experiencing benefits from role accumulation? That is, are these women gaining any resources through participating in multiple roles? If enrichment is occurring, then what types of role resources are being generated through employed GSMs participation in multiple roles? Are employed GSMs' (a) gaining new ways of analyzing situations or other skills and perspectives through role accumulation, (b) increasing their psychological and physical resources such as satisfaction or well-being through involvement in multiple roles, (c) gaining social capital through relationships developed within one or more of their roles (d) nurturing flexibility through personally determined pacing of role requirement completion, and/or (e) gaining material resources such as earning income or receiving gifts through their experiences in each domain?

If role resources, and thereby role enrichment, result from multiple role management, then through which pathway(s) are the resources generated (affective or instrumental), according to Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) model? The interview protocol included "How do you think graduate school is benefitting you in your role as a mother?" This question sought to draw out any enriching experiences of multiple role management.

## **Unit of Analysis**

Because the individuals in this study were selected for their involvement in three highly demanding roles, selecting one role from which to “synthesize and compare data” (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, p. 26) was necessary. The unit of analysis for this study was the graduate student role. According to Guest et al. (2013), “the unit of analysis in a study is the level of abstraction at which you look for variability...most commonly...the individual” (p. 26). Consequently, the employee and parent roles were explored through the context of the graduate student role.

The graduate student role was selected as the unit of analysis because it is the most optional of the three roles, it is the role most relevant to my program of study, and because we know so little about it. Questions on the interview protocol that reflected the graduate student role as the unit of analysis ask how graduate school is challenging the participant in her other primary roles (i.e. mother and employee) including: “How do you think graduate school is challenging you in your role as a mother?” and “How do you think graduate school is benefitting you in your role as an employee?” The specific method of inquiry for this study is outlined in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methods for this study, beginning with a rationale for a qualitative approach. A review of the research questions, philosophical perspective, and the research design are also included. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the data gathering and analysis procedures.

### **Rationale for Qualitative Interviewing Study**

The nature of qualitative data is, essentially, “data in the form of words” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 10). Using a qualitative interviewing method, this study explored the experiences, perspectives, and multiple role demands of 6 employed GSMs. In this study, the term *multiple roles* was defined as concurrent involvement in the roles of mother, graduate student, and employee. The researcher gathered data about this population from this sample through verbal accounts of the participants’ experiences as employed GSMs and learned how they fulfilled their multiple roles—in other words, the process of multiple role management. According to Merriam (2009), a qualitative approach is “particularly useful for addressing questions about process...” (p. 30). The sources of data included a screening tool, a brief demographic questionnaire, and a one-on-one, semi-structured, open-ended interview.

### **Philosophical Perspective**

Using the social constructivist philosophy, an approach typical to qualitative research, interview data were analyzed and interpreted to draw out the meanings employed GSMs had about their multiple roles (Creswell, 2009). This goal aligned with the interests of qualitative researchers as described by Merriam (2009) and Creswell (2009), primarily to understand participants’ interpretations, construction, and attributions of their experiences. The social

constructivist worldview holds that meaning is subjective and formed through the interaction with others in social contexts (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009).

The experiences and demands of employed GSMs were explored with the expectation of discovering the perspective these women assigned to their roles. In particular, I believed the social experiences employed GSMs have within the contexts of their multiple roles influenced or affected GSMs' descriptions, interpretations, and understanding of their multiple social roles. In addition, this study explored how employed GSMs described their multiple roles overall, and if the women who shared the same perspectives had anything else in common. This information was collected through qualitative interviews which, according to Kvale and Brinkman (2009) gather "...nuanced accounts of different aspects of the interviewee's life world..." (p. 30).

### **Research Questions**

This study explored the experiences, demands, and perspectives of employed GSMs, a group which pursues graduate study and work while also maintaining family roles. As noted in Chapter 1, the study aimed to answer this primary question: How do employed GSMs describe their experiences and meet the demands of each of their multiple roles, and what perspective do they adopt in doing so? This central question guided the following research questions:

1. What overall perspective is reflected in the participant's descriptions of their experience fulfilling the roles of graduate student, mother, and employee?
2. What practices do employed GSMs identify which help them meet the demands of their multiple roles?
3. What challenges and/or benefits of these roles do employed GSMs identify?

The research questions were designed to elicit descriptions of enrichment and/or conflict by asking about the benefits and challenges of fulfilling multiple roles. Avoiding explicit use of the

words ‘conflict’ and ‘enrichment’ was purposeful, so as to prevent leading participants to discuss one over the other. The interview questions were similar in nature and inquired specifically about both the process of how these women experienced their multiple roles, and the daily practice of meeting multiple role demands, as reflected by the research questions.

## **Research Design**

### **Sample Selection**

The participants were purposively selected to be similar on demographic characteristics. Purposive sampling allows for a researcher to focus on a “case’s unique contexts,” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 32). The participants had to meet all the criteria in order to assure the quality of the data (Patton, 1990). Therefore, in order to be included in the study, each participant was concurrently:

- a. Enrolled in a graduate program (MA, EdD, or PsyD)
- b. Employed (either full- or part-time), and
- c. The mother of at least one preschool child.

Although marriage was not a requirement, all the participants in this study were married. Employment was not restricted to any type or location, so the women could have been employed anywhere. For this study, “preschool” or “preschool-aged” meant children not yet in Kindergarten. The age range of the GSMs’ children was 9 months to 5 years. There was no preferred or required minimum or maximum age for participants, but the sample consisted of women aged 29 to 42 years. Since the requirements for participation in this study were specific, the sample was small (6 participants). Recruitment of participants took place at two sites: A community child care center and a graduate program within a university.

**Child care center.** It is likely that a significant number of employed GSMs have preschool-aged children who attend child care. Therefore, selecting participants from among the

mothers of children in a community child care center was reasonable. The child care center allowed for a more diverse sample, as the employed GSMs with children at the center attended different graduate schools in various locations, and were from different academic, social, and ethnic backgrounds.

The center was located in southern California in a city with a population of approximately 65,000 and offered toddler daycare and preschool curriculum for children ages 18 months through 4 years. There were three attendance programs: 5 days (Monday-Friday), 3 days (Monday/Wednesday/Friday), or 2 days (Tuesday/Thursday). Tuition ranged from \$75 to \$225 per week and depended upon the child's age and attendance program. The facility operated 51 weeks per year, Monday through Friday, 7 am through 6 pm. The child care center was located on the grounds of a Christian church, but the majority of the children (and their families) did not attend the church. The center served the community and was licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division.

Flyers were posted in the child care center office describing the study and requesting participants. The flyer included a brief description of the study, the criteria for participation, and the researchers' phone number and email address. Each interested person was asked to complete the Research Participant Interest Form (Appendix C), a screening tool used to compare participants on demographic data. The women who met the criteria were scheduled for an interview.

**Graduate program.** Participants at this site were enrolled in a degree program which attracted adult learners. Many of these programs require that applicants are of a minimum age—typically 23 and older (Schuetze & Slowey, 2002). Such programs in universities may be referred to by various names including, 'fully employed' or 'working professional' degree

programs. Individuals who work during the day are drawn to these programs because they tend to offer afternoon and evening classes, accelerated degree plans, year-round courses and admission, and full- or part-time enrollment options. Students entering this type of program are likely to be employed and of childbearing age.

The institution of interest was a small, private, liberal arts university in southern California. A contact within the psychology department offered to pass the flyer along to faculty at the institution and to students in her graduate psychology classes. The institution has a main campus, several satellite campuses, and an enrollment of approximately 2,700 undergraduate and 1,400 graduate students. The university's graduate psychology program offers students the option of afternoon and/or evening classes at two campuses within the county. The Research Participant Interest Flyer (Appendix G) was emailed to the contact, and she forwarded the flyer to the students in her classes and other faculty in her department.

Fewer than 6 participants combined were recruited from the two sites, so the remaining participants were selected through snowball, or chain (Patton, 1990). Study participants were asked if they knew of any other employed GSMs who might be good cases for the study. Three participants were found through snowball (Lisette, Ann, and Debra [all names are pseudonyms]).

## **Procedures**

### **Data Collection**

**Informed consent.** The general purpose of the study was explained prior to the beginning of each interview. The Consent to Participate in Research form (Appendix F) was handed to each participant and the researcher went over it thoroughly. The audio recording, transcription, pseudonym use, and interview report procedures were explained and clarified. The participants' were informed that their child care facility, university affiliation, and any other



identifying information would be changed on and/or redacted from the transcript. The risks and benefits of the study, with emphasis on the fact that participation was completely voluntary were explained in detail. Participants were informed of their right to discontinue the interview, and participation in the study, at any time. The consent form indicated an option to receive a \$10 Target gift card as compensation for participating in the study.

**Preliminary questionnaire.** Demographic information from each participant was collected using a Background Questionnaire (Appendix D). The questionnaire was highly structured. The purpose of its structure was to gather background information for comparison, verify that each respondent met the multiple role criteria for participation, and request general demographic information (Merriam, 2009). The preliminary questionnaire was completed immediately prior to the interview.

After review of the preliminary questionnaire and confirmation of the participant's eligibility, a one-on-one, semi-structured, opened-ended interview was conducted with each employed GSM. The interviews were scheduled over the course of one academic period, the Spring of 2014.

**The interview.** The major benefit of the semi-structured interview is that it allows researchers to gain perspective and understanding of the participants' views of the world and garner information from participants who cannot be directly observed in the process of interest (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009, p. 90). This interview format also provided the freedom to ask the same questions of all interviewees and probe when necessary (Brenner, 2006). A major drawback of interviews is the inability to observe participants in their natural setting (Creswell, 2009). Since observing each participant in each of her multiple roles was not possible for this study, asking questions about employed GSMs' experiences through one-on-one interviews was

the best source of gathering information on the process. The participants were interviewed wherever was convenient for the women (e.g. child care center, their office). All interviews were conducted, coded, and analyzed by the researcher.

After a brief introductory question, the interview protocol (Appendix E) posed questions about process. Since this study was mainly concerned with the experiences of employed GSMs during the process of fulfilling their multiple roles, the first question on the interview protocol was: “How would you describe your experience of attending graduate school while concurrently working and raising (a) child(ren)?”

To inquire about how employed GSMs met role demands, the protocol included this question: “How do you organize your schedule/time/routine in order to meet these demands?” Finally, the concluding questions drew on the participant’s experience of being an employed GSM and included: “What advice would you give to a working mother who is considering graduate school?” The interviews lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Four of the six interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Unfortunately, two of the interviews (Danielle’s and Monica’s) were not recorded due to researcher error, and analysis relied on notes taken during the interview. Transcription was conducted by GMR Transcription.

### **Data Storage**

Each interview was assigned a code number to protect the participants’ individual identities. The list with the corresponding participant’s name was kept in a separate location, away from the transcribed interview data. To safeguard the data and protect participant privacy, one electronic copy of each interview transcript was stored on a secure, password protected file on the researchers’ home computer. The data files were backed up to a secondary hard drive once per day, in the evening. A second electronic copy of each transcript was stored in the

researchers' private, web-based Dropbox account, accessible only via password. Any hard copies of the interview transcripts were stored in a locked, waterproof, fire-proof safe in the researchers' home office. Interview consent forms were stored in a separate, locked filing cabinet.

### **Data Analysis**

The data set consisted of structured questionnaires and transcribed interviews. As is common with qualitative research, data analysis began during data collection, starting with the first interview. The second research question was answered using an inductive method, which allowed for constant data comparison with subsequent interviews (Brenner, 2006; Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). As Patton (1990) explained, "inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (p. 330). The inductive approach is useful for the second research question (What practices do employed GSMs identify which help them meet the demands of their multiple roles?), as these practices are expected to emerge during data collection (Miles et al., 2014).

However, in order to classify each participants' overall perspective on her multiple roles, a deductive method was used to answer the first and third research questions, as analysis included terms from the theoretical framework, identified prior to beginning the study (Brenner, 2006; Miles et al., 2014). A deductive method was appropriate because the researcher began data analysis with predefined codes for challenges, benefits, conflict, and enrichment. The participant's frequency of positive versus negative descriptions of their experience in their roles was included in my analysis. This process included identifying words or statements which indicated or suggested challenges and/or benefits. This allowed for categorization of the employed GSMs' perspectives as conflicting, enriching, or both.

**Analytic sequence.** For the research question regarding role demands, the analytic sequence suggested by Miles et al. (2014) was utilized by “sorting and sifting through these coded materials to identify similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes, categories, distinct differences between subgroups, and common sequences” (p. 10). Then, similar concepts were grouped and categories formed from the concepts via pattern coding (Miles et al., 2014). Simultaneously, emerging themes were identified and the frequency of the emerging themes was noted. Participants’ descriptions of their experiences were then classified into categories of conflicting, enriching, or both, as an indicator of their overall perspective on multiple role management. Finally, a case-oriented cross-case analysis was conducted to “compare cases with different outcomes to form explanations” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 102). The participants were compared with the other participants and the findings discussed.

**Data categorization.** After receiving the transcripts from GMR transcription service, the researcher read each transcript and listened to the recording and made any necessary corrections before beginning the coding process. Merriam (2009) explained coding as “assigning some sort of shorthand designation to various aspects of your data so that you can easily retrieve specific pieces of the data” (p. 173). Coding began with the use of a pseudonym and a numeric assignment for each participant’s questionnaire and interview. Each participant’s responses were coded with colored highlighters, using a different color for each code category. Elemental, affective, and exploratory coding methods were used (Miles et al., 2014).

Elemental methods are foundational, and for research question 2 the researcher used in vivo and descriptive coding. In vivo coding is the creating of codes using phrases from the participants’ dialogue during the interview, so as to draw out any “cultural categories” of the group (Miles et al., p. 74). Descriptive codes were used to label statements or phrases which

described challenges, benefits, or other ways the women met role demands (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

Emotion coding was used for the affective method, which labels the participants' inferred, recalled, or experienced emotions—a good method for exploring the participants' personal and social actions, experiences, and for the researcher to gain "...insight into the participants' perspectives" (Miles et al., p. 75). Affective coding methods draw out participants' subjective experiences (Miles et al., 2014), which are essential to this study.

Finally, holistic coding, an exploratory method, was used to allow the researcher to identify and label an overarching theme for certain coded categories and subcategories using a single code (Miles et al., 2014). This exploratory method allows a researcher to assign preliminary "global" codes for chunks of data on challenges and benefits. These global codes were later used to classify overall conflict or enrichment.

## **Data Presentation**

A demographic table was composed and included summaries of each participant and the themes, categories, and patterns described (Table 1, Chapter 4). Tables were used to visually display the data results (see Chapter 4). The demographic table was composed of data from the Research Participant Interest Form (Appendix C) and Background Questionnaire (Appendix D), and it contained information including, but not limited to, each participants' pseudonym, age, major and student status, type of degree, number and ages of children, type of work, number of hours worked per week, and marital status. The case summaries included information gathered from the interview about each participant including, but not limited to, a brief description of each employed GSMs' background, current employment, and graduate student information.

Finally, the findings were displayed using two methods. In response to research question one, a role-ordered matrix was used to “group, summarize, and compare different people’s role perceptions about selected topics or issues that enable the researcher to compare and contrast those perceptions” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 162). The matrix included the participants’ role challenges, benefits, support networks, relevant role characteristics, and overall perspectives of their multiple roles. A conceptually clustered matrix was also used to provide a visual summary of the themes, patterns, and categories identified and explored in response to research questions two and three (Miles et al., 2014).

### **Trustworthiness**

Through journaling, considered a “classic” analytic move (Miles et al., 2014, p. 10), the researcher followed Merriam’s (2009) recommendation and made notes of any potential themes, observations, and directions for additional pursuits gathered from the data. Notes were taken during and immediately following the interviews. Narrative member checking gave participants the opportunity to review the researchers’ interpretations of their statements and provide feedback to ensure that they were not misunderstood or misquoted. Frequent peer debriefing was used to ensure that the data analysis was trustworthy. Additionally, participants were given the opportunity to review their interview transcripts.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Six employed graduate student mothers (GSMs) participated in this study. This chapter begins with a description of each participant and presents the findings organized by research question (in order of 2, 3, and 1). After describing the participants' background information, findings are reported concerning how they met their role demands (RQ2), the challenges and benefits of their roles (RQ3), and their experience of those roles (RQ1).

### Participants

The participants were women concurrently in the roles of graduate student, employee (full- or part-time), and the parent of at least one preschool-aged child. All of the women were in dual-earner married couples, wherein the spouse was also employed, and all spouses were employed full-time. One employed GSM was seeking a Master of Arts (MA), while the others were seeking a doctorate—either a Doctor of Education (EdD), or a Doctor of Psychology (PsyD). The participants varied in employment type and their hours worked per week ranged from 6 to 41. The women ranged in age from 29 to 42.

Table 1 presents each participant's demographic information including age, degree sought, graduate program type, academic discipline, children, child care provider, employment, work hours per week, marital status, and position in graduate program. As a group, the participants were married and ranged in age from 29 to 42 years, with an average age of 35.5.

As is evident in Table 1, all study participants were employed in either the education or psychology fields. Further, they were employed in positions and locations throughout southern California—Debra in a public school, Lisette in a community college, Carmen in a medical office, Danielle in a psychologists' office, Monica and Ann in their own academic institutions. As noted, the participants worked from a low of 6 (Monica) to over 40 hours per week (Debra). All lived in the southern California area.

All 6 participants used a child care provider (either day care or preschool) for their child(ren) five and under. Their children ranged in age from 9 months to 5 years. Four participants—Lisette, Debra, Danielle, and Ann—each had a child in preschool. Two others, Carmen and Monica, had a child in day care. All participants were interviewed in the Spring (April or May) of 2014. The researcher had no contact with any of the participants prior to this study.

Further, pseudonyms were used to protect the individual identities of the women who participated in the study and anyone else they mentioned by name or described in the course of the interviews. A brief summary of each participant follows, which expands on the characteristics presented in Table 1.

#### **“Debra”**

Debra, a 31-year-old teacher attended a satellite campus of a small, private, southern California liberal arts university which enrolled about 1,400 graduate students. Debra was enrolled full-time in a hybrid (60% in-class instruction and 40% online) Master of Arts (M.A.) degree program, which met two weekends per month. She was also employed as a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher and had one child, a son, age 4.

During work hours, Debra’s son attended preschool each weekday full-time (8 hours per day). When she needed time to complete school work, her husband or her parents, who lived nearby, cared for her son. Debra planned to continue teaching as long as she enjoyed it.



Table 1

*Participant Characteristics*

	<b>Participant 1</b>	<b>Participant 2</b>	<b>Participant 3</b>	<b>Participant 4</b>	<b>Participant 5</b>	<b>Participant 6</b>
<b>Name</b>	“Debra”	“Lisette”	“Carmen”	“Danielle”	“Monica”	“Ann”
<b>Age</b>	31	42	32	29	32	36
<b>Degree Sought</b>	M.A.	Ed.D.	Psy.D.	Psy.D.	Psy.D.	Ed.D.
<b>Program Type</b>	Hybrid	Hybrid	On Campus	On Campus	On Campus	On Campus
<b>Academic Discipline</b>	Educational Leadership	Educational Leadership	Clinical Psychology	Clinical Psychology	Clinical Psychology	Educational Leadership
<b>Child(ren)</b>	1 Boy (4 yrs)	1 Girl (5 yrs)	1 Girl (9 mos)	1 Boy (3.5 yrs), Pregnant with #2	1 Girl (9 mos)	2 Girls (6 yrs) (3 yrs)
<b>Child Care Provider (for children under 5)</b>	Preschool	Preschool	Day Care	Preschool	Day Care	Preschool
<b>Employment</b>	Public School Teacher	Community College Career Counselor	Psychiatric Social Worker	Pre-Doctoral Psychology Intern	Teaching Assistant	Program Administrator
<b>Work Hours (per week)</b>	40+	40	32	25-28	6	40
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married
<b>Position in Program</b>	End	Beginning	Middle	End	Middle	Middle

**“Lisette”**

Lisette, a 42-year-old career counselor, attended graduate school in a small, private southern California institution with a graduate enrollment of approximately 1,100. She was enrolled full-time in an Ed.D. program that was designed to accommodate working professionals. Lisette’s program was also a hybrid, with course meetings scheduled in clusters throughout the term. Lisette was employed as a career counselor at a community college at the time of this study.

Lisette's 5-year-old daughter attended preschool 4 days per week, 8 hours per day. Her daughter was also cared for by her husband during her work hours. When she needed to complete school work, or attend a conference while her husband worked, she relied on other family members to help with child care. Lisette planned to continue working at the community college level until she retires.

### **“Carmen”**

Carmen, a 32-year-old psychiatric social worker, was enrolled part-time in a PsyD program at a small, private liberal arts institution. The university had a graduate enrollment of approximately 4,000, including on campus and off-site locations. She attended an off-site location. Carmen was employed full-time.

Carmen's 9-month-old daughter attended child care 5 days per week, 8 hours per day. On occasions when her daughter was sick and could not attend child care, Carmen enlisted the help of her sister or her mother-in-law (who lived 10 minutes away) to care for her daughter. After a year-long postdoctoral internship, Carmen planned to become a licensed psychologist.

### **“Danielle”**

Danielle was a 29-year-old pre-doctoral psychology intern. At the time of this study, she was enrolled in a PsyD program at a private institution in southern California. Her university had approximately 3,000 graduate students. She attended classes on campus and was enrolled full-time. Danielle worked 25 hours per week at the time of this study. Her position was unpaid, but the internship met degree program requirements through course credit and units. Danielle was the mother of one child, a 3 ½-year-old boy. She was also in the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester of pregnancy with her second child at the time of the interview. Danielle lived in southern California and intended to become a licensed psychologist after a 1-year postdoctoral internship.

### **“Monica”**

Monica, a 32-year-old teaching assistant, attended graduate school in southern California at a small, private, liberal arts university. Monica was in a Doctor of Psy.D. program and attended classes full-time at one of the institution’s off-site locations. At the time of this study, she was employed part-time at her institution and worked 6 to 10 hours per week.

Monica’s 9-month-old daughter attended child care 3 to 4 days per week, 6 hours per day. Her daughter was either in child care or with her wife when she worked or studied. She considered her schedule flexible, as she had Tuesdays off and spent them at home with her daughter. After completing the PsyD, her plan was to become a licensed psychologist and teach at the graduate level.

### **“Ann”**

Ann, a 36-year-old program administrator, lived in southern California and attended a large, private, university that enrolls approximately 22,000 graduate students. Ann was in her fourth year of a full-time EdD program. She was employed full-time at her academic institution.

Ann had two daughters, ages 6 and 3 years. Her 6-year-old daughter was a kindergarten student at a private school. Her 3-year-old daughter was in preschool for 9 hours per day, 5 days per week. Ann had been “ABD” (all but dissertation) for two years at the time of this interview. She was unsure of her career goals after completing the EdD, but planned to stay in her current position until she decided.

## **Research Questions**

Data analysis began with research question two (RQ2), which focused on the practices GSMs used to help meet the demands of their multiple roles. Research question three (RQ3), which focused on challenges and benefits, was analyzed next. Finally, research question one

RQ1 was reserved for last because it was more comprehensive in nature, as it included holistic analysis of participant descriptions and their overall experiences.

1. What overall perspective is reflected in the participant's descriptions of their experience of fulfilling the roles of graduate student, mother, and employee?
2. What practices do employed GSMs identify which help them meet the demands of their multiple roles?
3. What challenges and/or benefits of these roles do employed GSMs identify?

The 6 participants in this study provided thorough, candid responses to the interview questions which led to the findings in this section. This study was designed to reveal themes or patterns of how employed GSMs experience, meet, and perceive their multiple role demands. Five themes were identified among the areas of analysis in response to the research questions. The areas of analysis coincided with the research questions. Analysis revealed how the participants met role demands (RQ2), identified some of the benefits and challenges of multiple roles (RQ3), and explained how participants experienced their multiple roles overall (RQ1).

### **Meeting Role Demands (RQ2)**

Five overarching themes were identified in the participants' responses to questions about how, in practice, they met the demands of their multiple roles. These themes are represented in a conceptually clustered matrix in decreasing order of mention by the participants were time management, support networks, weekend r's, family first, and role management (see Table 2).

#### **Time Management**

The first theme in this category, time management, included the use of methods such as a calendar, schedule, system, routine, or a written list to help manage their multiple roles. Participants viewed time management as a necessary way to keep track of their schedules,

workload, and weekly responsibilities. For example, keeping track of their schedules through a calendar allowed for the manageability of their work, family, and graduate student roles.

References to time management included “plan ahead,” “be organized,” “prioritize,” and “put it on the calendar.”

Debra, the English teacher and mother of a 4-year-old son, noted the importance of a calendar for remembering her daily tasks and of keeping things that must be done written down, while other things remained flexible:

Before, it would be: if it's not written down, then it wouldn't get done. And now, it's: if it's written down, it's still 50/50. A little shaky on getting things done, but I'm using my calendar a lot and just making sure that whatever it is today—looking at today and trying not to look too far ahead, because then I get overwhelmed...definitely, trying to have that—the system of putting things on the calendar—having other things be flexible that are want to's and not have to's.

Similarly, the importance of the calendar to keep track of her tasks was evident for Lisette, a career counselor and mother of a 5-year-old daughter:

So, everything that I need to do I put in a calendar. So, that's how I manage my time and that's how I know what needs to be done so that nothing falls through the cracks...so, having a good handle on my schedule—making sure it's in my calendar, because if it's not in my calendar, it doesn't exist...if it's not in there, it'll fall through the cracks and that's when something could go wrong. But, since I know that about myself, that's how I manage my schedule.

Table 2

*Conceptually Clustered Matrix: Meeting Role Demands and Role Challenges and Benefits*

	Meeting Role Demands (RQ2)	Role Challenges (RQ3)	Role Benefits (RQ3)
Themes and Categories	Time Management Support Networks Family First Weekend 'Rs' Role Management	Role Strain Role Conflict <i>Time-based</i> <i>Strain-based</i> <i>Behavior-based</i> Role Overload	Role Resources Role Enrichment
Examples and Sub-themes	<p><b>Time Management</b> <i>Schedule</i> Routine Plan ahead Avoid conflicts <i>Organization</i> System/Checklists Calendar To Do list</p> <p><b>Support Networks</b> <i>Spouse</i> <i>Family &amp; Community</i> Parents Extended family Church Neighbors <i>Employer/Supervisor</i> <i>Institution</i> Hybrid program Cohort model <i>Financial</i> Scholarships Tuition remission</p> <p><b>Family First</b> <i>Prioritization</i> Before studies Before work</p> <p><b>Weekend Rs</b> (Responsibilities, Relaxation, Recreation) <i>Shopping</i> <i>Family activities</i> <i>Household tasks</i></p> <p><b>Role Management</b> <i>Role Overlap</i> <i>Role Separation</i></p>	<p><b>Role Strain</b> <i>Tension at home</i> <i>Limited family time</i> <i>Long commutes</i> <i>Forgetfulness</i> <i>Sick child</i></p> <p><b>Role Conflict</b> <i>Time-based</i> Young children Dual-earners Putting off tasks Weekly chores</p> <p><i>Strain-based</i> Exhaustion Working weekends Heavy work load</p> <p><i>Behavior-based</i> "Good enough" Lowered expectations Disorder/Disorganization</p> <p><b>Role Overload</b></p>	<p><b>Role Resources</b> <i>Psychological/Physical</i> <i>Skills/Perspectives</i> <i>Social Capital</i> <i>Flexibility</i> <i>Material Resources</i></p> <p><b>Role Enrichment</b> <i>Instrumental Pathway (Direct)</i> Advanced Knowledge Applicable Skills Connections Compensation</p> <p><i>Affective Pathway (Indirect)</i> Esteem/Confidence Satisfaction Self-Reliance</p>

Carmen, a psychiatric social worker and mother of a 9-month-old daughter, described the structure of her week in these terms:

People ask me how I handle everything that I'm doing, and I mean, my answer? It's—it always has been—I take it one day at a time. One assignment at a time, one project at a time, one client at a time. So, I've structured my week in a way where I know where I have to be every hour of the day, every day...

## **Support Networks**

When asked about resources the GSMs used to meet multiple role demands, all identified support networks as essential to their ability to manage multiple role demands—supportive spouses, extended family, friends, neighbors, professors, financial support (a material resource also discussed later in this chapter), faith, and supportive employers.

**Spouse.** Each employed GSM reported that she was married to a person who supported her academic, professional, and parenting goals, which allowed the participants to meet their multiple role demands. Five of the six women were in heterosexual relationships, and one participant was in a same-sex marriage. All participants reported that their spouses assumed most or all of the responsibility for cooking, laundry, other household chores, and caring for children while the employed GSM worked or studied. For example, Carmen reported that her husband cooked most of their meals and fully supported her academic endeavors. She described her husband as “amazing.”

Monica, the teaching assistant and mother of a 9-month-old daughter, identified her wife (Jess) as fully supportive of Monica's graduate studies and professional goals. Jess prepared most of the family meals, and did most of the cleaning, and laundry. Jess also picked their daughter up from day care in the afternoons since Monica had classes in the evenings, often until 10:00 p.m. In addition, Jess supported Monica emotionally, as she experienced severe morning sickness during her pregnancy.

Ann's (a university program administrator and mother of 2 girls, ages 6 and 3) husband recently took over school and day care drop off and pick-up. She described how this change affected her day:

I have a really great husband. Even with all those three priorities [family, work, and graduate school], that I talk about, I wouldn't have been able to do it without having a great partner in the relationship, and so going back to the example of him doing the drop offs and the pick-ups, that's amazing because that literally saves me 30 minutes in the morning to get to work faster so that I can speed home faster.

Later in the interview, she described the many other ways her husband supported her as she fulfilled her responsibilities as an employed GSM:

Laundry wise, my husband is really great, he does the laundry. So I think—thinking right now he's given me a lot more leeway because I have a more demanding schedule. Where, even though he has those two things—family and career—as well, but I have the added thing of education. He knows the benefit of me receiving my doctorate degree in terms of—career-wise and financial-wise.

So, he's very supportive, and so we're able to do certain things—or he's able to pick up the slack...he does a lot of the cooking as well, and whenever I can get in there, I'll do it. I'll do the dishes, and I will do certain things that he's unable to do, but if we were to do a split of the daily life things, he probably deserves about 60 or 70 percent of the credit and me about 30 percent right now.

All the participants were partners in dual-earner couples—meaning each participant's spouse was employed full-time. However, some reported that their spouses had accommodating work arrangements, which made the employed GSMs' multiple role involvement more manageable. For example, Debra's husband was also employed as a teacher, so both partners were home and had no need for childcare during the summer. This schedule allowed Debra more freedom and flexibility for completing assignments and preparing for classes, since her graduate program had year-round enrollment.

Although Lisette, the community college career counselor, did not mention her husband's job title, she said he worked the night shift (including weekends) and was home during the day.



His night shift schedule allowed Lisette to complete course readings and assignments on the weekend, the only time she was able to do so, as she worked long hours during the week.

Danielle, the pre-doctoral psychology intern and pregnant mother of a 3-year-old boy, did not mention her husband's job title either, but because he worked from home, and he was able to be with their son in the event that the boy was ill and could not attend childcare. Because she commuted 4 hours round-trip on weekdays, having her husband at home made it less likely that Danielle would have to cancel therapy clients, miss classes, or miss supervision hours when her son was sick.

**Family, friends, and community.** Several participants utilized family, faith, and community support networks to help them meet their role demands. The participants reported that their parents, in-laws, siblings, nieces, and neighbors were willing to assist when needed. These people were called on to care for a sick child, do school pick up, and/or take children for outings so the employed GSM could work on school assignments or work on employee responsibilities.

For example, Carmen's mother-in-law lived close by and was available to babysit when her daughter was sick and could not attend childcare. Her sister did not live nearby, but "[she was] a stay-at-home mom and willing to come to my house and hang out with my daughter while I was at work." She stated that her family and friends are understanding of her frequent absence from gatherings and events.

Although Monica's extended family on the east coast have been supportive, her immediate family did not approve of her relationship with Jess for six years. However, her parents' support had developed since her daughter was born. She described Jess's parents as "on board" with the relationship from the beginning, but they did not live locally.

Debra described her parents as their “biggest resource.” She and her husband rented her parent’s house, and her parents moved into another house on the same street. This arrangement, along with geographic closeness to her parents, this provided them with close caretakers for their son (when needed) and more affordable housing while Debra attended graduate school.

My parents help out a lot. My son wants to be there all the time, so he’s constantly asking us. Half the reason our house is such a mess is because we come home and make a mess, and then we leave it a mess and go hang out with my mom and dad two doors down, and then come back and do everything else but clean. They help out a lot. My mom is very involved, and the kind of grandma where she really wants to be—she would rather be a grandma than anything else...they’ve been a huge help, financially for us, and time wise, and just really supportive of the whole process. I think they are—they’re our biggest resource.

Lisette considered her mother, mother-in-law, sister, and 26-year-old niece as part of her support network. They took turns helping take care of her daughter when Lisette traveled for work and when her husband was also working.

I don’t count on one person because I can’t, so I have to kind of like—so one person can do one thing. So we have his mom, I have my mom, I have my sister, and even sometimes—my niece is 26—so I have that support. And I think, without that, if I didn’t have that, it’d be very, very hard.

Carmen and Monica cited neighbors and/or church communities and in Carmen’s case, faith as a resource. Carmen described her religious faith:

I think my faith in God, and prayer—and I don’t go to church as much as I wish I did—but just knowing that I have like that opportunity to feed my soul, to get spiritually fed. Whether it be through prayer, or whatever it may be, I think that’s definitely a resource.

Monica’s neighbors and their church were also identified as supports. Monica lives in a “diverse neighborhood” where she and her wife had friends and felt accepted. Within her church, they had been adopted by a caring group of older women and described her priest as “wonderful.” The older women provided moral support, encouragement, and babysitting for Monica when needed. These acts allowed her to meet multiple role demands.

**Employer.** Four of the six women cited their employer's support as essential to their ability to meet the demands of their multiple roles. For example, Debra, the teacher, cited her principal and assistant principal as supportive of her academic goals. Both principals have approved her requests to observe administration in action in order to help her meet class requirements.

Lisette said her manager was her "mentor." She "believes in higher education" and "[she] sees it as part of my job [to pursue the doctorate]." Lisette considered that her managers' belief in education as professional development supported her goal of earning the doctorate while also working full-time.

Ann, who also worked in higher education at a large private university, believed her supervisor's support was reflective of the nature of her institution's goals:

I'm in higher ed[ucation]. It would be very ludicrous if there was a person supervising who didn't support education—someone getting an education—because that's what we're in the business of. So, he's been very supportive.

Carmen's supervisor had supported her graduate studies since she began the program, 18 months ago. Her employer's support was evident when Carmen requested to reduce her hours from 32 to 28 per week.

**Institutional.** The participants identified institutional support from professors and academic departments as supportive of their ability to meet role demands. Some described the graduate programs they chose as having an appropriate structure and design for their situations. Each GSM was enrolled in a program for fully employed students and believed their program structure allowed them to pursue their academic goals while also maintaining their full-time jobs and raising a family:

Lisette summed up the family-friendly nature of her graduate program:

So...it's a hybrid...because it's a blended program, it gives you an opportunity to be able to do your full-time work and obviously have your family. I think it's not the traditional where you're going to be in school, face-to-face, for a long period of time, you know, so I think it does give it—lend itself to being [family] friendly.

Carmen also felt supported by the professors at her institution:

Yes. Yeah. I do feel—I think every professor that I spoke to about my plans for graduation, or adjusting my schedule in a way that would fit with my work and me being a mom, every single one of them has been very supportive. Yeah, so I do feel like they are understanding and they could accommodate what my needs are as a mother and student.

In addition to being an accelerated program (i.e. designed to be completed within one year), Debra's program was also a hybrid, which made it manageable for students who are employed. She described the family friendly nature of her graduate program:

That definitely makes it so I can schedule things around my home life. And there had been several times where in class—if I had to step out and take a call, or if I had to leave and take care of something family [related], they were very open to that. My boys came in one day to surprise me and say hi and that was welcomed. Yeah, it's been really family friendly. They gave us our schedule ahead of time, always, so we're able to really schedule things. I have never had to miss a class, through the whole year, because I knew I had a time when I was gonna have to attend school stuff. It's worked really well.

Monica and Danielle described academic support for their multiple roles as well. Both indicated that they were able to miss a course if needed and had professors who understood their needs and responsibilities as employed GSMs.

**Financial.** Financial resources were cited by several GSMs to help meet their role demands. As mentioned in the previous section, for Debra, renting her parent's house has helped her family financially. In addition, Debra received a small scholarship from her institution. The scholarship subsidized the savings she had accumulated to pay for her graduate program.

Lisette's institution awarded her a \$20,000 scholarship, and she intended to continue pursuing

financial funding throughout her doctoral program. Ann's job provided tuition remission, since she was also employed by the university at which she was pursuing the doctorate:

I got a very minor scholarship for my program, but what was really helpful is that I work at [university name], and I am going to [university name] as well, and so I have tuition benefits as a staff person.

Carmen considered her job as a financial support, since her work provides income and financial stability for her family, "We wouldn't be able to afford our home if I weren't working, so the fact that I work brings some degree of financial stability."

### **Family First**

The GSMs in this study indicated that they met the demands of multiple roles by considering the family role as their most important and placing it first. Prior to beginning the graduate program, Monica and her wife had no children. During the course of the program, Monica gave birth to her daughter. She described how much time attending classes, studying, lecture preparation, meetings, and internship took away from time with her family. The aforementioned plus sleep deprivation were major hindrances to her employment and graduate work. She explained that she would have liked to take a year off from graduate school after having her baby. Her family became her top priority after the birth of her child, so she believed that taking more time to acclimate to her role as a mother would have better prepared her for the challenges of managing multiple roles. Further, she believed that more important than staying on track to complete her degree with her cohort was her desire to do well in all three of her roles.

When asked how she resolved situations in which her roles began to overlap, Ann said it succinctly: "I've always prioritized certain things...so it's family first, career, and then my education comes third." Ann is in the dissertation stage of her program and is in the process of

making future career plans. She had this to say, when asked: “What are your concerns, if any, about your future career plans in terms of managing your multiple roles?”

So there are some parents or families that will make the sacrifice and will relocate and do certain things to further their career. For me, again, going back to it being about family, career, and then school—and once school is out of the equation and it becomes basically family and career—my family will always come before my career. And I want to be able to raise them in a stable environment where they’re not following my career, and so I’m sort of stuck. I like California. I like [city name]. I like the school that we have—we’re enrolled in, and so in terms of my maneuverability, into different positions, it’s going to be limited because there are only so many institutions of higher ed within [city name].

And so the sacrifices that you make, because I’m not willing to move my family for a position in New York, or in Missouri somewhere just for the fact of doing that. I wish that I had done that when I was younger, before I had a family and had moved around and had done, kind of picking different careers—or not careers but different positions within the career of student affairs—but that time has passed me and I’m just going to have to deal with what I have now. And so, there are sacrifices to have a successful career, and I’m not going to have that. But I’m okay. I’m okay because those are, again, the sacrifices that you make, and I choose my family over my career.

Carmen’s views were also very clear. When asked: “What are you aware of now that you weren’t aware of when you started graduate school?” She replied:

I have to really get my priorities straight. I think something that I’ve been realizing more and more lately is that...when my life comes to an end, you know, I think family, my children, my husband will matter most—and yes, that degree on the wall is important, but it’s not everything.

You know, and so I’ve been battling with this for the last year and a half, but I think I’ve come to this realization where you know what, I really—yeah, I really value my education, I always have, and it’s been a dream for me to get my doctorate, and I’m proud of myself for being at an awesome school, and working towards it right now—but I think right now I’m realizing that family does come first...I mean, the doctorate could wait, and even if I have to prolong my—the program—and graduate later, that’s okay...because I’m enjoying the time with my family.

When describing her roles, Lisette put them in this order: “the mom, the employee, [and] the graduate student.” She described her priorities and her schedule upon taking on the graduate

student role in comparison with advice from her former (male) boss to “shut the door” on her family whenever she had to study, read, write, or prepare for class:

It’s not always true, but I’m just saying, the role as a mom is so much different than a dad, and that I feel like the children—or my child—definitely counts on me more and wants me there more...and so incorporating her into what I’m doing is going to be my best way of getting my stuff done. And, I think, the mom—for me—is like...the anchor...I make everything run in the household and so you know it’s—we definitely have a different role. I can’t just shut the door.

### **Weekend ‘Rs’ (Responsibilities, Relaxation, and Recreation)**

The participants shared a common value for their weekends and used them for household responsibilities, relaxation, and/or recreation. All cited their use of weekends for family activities, household tasks, and relaxation they did not have time for during the week. Some hired help to make this happen. For example, Ann said:

We hire someone to clean so that we don’t have to spend [that] time—we’re trying to maximize as much as we can. Groceries, we do it as a family activity so that we take our kids and our weekends are basically about, half the time, doing errands with the kids—which you sometimes feel bad about, but there’s certain things you have to do in order to take care of your house and take care of things that are happening.

As mentioned in the previous section, Danielle valued her weekends with her family. She described her long commute (to classes and her job as a psychologist intern), which required 4 hours a day in her car during the week, in addition to the time she spent away from her husband and son due to her class and work schedules. During the week, the requirements for her psychology internship demanded a lot of her personal time for client appointments, staff meetings, and case notes, so she chose not to use her weekends for work. Instead, she used weekends for resting, grocery shopping, and horseback riding—one of her favorite activities.

Since Debra attended class on Friday evenings and Saturdays from 9am to 5pm, she and her family used their free time on weekends (typically Sundays) for household tasks and chores

including grocery shopping, laundry, meal planning, cleaning, and yard work. Debra's family was very physically active and spent time outdoors whenever possible.

Carmen looked forward to her weekends and spending time with her daughter, even though she worked half-days on Saturday mornings. She also described most of the cleaning, laundry, vacuuming, and other household tasks as things her family did on weekends.

Similarly, Lisette's family used their weekends for grocery shopping, family time, relaxation, and homework. Although they had a housekeeper who did most of the cleaning, throughout the week Lisette did laundry and walked their dogs daily. She described their routine:

We—as a family—on Saturdays, we go to Costco and then we go to Ralphs and then we come home and have lunch...and then...after lunch it's usually nap time, but I'll go and do my work. I'll go into a separate room and do my work and then my husband will take a nap with my daughter...that'll give me like a good 2 to 4 hours—I mean—not that she sleeps that whole time, but that's when I'll have like a good 4 hours of study time or work time, or whatever I'm doing...after that, then it's back to family time. And then on Sunday...we get up and we do something as a family—whatever it is—and then my husband will go to sleep around 2:00 because he works graveyard, and then that's when she'll take a nap and I'll continue with my work.

As noted earlier in the chapter, all of the women in this study were partners in dual-career couples (their spouses worked full-time), so there was not much time for additional activities outside of the normal weekly routine. Family time was scarce during the week, so these employed GSMs were intentional and deliberate with their time on weekends.

### **Role Management**

The participants described the use of two role management techniques to help fulfill the duties of their multiple roles. The techniques described were role overlap and role separation.

**Role overlap.** Half of the employed GSMs identified the use of role overlap, or taking opportunities to integrate roles, as a method they used to meet role demands. These women seized opportunities to integrate their roles in an effort to combine their responsibilities and get



more role tasks accomplished throughout the day. Although three of the participants described the use of this technique to meet the demands of their student, parent, and worker roles, only one participant, Debra, explicitly used the words ‘role overlap.’ She described a situation in which she overlapped her student and employee roles:

If there was ever an opportunity for me to overlap these roles, then I would. So, for instance, this year is an evaluation year for me, and we have choices in our—once you’re tenured—you have choices in how you’ll be evaluated. And, so I chose the portfolio option, and I used my thesis paper that I have to write for my masters as my portfolio for my evaluation. So, I didn’t have to do anything extra. I joined the leadership team on campus, and all those hours I spent in those meetings counted for my field work hours, so I didn’t have to look very far for field work hours.

Lisette, the career counselor enrolled in an EdD program, overlapped her student and parent roles. When she prepared for classes, she also used that time to bond with her daughter. Lisette recalled that her 5-year-old daughter asked her to read a journal article at bedtime in order to stay close while Lisette worked:

This one night, she was like, “oh...well, can I just lay here and will you read to me?” And so, I’m here reading this article I have to read for graduate school. And, of course, it’s over her head, and it’s probably totally boring to her, but she just wanted to be there and listen to me read. And I did. I think it’s very important that I show—that I include her—instead of [saying]...“I’m going to shut the door.”

Monica, the teaching assistant, also overlapped her student and parent roles at least once per week. As a clinical psychology student, she was required to be supervised by a licensed psychologist each week. She took her 9-month-old daughter to campus with her on Fridays for supervision.

**Role separation.** The other half of the participants intentionally separated their roles. Carmen, Danielle (the pre-doc intern, mother of a 3-year-old boy expecting her second child), and Ann maintained separation to help meet their role demands.

Carmen's role responsibilities revolved each day. As part of her practicum course requirements, she conducted neuropsychological assessments on Monday, worked (as a Psychiatric Social Worker at a medical office) full-days on Tuesday, attended classes all day on Wednesday, and spent all day Thursday, Friday, and a half-day on Saturday at work. In addition, she commuted at least an hour each day. She described how scheduling one role per day helped her manage multiple role demands:

I've scheduled my life in a way where every day I focus on just one thing. You know, like for example, Monday is practicum day, so my full attention is just practicum...it's not like I'm going to work, then school afterwards, and then practicum afterwards...every day I'm just focused and present in one role and that has made it—I guess—more bearable...

Danielle chose role separation as well. She dropped her son off at preschool on weekday mornings, then drove for 2 hours to work (Monday/Wednesday/Friday), or classes (Tuesday/Thursday), each weekday where she would remain until the late afternoon. Although her late-stage pregnancy made her mothering role obvious wherever she went, the 4-hour per day (round trip) commute relieved her of some of the demands of her parenting role until evening. Danielle's husband worked from home, therefore he was close to the preschool for emergencies and available to be with her son anytime he was sick. On weekdays, she and her husband alternated picking up her son from preschool, as her schedule allowed.

Additionally, Danielle kept her weekends for family time. She recalled an instance when her internship supervisor requested that she work on a holiday weekend for an upcoming project. She declined and reminded her supervisor that, upon hire, she had explained that she would not work on weekends because weekends are for her family. Refusing was a challenge because her internship was tied with her doctoral program and future career aspirations, but protecting her role boundaries was a top priority.

Ann's preference for separation of her parenting and work roles was indicated by her response to the "bad day" question (When you have a bad day and your roles of student, mother, and employee are equally demanding, what makes the day go poorly?):

I guess when the day goes poorly is when you just feel that you don't have enough time to do anything. Especially when there are certain things—like last week, my oldest was finishing up kindergarten, and there were a lot of activities that were happening at school that were very stay-at-home mom hours. So, I had to take off [work] quite a lot of time to do those things, because you feel guilty where it's like, yeah, you understand that there are working families and mothers and fathers, but at the same time, there are mothers and fathers who are able to be with them at events.

She goes to private Catholic school, and so they're very involved and everybody shows up. And—so it's a bad day when you just feel like you're getting pulled in so many directions and the roles that you have, as much as you've tried to compartmentalize them, start to bleed into each other. Where, you know, you have your morning duties that you do, you go to work from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, and between that 8 and 5, when certain things start to bleed in where you have demands from your family and demands of what you should be doing for your dissertation, is when it's a bad day.

The previous section discussed practices the participants in this study reported using to meet the demands of their parent, student, and worker roles. The following section reports findings about the challenges and benefits of multiple roles. The conflict perspective suggests that occupying multiple roles is synonymous with stress, and the enrichment perspective declares that there are benefits to occupying multiple roles. The employed GSMs in this study did indeed experience both challenges (conflict) and benefits (enrichment) as they managed their work, family, and student roles.

### **Challenges and Benefits of Multiple Roles (RQ3)**

#### **Role Challenges**

All of the participants described some of the challenges they faced as they fulfilled multiple roles, and this section identifies themes in the participant's responses about the challenges of fulfilling work, family, and student roles. These themes are presented in the order

in which they appear in the literature (Table 2). The challenges discussed represented role strain, role conflict, and role overload. Sub-themes are organized by frequency of mention by the participants.

Multiple roles can lead to stress, and this stress is referred to as role strain. Role conflict is the process by which the demands of one role are incompatible with involvement in another role. Ultimately, role overload occurs when multiple role demands exceed an individual's time and resources.

**Role strain.** Role strain (i.e. pressure or stress) was evident among the employed GSMs in this study, and they described role strain as resulting primarily, but not exclusively, from the hours they spent working and studying. For example, Ann described experiencing stress because she desired to be with her family on the weekends. However, she needed to use the weekends to write her dissertation:

During the week it's really difficult because you only get a couple of hours every night with your kids, and so the weekends are really the time that you're with them 24 hours. And so, right now I have to really work on my dissertation, but it's very, very difficult to step away from the family and try to get things done, even though, as desperately as I want to finish, it's very difficult sometimes to separate out...kind of wanting to be with your family and then wanting to finish your education.

Debra experienced stress when her 4-year-old son was having a hard day. His behavior competed for her attention and resources, which prolonged and made task completion for her other roles more difficult. These pressures for Debra's time and resources resulted in role strain:

Any tension in the home relationships always makes it hard. So, when my son's having a hard day, and a lot of meltdowns, and wants me, and I have—you know, I have to cook dinner, and I have to clean up, but he really wants my attention—that's hard. If my husband and I both have something that we have to get done, and it's a time when our son's being challenging—or being challenged, I should say—then that makes for a really bad day, or a hard day.

Danielle's role strain was also related to work hours and occurred when she had a heavy work load, including case notes to write, several clients to see, and when her employer wanted her "100 percent, all the time." In addition, she had a long commute to work and classes and was 8 months pregnant with her second child at the time of this study.

For Lisette, role strain occurred when she forgot something important. For example, she described an instance when she needed to purchase a gift by a certain date, had the opportunity, but did not buy the gift, and then forgot about it until the day she needed it:

A bad day is when I forget something and it's important and it wasn't on my calendar and now it creates stress. You know, what I've learned is to never put anything off...for me, I can't put anything off because if I would have just bought that present on Monday, then I would have had it ready, although way in advance, I would have had it ready and wouldn't have like—now I had to wait for the bank to open, and then I had to wait for you know, it was just a nightmare. And then I had to write this letter for my nephew, and then I was like—oh, and then I had to finish up responding to these students and it just, you know, so it was...bad.

Carmen's role strain was evident through her experience of stress from her roles as mother, student, and employee:

Waking up late or not having slept well, and when I—see, when I say slept well, I mean, at least a good 3 solid hours, mean a million bucks to me—because I'm still breastfeeding and so I have to wake up at least once a night, but because she's been sick lately, I've been waking up, like, literally every hour, every 2 hours—which is insane. So when I don't sleep, I feel like that's a bad day. When I'm always in a hurry, or there's more traffic than I expected. Sometimes I feel like—I feel really guilty—because I am tired, and I'm not working at my full potential, be it as an employee, as a student, or even as a mom.

For Monica, role strain occurred when she had reports due, exams, and mandatory supervision all within the same week. During the interview, she recalled that she and her family became ill with a stomach virus during a week when her many role responsibilities each demanded more of her time and attention than usual. That was also the week her "worst

nightmare came true”—she showed up to class after a week-long illness, and had forgotten she had a test that day.

**Role conflict.** Throughout the participant’s descriptions of role conflict, each of the three types of role pressure incompatibility (outlined by Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) were identified. For these women, the ongoing pressures from parenting, work, and graduate school presented time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based conflicts. A summary of the participants and the types of conflict they experienced can be found in Table 3.

**Time-based.** All the participants cited multiple demands on their time. Time-based conflict occurs when time spent in one role creates difficulty in fulfilling the time required in another role. Fulfilling the responsibilities of parenting, graduate student, and employee roles required a significant time commitment for task and assignment completion, in addition to the GSMs presence at many locations throughout the week. Ann described how her work schedule allowed for little time with her young daughters in the evening:

They need more care and attention, and so there’s the guilt factor as well, because you’re a new mom and you want to spend as much time—especially when you’re a working mom. And basically by the time you get home, and the earliest that you could get home probably could be 6:00 p.m., you have about two hours with your child before they need to get ready for bed or even earlier. So yeah, that’s definitely hard.

For Lisette, time-based role conflict occurred when she put off a task, and that decision resulted in a situation in which she was pressed for time—such as the gift situation mentioned previously, which became urgent because she put it off:

I was supposed to do it on Monday, and I had time to do it on Monday, but I chose not to do it on Monday and now fast forward to, you know... I needed the present and I didn’t do it and now I had to be at work, I had to get this present, I had, you know, the stress and then I had to complete this letter for my nephew because tomorrow is the retreat and then I also had to finish some homework, and so that’s kinda where—then my stress level came through and I hate feeling that

way...so when I don't do something that I actually have time to do, and I don't do it, then it is really bad.

When I asked how graduate school was challenging Debra in her role as a mother, she replied:

My sanity is challenged. Scheduling is a challenge. I feel like everything is challenged. [It's] definitely a push and pull with and against being a mother. I think that I want my son to see me going to school and working hard, and all those things, and at the same time, my priority is him, and my priority is spending time with him. It definitely takes [time] away from that.

Carmen experienced time-based conflict when trying to manage household chores during the week, in the midst of her work and graduate student roles:

I do clean the house throughout the week here and there, but it's not much. It's just—let's say washing the dishes, or vacuuming sporadically throughout the week. I don't dedicate as much time as I would like to the household things that mommy's do, but I mean, it is what it is.

***Strain-based.*** Strain-based conflict, when strain produced by one role creates difficulty in fulfilling the requirements of another role, was also described by some of the participants.

Because of their limited physical resources due to sleep deprivation caused by caring for their infants, Carmen's and Monica's descriptions of the challenges they faced in their employee roles were also indicative of strain-based conflict. Carmen described her feelings about client cancellations and went on to describe how her lack of energy, resulting from her mothering role, affected her work:

I secretly get happy when clients cancel. I mean, as a therapist, I have clients booked every hour, and I mean, I'm working at a hospital and it's very busy, so I honestly do like a happy dance when I see a cancellation, and I'm like, yeah, I have an hour to rest, and so—or to get caught up on notes, or you know, make phone calls, but it's my hour. And so, I feel like that's indicative of how tired and exhausted and just overworked I feel...because I am tired, perhaps I might not be the best therapist that I could be...I question if I could be doing better in each of these roles, so that's a big factor.

Debra's experience of strain-based conflict was similar, especially on weekday evenings:

Often times, I will fall asleep when I'm putting him to sleep, and so, I'll get up and be so groggy, but still have to do homework, and stay up late, and so, I lost a lot of time to do homework, and stay up even later, and I'm so tired that it's really hard to get it done, and to remember what I'm trying to learn, and to do assignments well.

Ann also experienced strain-based conflict. She described what happened when she tried to use her weekends to fulfill the responsibilities of her graduate student role, as she attempted to keep roles separate by planning to work on her dissertation away from home on weekends:

The dissertation is really affecting the weekend, and...this weekend, I have plans to go [in the office] to work, because you can't really do it at home with kids crawling all over you—go to work and spend from—my plan is to go in from maybe 8:00 in the morning until about 1:00 pm or 2:00 pm and do my dissertation.

***Behavior-based.*** Behavior-based role conflict results when behavior required for one role creates difficulty in completing the requirements of another role. Many of the GSMs described a preference for order and organization throughout their work and academic roles. Although most of the women described a desire for the same order and organization in their family roles, half of the participants (Carmen, Monica, and Danielle) specifically illustrated behavior-based conflict. Carmen explained her typical orderly behaviors in her roles and how they conflicted with the behaviors she adopted for managing her family role, and delayed her studying:

That has been so tough, because I am a neat freak, and I love a clean house, and things being organized and put away, and in fact, I can't mentally start studying until those things are done, but having a child has taught me that that's—like I have to be more flexible. I do clean the house, and I do my laundry, usually, on the weekends.



Monica and Danielle were enrolled in graduate programs with cohort schedules designed to progress in an orderly manner with a set completion date. Both women cited the cohort model as a reason they chose their graduate programs. They reported that the cohort model provided structure and a clear end date, which helped them maintain a regular schedule and keep order in their work and family lives. However, Carmen, Monica, and Danielle all became pregnant and had their children during the course of their graduate programs and subsequently struggled with the substantial physical demands, disorganization, and fragmentation of their mothering role.

All three women described their ultimate acceptance of the lack of order in their mothering roles, which had quickly become their first priority. For example, both Monica and Carmen decided that “good enough” would have to do in their work and student responsibilities, and Danielle used the phrase “nothing will be perfect” to describe her current perspective in her roles as student and employee. These statements indicated that the GSMs’ current behaviors in the mothering role were incompatible with the orderly and organized behaviors they typically exhibited in their work and academic roles.

Ann, an EdD student and mother of two, reported another example of behavior-based conflict. The stability she maintained in her family role made it difficult for her to complete the requirements of her work role. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, she expressed her belief that seeking a job in a city other than her current location would create instability in her family role. For Ann, moving after she completed the doctorate would uproot her family and that behavior would be contrary to what is required in her mothering role.

**Role overload.** Role overload, which occurs when role demands exceed available resources, was evident for Carmen and Ann, in particular. Both women consistently responded to interview questions with statements about having more to do than she was actually able to

accomplish. Ann has been in an EdD program for four years and she was trying to work on her dissertation. When she described how graduate school is challenging her as an employee, it was clear that Ann was experiencing role overload:

If I didn't have to work, I think that I could get done with my dissertation. I would treat it as a job and I would just get it done. But when your time is divided so much between having to be at work, eight some hours, and then trying to do your family life—again, the education part, depending on what your priority is, gets put on the back burner—and the work definitely affects my ability to be much more productive in my stage now—dissertation stage—but, it also affected me while I was going through the program because, again, there's only so many hours in the day that you can do things, and you still want to have a life, too. And so things would suffer because, perhaps for a class the week-to-week readings equaled maybe 10 some hours, and you don't have 10 some hours to do both. You barely have a couple of hours to split, unless you're giving up all of your weekend.

When asked to describe a 'good day' later in the interview, Ann's reply indicated that she had yet to have a good day since becoming a graduate student:

When I have a good day—which I don't think I have ever had a really good day—it's probably where I am able to go ahead and get the things done that I need to get done in the morning with the kids, and work on my dissertation maybe a couple of hours. But that has not happened yet.

Managing multiple roles also seemed to be extremely challenging for Carmen. When asked how graduate school was challenging her in her role as a mother, her response indicated role overload:

It takes so much. I know I'm just in school one day a week, but then, there's dissertation and there's...my practicum...because I'm in school, you know, and not getting paid [for practicum]. I'm learning how to do assessment, and it's just time-consuming.

I feel like those moments I could easily just spend with my daughter, or sometimes I wonder if I'm taking on too much, if I should perhaps spread the program into five or six years, and not try to graduate in four years, because that was my initial goal. I still hope to graduate in four years, but I don't know if that's going to happen or not, because things do come up and like I said, I'm just trying to go one day at a time, one month at a time.

The previous section discussed the participant's descriptions of the challenges of multiple role management including role strain, role conflict, and role overload. The next section includes the employed GSMs descriptions of some of the benefits of fulfilling multiple roles. The enrichment perspective suggests that multiple roles provide benefits to role occupants, and these benefits can be used across, or within, role domains.

### **Role Benefits**

The participants in this study also experienced the benefits of role accumulation: role resources and role enrichment. Table 2 displays the two main benefits that emerged from the employed GSMs descriptions in order of appearance in the literature, and presented in their sub-categories in order of mention.

According to the enrichment perspective, occupying multiple roles generates role resources—assets that a role occupant can draw upon to use as she chooses. Role enrichment is the consequence of role resources. Ultimately, role enrichment occurs when role resources exceed an individual's role conflict.

**Role resources.** According to the enrichment perspective, occupying multiple roles generates resources that can be used within or across work and family domains. Among the role resources generated, the women in this study described experiencing the sub-categories of Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) role resources: skills and perspectives, psychological and physical resources, social capital, flexibility, and material resources.

*Skills and perspectives.* All the participants described gaining new skills and perspectives in the course of fulfilling their multiple roles. Skills and perspectives are gained in each domain through the acquisition of knowledge, wisdom, accomplishment of tasks, and through the

development of new ways to interpret and respond to situations (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 80).

For example, Monica, a PsyD in clinical psychology student and mother of a 9-month-old daughter, identified the skills and perspectives she learned in her graduate student role that could be applied to her mothering role. She explained that her knowledge of the importance of the stages and milestones in human development has influenced her parenting practices.

Further, from her graduate student role, Debra was able to use what she learned in the classroom in her work as a teacher:

Of course, I've learned a lot, and been able to apply it to my job already. I think that the skills I've learned aren't completely necessary for me as a classroom teacher, but again, it's getting my preliminary credential in administration so that—if I choose to go into administration in the future—then I'll really start to see the benefits at that time.

In addition to professional experience, Danielle identified work as a pre-doctoral intern also provided the necessary clinical hours she needed for course credits. Having her employment meet graduation requirements was a benefit for which she was grateful, because she was able to apply the skills she learned in class to assist her clients in therapy.

For Ann, who was pursuing an EdD in educational leadership, skills and perspectives gains were utilized when her role as a graduate student generated resources that crossed domains into her work as a program administrator:

I think graduate school has benefitted me in the classes that I've taken and definitely in terms of critical thinking. It's introduced certain things that I wouldn't have thought of. It's also nice as you work with students—I'm in student affairs—so as you work with students and as you're going through the process of being a student yourself, it's very helpful to kind of be at a level because you understand better certain things.

Carmen, who was enrolled in a clinical psychology Psy.D. program, also applied the new skills and knowledge she gained from her graduate program to her work as a psychiatric social worker:

I feel like—I mean, since I'm learning, every week, I'm learning—I'm reading things that pertain to my field, psychology. I mean, I work as a therapist already. I am able to apply what I'm learning right away, and although I'm not getting credit for my real work hours, I am getting paid for it. I feel like I'm still able to apply what I'm learning in my classes.

Similarly, as an EdD student in educational leadership, Lisette found that her graduate studies provided information she could use in her work as a career counselor in a community college:

First of all, because it's a community college emphasis, and I'm at the community college, it's just a wealth of information, stuff that I didn't know so I'm really, really excited that I started this program. And the emphasis is community college since I do plan to stay here and retire, and this is it for me. I'm staying here.

Lisette went on to talk about how her perspective of her work environment was evolving as she learned more about the history of community colleges:

Also, the material that I'm learning about—the history of the association of the community college—so all this background that I'm getting and understanding how—you know, where we came from to where we are now—would be very beneficial as we move forward as a community college. You know, I don't like to repeat the same mistakes—or this was the overall vision and mission of the college back in 1950 and this is how it's changed. I do believe that having that background and being able to apply it to my current job, I think, is very beneficial.

In her work role as a teaching assistant, Monica was better able to have empathy for her students as they navigated their programs because of her clinical training and personal experience as an employed GSM. In addition, she taught a psychopathology course and was required to learn the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

(DSM-5). She had to know the DSM-5 well for her job, and this knowledge facilitated her role as a graduate student and future psychotherapist.

*Psychological and physical resources.* Role benefits also included self-reliance, esteem, satisfaction, and physical well-being that can be drawn upon when facing hardship. Sometimes, work can provide resources such as supervisory support for graduate school. For example, Ann discussed the respect and acceptance (esteem) she received at work due to her supervisor's support of her graduate studies:

He has been very supportive and has commented that having someone who is just about finished with a doctorate degree—it just gives a little more, I guess it gives more to the job because you have more, what do you call it—legitimacy—in terms of certain things that you're trying to do.

Psychological and physical resources from the work role to the parenting role were also evident in Carmen's descriptions of great satisfaction with work ending at 6:00 p.m. so she could spend time with her daughter in the evenings. She explained:

I think the biggest way it's benefiting me is I treasure, so much, every moment I have with my daughter. Every time I'm holding her, I'm breastfeeding her—every time I'm playing with her, it's like I'm fully present. Like it just—I don't know how to describe it—but it feels like I truly value and appreciate, just...every minute that I'm with her. In fact, after I get off work, or school, or practicum, I get home—let's say around 6:00, and I know her bedtime is 7—and so, I look forward to, like, seeing her that hour and playing with—and doing whatever. You know, sometimes I'm happy when she goes to bed later because then I get to interact with her a little bit more than just an hour.

Lisette took the theoretical knowledge she learned through her graduate student role and implemented it in her work role:

It's [graduate school] strengthening my job and the stuff that I do, because now I can pull some references or I can pull some theory, or I can pull something and then add it to—infuse it into what I'm doing and so it makes it stronger.

She went on to say of her supervisor, “She thinks everything I’m doing is actually benefitting the college because I’m getting the education that I need to move forward and to bring back the information or make stuff better here.”

Ann, Lisette, Debra, and Monica declared their intent to be role models for their children. Debra described the main benefit of pursuing a graduate degree: “Right now, it’s being a role model for my son...” Similarly, Lisette stated a hope that her daughter would see her studying and decide to pursue higher education in the future as well:

I feel like I’ll be showing my daughter an example of—to pursue her education. I mean, I hope she does pursue her education and get her doctorate and I hope—and I want her to go to Harvard. I didn’t get to go to Harvard, but I want her to go to Harvard.

Even Ann, whose statements regarding multiple role management were mostly of the challenges, had this to say about the benefits of graduate school while also fulfilling other roles:

I think the only thing I could say is that right now there isn’t any tangible benefit. But in the future you hope to set a good example for your children to live. Say that, even though you have a lot of things going on and you can juggle a lot of things, and then also—foremost, I’m a real big believer in education.

***Social capital.*** Four of six women in this study (Debra, Lisette, Monica, and Ann) described social capital (e.g. networking, information sharing) as a role resource. Social capital includes the beneficial interpersonal relationships that are developed in the course of role accumulation.

The development of Debra’s interpersonal relationships with administrators at her school provided social benefits: “Some of them have shared information with me—information that they probably wouldn’t have otherwise—to [participate in] extra things that were from a more administrative standpoint.” Similarly, as a graduate student, Lisette’s social capital gains

benefited her work as a community college administrator: “I do see it as opening doors to different positions that I maybe would not have access to.”

Monica experienced the benefits of social capital as well. In her student role she had frequent contact with her graduate advisor, who was a leader in Monica’s desired career field. This advising relationship gave her a strong, deep connection with her field of interest and provided a mentor for her developing professional career.

***Flexibility.*** Another beneficial aspect of multiple roles was flexibility. Flexibility provides autonomy and allows for individuals to complete role requirements at a location, time, speed, and in ways that are most convenient for the role occupant. Lisette appreciated the flexibility her student role provided. Her graduate program was an online/in-class hybrid, so it was designed for students who maintained employment throughout the program. Lisette described the flexibility of her class meeting and advising arrangements:

So, it’s a hybrid. It’s blended, so you’re not going to class every single day at this time. You’re meeting, you know, virtually, through Moodle. You will have to spend—for example, we will be meeting in Santa Barbara for four days in a row, all day long, and then that’s when we’re gonna actually decide—okay, when are we gonna meet next? And they have an advisor that they give you so that you’re always able to connect with your advisor. So, I think it’s because it’s a blended program, it gives you an opportunity to be able to do your full-time work and obviously have your family. I think it’s not the traditional where you’re gonna be in school, face-to-face, for a long period of time.

Regarding her graduate schools’ ability to accommodate employed GSMs, Ann said:

You know, I actually don’t have any advice or complaints because I feel that for any hardships that I had to work through, it was really more the personal juggling part of it, and so I feel that with the program that I’m in—now [the class schedule] was very flexible and worked out really well.

Monica, who was enrolled in a PsyD program, also mentioned the flexibility of her schedule. She had one day (Tuesday) off work and graduate school each week, which allowed



her to be home with her 9-month-old daughter and complete other role requirements at her leisure throughout the day.

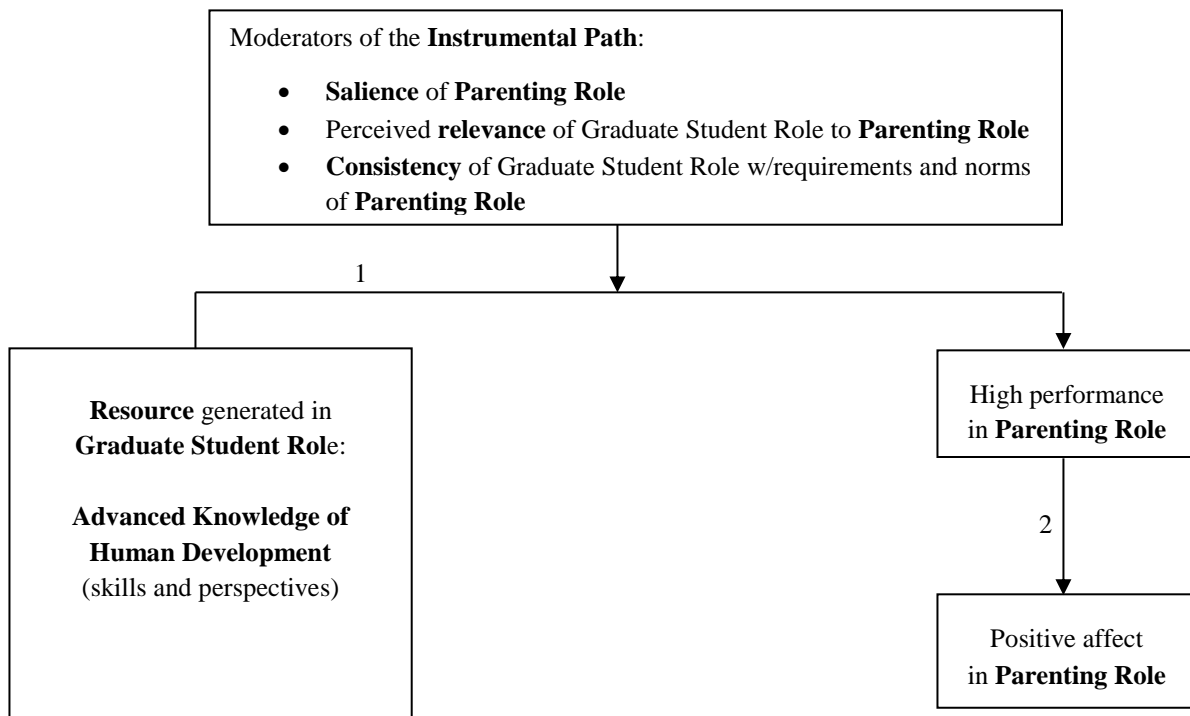
**Material resources.** An additional benefit of multiple roles was that material resources in one role could help with another. For example, Debra initially chose to pursue the MA in Educational Leadership because a pay increase would help her family finances. At the time of this study, Debra was in the last term of her program and was due to receive a pay raise upon completion of the M.A. degree. “The specific reason I’ve chosen—the reason why I want it is to increase my pay, so I haven’t seen that benefit yet, but I know that I will.”

During the course of the interview, Carmen also acknowledged the benefits of her work role in the parenting domain. Carmen’s income helped pay the mortgage, which provided adequate housing for her family:

I have—you know what, I never thought about this as a resource, but the fact that I work, and I have money, you know, and I think that—that’s a big plus, because [my] loans do not [completely] cover school. I have to pay for part of it myself, and I wouldn’t be able to afford school if I weren’t working.

**Role enrichment.** Resources generated in one role provide role enrichment by directly or indirectly enhancing performance in another role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). The participants’ role resources led to role enrichment through the pathways identified by Greenhaus and Powell (2006). The GSMs utilized their role resources through both the instrumental and affective pathways. Briefly, resources generated in one role can either directly transfer to a second role (instrumental), or transfer indirectly (affective). Resources transferred through the instrumental path have a direct effect on role execution. Role resources that are transferred indirectly (through positive emotions or mood) are considered affective. A summary of this area of analysis can be found in Table 2. Examples of the enrichment pathways are illustrated in Figures 4 and 5 in this chapter.

**Instrumental pathway.** Role resources transferred directly provide enrichment through the instrumental path. For example, the skills and perspectives resources generated in Monica’s student role had a direct effect on her family role. Her knowledge of childhood stages and developmental milestones was enhanced by her graduate studies, and Monica stated that the advanced knowledge of human development had a direct impact on her parenting. She reported a belief that this knowledge contributed to higher performance in her parenting role. This example of Monica’s role enrichment via the instrumental path is illustrated in Figure 5. In addition, Monica’s advanced knowledge of the DSM-5 gained in the course of her job as a teaching assistant was directly applied in her graduate studies.



**Figure 5.** Monica’s Role Enrichment: Instrumental Pathway<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> From Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 79

Similarly, the advanced knowledge Debra gained in her graduate program gave her a broader perspective of education, which she directly applied to her work:

It's given me an even bigger picture of education. So I would look at education from just a teacher perspective, and now, I'm able to look at it from an administrative perspective a little bit more.

Carmen's new skills gained in her student role transferred directly to her job as a psychiatric social worker, which assisted her in meeting the needs of her clients in therapy:

For example, while I was recently taking competent behavior therapy class for two semesters, and everything that I was learning in the class I was able to apply. I mean, some of the things I already knew, because I've been practicing for a while, but a lot of the things...they're fresh in my mind and so it's just—they're more accessible. When I'm in the room with one of my clients trying to work on an issue, I already know what tools to look for and use because—I mean, I've been practicing them in class over the last couple of weeks or months, so it's definitely helping me a lot.

Ann's confidence in her job was bolstered by her doctoral program, as she already worked in higher education. She believed it added to her credentials:

You're not somebody that's so green that you just graduated and you're trying to figure out what to do in the job, but you have work experience—you have this professional doctorate, and it just gives you more legitimacy in the job.

The theoretical knowledge Lisette gained through her student role transferred to her work role through the instrumental path. She became familiar with the research in her field and applied it directly to her work as a career counselor.

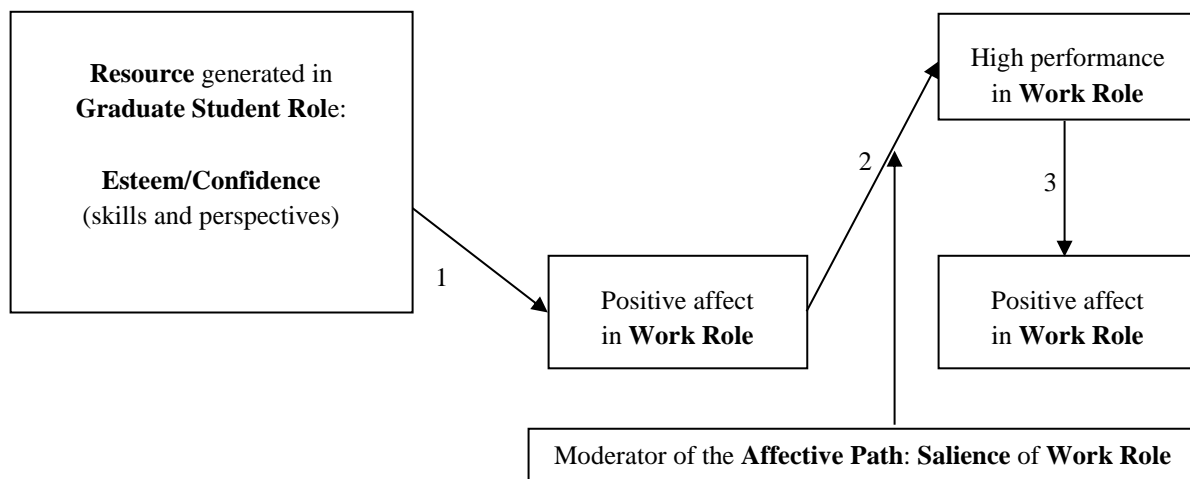
The connections Debra and Monica made through their graduate student roles also provided role enrichment. Frequent contact with her graduate advisor provided Monica access to a long-time professor and leader in her field and directly influenced her work as a teaching assistant and therapist in training.

Debra’s graduate student role facilitated her connections with administrators at her workplace. The social capital benefits Debra, a teacher, gained through involvement in her graduate student role, directly contributed to enhanced performance in her teaching role:

I feel like I’m better rounded as an educator now, so I have the ability to look at the bigger picture. I took on extra duties this year, and had a lot of field work experience, and I can see from the point of view of my administrators a little bit better.

**Affective pathway.** Role resources transferred indirectly provide enrichment through the affective path. For example, the skills Ann learned in class gave her confidence in her job (see Figure 6). As a program administrator who worked with graduate students, Ann was confident in her role because she understood the graduate students’ perspective:

It’s always helped with—I work with master students as well as Ph.D. students—and with the Ph.D. students, I have a better understanding of what they’re going through, even though they’re in a different type of [doctoral] program. But I think that it’s still the same in terms of how you balance your time and how to work with your chair, so it’s helped me in that regard. And also, my field and the type of degree that I’m getting, is directly linked, and so I think it’s enhanced me as a professional. So there have been very good positive effects of it.



**Figure 6.** Ann’s Role Enrichment: Affective Pathway<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 79

Being a role model and example for their children provided role enrichment for four women (Ann, Lisette, Debra, and Monica). For these women, the psychological resources (e.g. esteem and confidence) generated in the graduate student role indirectly transferred to the parenting role via the affective path. Regarding the example she hopes to set for her children, Ann said:

I don't think that it stops at an undergrad education, and so I would hope that me being an example to my kids that they would follow, sort of, in my footsteps and further their education—whether it's a professional degree or a doctorate or something like that.

The previous section discussed the participants' reports of the benefits and challenges of fulfilling multiple roles. The challenges included role strain, role conflict, and role overload. Also discussed were the benefits of managing multiple roles, including role resources and role enrichment.

### **Overall Perspective of Multiple Roles (RQ1)**

To make sense of how, overall, the participants regarded their student, parent, and worker roles, the role challenges and role benefits each participant reported were added to a role-ordered matrix (Table 3). Then, the participants' transcripts were analyzed holistically for descriptive words which indicated role challenges (e.g. difficult, hard, challenging, failing). Since Danielle's and Monica's interviews did not record, the factors which may have influenced their overall perspectives could not be analyzed holistically. However, Table 3 includes their data as well.

The findings indicated that the GSMs who experienced fewer role challenges had an overall enrichment perspective. Interestingly, all the women experienced a similar number of role challenges and role benefits, however the experience of role overload, as measured by the use of more negative descriptors, was a primary separator between the conflict and enrichment groups. The women who experienced role overload had an overall conflict perspective. In

addition, the age and number of children and the stage of her graduate program were also factors which influenced the employed GSMs' overall experience of conflict. The participants who had at least one child under 3, and were in the midst of their graduate programs (Carmen and Ann), described experiencing more challenges in meeting multiple role demands. Perhaps not surprisingly, caring for an infant or toddler, combined with being at the midpoint of a graduate program, was a most challenging time for the employed GSMs.

### **Carmen**

For example, Carmen was nursing her 9-month-old daughter and also at the midpoint of her PsyD program. She reported an hour-long commute to and from her work, graduate school, and practicum site. She described nursing her daughter often and throughout the night, severe sleep deprivation, and carried a breast pump with her when she was away from her baby. Perhaps these additional role demands contributed to her experience of role overload.

As indicated in the previous section, Carmen's responses to many of the interview questions were primarily regarding the difficulty she had as an employed GSM. To summarize her overall perception of her experience as an employed GSM, her answer to the second interview question, which reflected strain-based conflict, summed it up well. She described how the demands of her multiple roles regularly exceeded her limited physical resources:

It is the hardest thing I've ever had to do, by far. I knew it would be challenging. I knew that life would be hard for a period of time, but I did not think it would be this hard. I'm a very ambitious, hardworking individual, and I thought, well, I can handle it, you know? It's really kicked my butt...it's been a lot of work, more so, because of the physical issues—me being constantly tired.

When I was pregnant, my mind was like very eager to learn...but physically...it was just too much for my body to take, and then, with having the baby, I'm still very sleep deprived. I mean, my baby's 9 months old this week, so I'm still breastfeeding, and she demands a lot of my attention. She's teething, and so it's beyond what I thought initially.

Table 3  
*Participant's Role Challenges, Role Benefits, and Overall Perspective on Fulfilling Multiple Roles*

	Participants' Experience of Multiple Roles		Support Network	Relevant Role Characteristics (Academic/Parenting/Work)				Overall Perspective
	Role Challenges	Role Benefits		Role Management Technique	In the Midst of Grad Program?	Age(s) of Child(ren)	Work Hours (Per Week)	
Debra	<b>Role Strain</b> <i>Role Conflict</i> <i>Time-based</i> <i>Strain-based</i>	<b>Role Resources</b> <i>Skills &amp; Perspectives</i> <i>Social Capital</i> <i>Material Resources</i>	Husband Family/Community Parents	<b>Role Overlap</b>	No	4	40	<b>Enrichment</b>
Lisette	<b>Role Strain</b> <i>Role Conflict</i> <i>Time-based</i>	<b>Role Resources</b> <i>Skills &amp; Perspectives</i> <i>Psychological &amp; Physical Resources</i> <i>Social Capital</i> <i>Flexibility</i>	Husband Family/Community Mother Mother-in-Law Sister Niece	<b>Role Overlap</b>	No	5	41	<b>Enrichment</b>
Carmen	<b>Role Strain</b> <i>Role Conflict</i> <i>Time-based</i> <i>Strain-based</i> <b>Role Overload</b>	<b>Role Resources</b> <i>Skills &amp; Perspectives</i> <i>Psychological &amp; Physical Resources</i> <i>Material Resources</i>	Husband Family/Community Mother-in-Law Sister Friends Religious Faith	<b>Role Separation</b>	Yes	9 months	32	<b>Conflict</b>

Table 3 (continued)  
*Participant's Role Challenges, Role Benefits, and Overall Perspective on Fulfilling Multiple Roles*

	Participants' Experience of Multiple Roles		Support Network	Relevant Role Characteristics (Academic/Parenting/Work)				Overall Perspective
	Role Challenges	Role Benefits		Role Management Technique	In the Midst of Grad Program?	Age(s) of Child(ren)	Work Hours (Per Week)	
Monica	<b>Role Strain</b> <b>Role Conflict</b> <i>Behavior-based</i>	<b>Role Resources</b> <i>Skills &amp; Perspectives</i> <i>Psychological &amp; Physical Resources</i> <i>Flexibility</i>	Wife Family/Community Neighbors Church	<b>Role Overlap</b>	Yes	<b>9 months</b>	6	?
Danielle	<b>Role Strain</b> <b>Role Conflict</b> <i>Behavior-based</i>	<b>Role Resources</b> <i>Skills &amp; Perspectives</i> <i>Psychological &amp; Physical Resources</i> <b>Role Enrichment</b> <i>Instrumental Pathway</i> <i>Affective Pathway</i>	Husband	<b>Role Separation</b>	No	<b>3</b> ( <b>&amp; pregnant</b> )	26.5	?
Ann	<b>Role Strain</b> <b>Role Conflict</b> <i>Time-based</i> <i>Strain-based</i> <b>Role Overload</b>	<b>Role Resources</b> <i>Skills &amp; Perspectives</i> <i>Psychological &amp; Physical Resources</i> <i>Social Capital</i> <i>Flexibility</i>	Husband Family/Community Parents Mother-in-Law Sister-in-Law	<b>Role Separation</b>	Yes* (*year 5 of 3-yr program)	<b>3 &amp; 6</b>	40+	<b>Conflict</b>



Carmen consistently used the words “hardest,” “hard,” and “challenging,” and a few other phrases to describe her overall experience of motherhood, while also fulfilling work and graduate student roles when considered in conjunction with her previous descriptions of meeting multiple role demands, these words and phrases reflected a conflict perspective. The other factors were equally balanced for Carmen—she had a large support network, and experienced several of both types of benefits (role resources and role enrichment) in the course of fulfilling her multiple role demands (see Table 3).

### **Ann**

Having two children (including one 3-year-old), combined with the stalled progress of her graduate program appear to have influenced Ann’s overall experience of conflict. Her daughters needed to be dropped off and picked up at two separate locations each weekday. At the time of this study, Ann was entering the fifth year of a three-year EdD program and had not made progress on her dissertation, which she believed would take at least another year to complete. Ann was considered to be in the midst of her graduate program because she was two years beyond the expected completion date of her program, and her dissertation progress was stalled.

Because she had been enrolled in her program for so long, Ann was able to offer both a current and reflective perspective on student, work, and parenting roles. Ann’s responses to questions about her experience of managing graduate school while concurrently working and raising children were similar to Carmen’s in that her descriptions throughout the interview primarily reflected the challenges of multiple role management. Ann’s responses to the other interview questions were also primarily conflict statements. For example, in response to the

interview question designed to elicit an overall view of employed GSMs' experiences in their multiple roles, Ann said:

I think it was difficult because, in the doctoral program, I think—definitely there are people that are in similar situations—but, I think a lot of them had older kids or were married without kids. And having young kids...they're...a little bit more need[y] and require more, based on where they are in their schooling. So it was a bit difficult. The attending classes, that was fine because it's part of your schedule, but I think what was difficult was, after class when you need to get certain things done, readings and having to write and trying to find time for that away from your work and away from school, it's probably the most difficult.

In this statement, Ann used the word “difficult” three times and primarily described some of the challenges of being an employed GSM. Her language in response to this question about her overall experience indicated an overall conflict perspective of managing her student, work, and parenting roles. Similar to Carmen, Ann's support network was broad. She experienced all three role challenges and several of both types of benefits—role resources and role enrichment (see Table 3).

### **Debra**

Debra's support network was small, but her parents lived very close. In addition, her son was older (4 years old), and she was in the final term of her program. Debra reported experiencing role strain and role conflict, but role overload was not evident in her descriptions. Debra was also in the last term of her MA program.

### **Lisette**

Lisette had a large support network and reported experiencing all of the benefits in each of the role resources and role enrichment categories. Lisette's daughter was 5 years old. Although Lisette experienced role strain and role conflict,

she did not describe experiencing role overload. Lisette was at the beginning of her graduate program.

### **Additional Theme: Lack or Withdrawal of Support**

Most of the women in this study had large familial and community support networks. However, the lack or withdrawal of support in the work and academic environments was a common theme among over half of the participants. This theme did not address the research questions, but it is not surprising that it emerged.

Four out of six of the employed GSMs in this study gave birth to a child during the course of her graduate program. While each participant was able to take time off from both work and graduate school immediately after giving birth, two of these women, Danielle and Monica, described receiving negative feedback from classmates, professors, and advisors regarding their pregnancies during the program. They were both surprised when a professor inferred that they were ruining their careers before they started. Once they announced their pregnancies, they felt unsupported by some in their academic communities.

Lack or withdrawal of support, from institutions and employers were common among two of the six participants. Although hybrid programs and cohort formats seemed to provide an enrollment option for students who work and have children, not all working professional graduate programs are “family friendly.” Ann suggested that, while her program was designed to accommodate full-time employees, she did not seem to view it as family friendly:

You know, I don't think when they designed the program that they had a family friendly culture in mind. It's definitely oriented toward professionals, at a certain age group, almost. The classes are held in the evenings. And so, in that way, I guess to me, I'm sort of interpreting that as both: Where there are certain people who are in the profession at a certain age will tend to have

families, and so by having it more towards the evening—especially if you have a caretaker—I guess that I take it that it's being flexible towards that, but I don't think that it is explicitly—that the program is geared to be a family friendly type.

Carmen's supervisor had approved her request to reduce her weekly hours. This reduction in hours allowed more time for her to fulfill the responsibilities of her graduate student and mothering roles. Although Carmen's employer had approved her request for reduced hours, she recently asked Carmen to increase her hours. The medical organization Carmen worked for experienced an increase in clients, and as one of the Spanish-speaking members on staff, Carmen was in high demand. She described her employer's support as reflective of the situation at her medical office:

I usually work 32 hours, and when I started grad school a year and a half ago, I asked to reduce my hours, and so my employers was kind enough to cut four hours of my regular weekly hours, and—however, because we're getting very busy lately, and there's several people on medical leave, and I'm a Spanish-speaking clinician, and there aren't that many Spanish-speaking clinician's in my department. The need is there for me to be there my full 32 hours a week versus the 32 I was doing, which—I mean, at the moment, I did feel like my plans were gonna get—I mean, weren't gonna happen the way I envisioned them, but like I said, it is what it is.

I am—I love and appreciate my job, so I'm gonna do what I have to do to make my boss happy, so that's gonna—I don't know how that will translate, in terms of my schedule next year. I mean, right now, we're approaching summer, so I don't have to worry about it for a couple of months, but once the fall starts and I have to be in class, and I have to commit to my new practicum in the fall, I don't know what that will mean. I might have to cut my classes.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

Currently, women earn two-thirds of master's and doctoral degrees (Gonzales, Allum, & Sowell, 2013, p. 12), and over 70 percent of mothers with young children participate in the workforce (BLS, 2013). As such, it is important to understand the experiences, practices, and perspectives of women who are simultaneously fulfilling student, parent, and worker roles.

The research questions for this study were:

1. What overall perspective is reflected in the participant's descriptions of their experience fulfilling the roles of graduate student, mother, and employee?
2. What practices do employed GSMs identify which help them meet the demands of their multiple roles?
3. What challenges and/or benefits of these roles do employed GSMs identify?

The research questions were designed to answer the central question of this study:

How do employed GSMs describe their experiences and meet the demands of their multiple roles, and what perspective do they adopt in doing so? First, in order of analysis, this chapter explains how the employed GSMs in this study met their role demands (RQ2). Then, the challenges and benefits (RQ3) the participants experienced and the overall perspectives of their roles (RQ1) are discussed in light of previous literature. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this study and the implications for future research and practice.

### **Meeting Role Demands: Research Question 2**

The purpose of this study was to explore how the participants experienced, perceived, and met the multiple demands of their roles as student, parent, and employee. In order to understand their experiences and perceptions in light of the literature, it is important to first

understand how the women in this study met the demands of their multiple roles. The second research question was “What practices do employed GSMs identify which help them meet the demands of their multiple roles?” Five common ways these women described fulfilling the demands of their student, parent, and employee roles were: Time management, support networks, family first, deliberate use of weekends, and role management strategies.

More than any other factor, effective time management was the primary way the participants reported meeting their multiple role demands. For some, the use of time management techniques encouraged a disciplined approach to each role’s responsibilities, provided a routine, and allowed for advanced planning to avoid schedule conflicts. For others, time management was the organization of their schedules for which they implemented systems, kept checklists, calendars, and created written ‘To Do’ lists. Overall, time management encouraged the participants to use their limited time in each role most effectively.

Similar to Lynch’s (2008) findings, the use of support networks was also a major factor in the participants’ ability to meet role demands. Spouses were universally supportive of each participant’s academic and professional endeavors. Spousal support included taking on the majority of household tasks such as laundry, cooking, chores, and taking care of children during study times. Family, faith, and community support systems were utilized primarily for early evening and daytime child care during periods when illness prevented the GSMs child from returning to day care or preschool. In line with previous research, the women in this study paid the full cost of child care and relied on parents, in-laws, adult siblings, extended family, neighbors, and church members who assisted when needed (Lynch, 2008).

Employer support was also crucial in the employed GSM's ability to request and maintain work hours that permitted course enrollment. Supervisor support in the form of hours reduction and mentorship were found to be of particular importance, and reduction or withdrawal of supervisor support appeared to influence the perception of role conflict. Institutional support in the form of hybrid programs with cohort models accommodated the participant's academic pursuits. Infrequent class meeting schedules and attendance with a cohort allowed for advanced planning for those with multiple role demands. Scholarship awards and tuition remission provided some participants with the financial support necessary for continued enrollment in their graduate programs (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). As cited by other researchers, fellowships, stipends, and assistantships were not common among the women in this study, and with the exception of one GSM, loans were the primary means of funding (Lynch, 2008; Springer et al., 2009). However, the financial support provided by employment was reported to have made graduate study more affordable for these women.

In alignment with previous research, the participants ordered their roles by importance (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), which allowed them to quickly organize their priorities and make decisions on occasions when more than one role demanded immediate attention or action. Family responsibilities were deemed most important, and were therefore completed before their studies and their work. Some participants classified the importance of their roles as family, work, and graduate school, in that order. For these women, the student role took a back seat when family or work demands increased, another finding consistent with previous literature in that the sacrifice of graduate education for good parenting is not uncommon (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Mason et al., 2009).

Although the family first philosophy was viewed as an acceptable sacrifice, perhaps it contributes to career disadvantages among graduate student parents (GSPs) identified in previous literature (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006; Springer et al., 2009). For example, when faced with the prospect of relocation for future career opportunities, maintaining stability for children and families was a priority over any potential limitations of remaining in California. However, it was acknowledged that selecting the work or student roles as top priority would also result in sacrifice.

Use of weekends for responsibilities, relaxation, and recreation ('Weekend Rs') was a common way for the participants to take care of things they did not have time for during the week. Weekends were for the completion of household tasks and enjoyment of family activities. The participants had regularly scheduled family time, shopping trips, and chores on weekends. Family time was scarce and intentional, so shopping trips were often accomplished with the child(ren) in tow, which allotted for family time during task completion.

The employed GSMs in this study used two role management strategies to help them fulfill the duties of their multiple roles. Half of the women intentionally used *role overlap* as a way to combine role responsibilities. This integration of roles gave them opportunities to meet two role demands at the same time. Overlapping graduate school assignments with work demands streamlined their efforts to complete a single activity or project that met two role requirements and significantly reduced the employed GSMs workload. For example, when parent and graduate student roles were integrated, the women were able to complete assignments or attend meetings with their children alongside them. The decision to combine the parent and graduate student roles reduced the employed GSMs time away from her



children and lessened the need (and expense) for childcare. Role overlap was reported as an effective, time-saving strategy that promoted efficiency in meeting work and graduate school role demands and provided positive influences on children's perceptions of motherhood and higher education. For the women who employed this technique, perhaps role overlap was an attempt to reduce role challenges and get more accomplished in less time.

The other half of the participants used role separation to maintain a deliberate boundary between each of their roles. Through *role separation*, the employed GSMs attended to one role at a time. They reported that role overlap tended to present role strain for them. Maintaining separation between work and graduate school responsibilities provided a clear boundary and allowed these women to focus on the demands of each role separately. For example, having a spouse or relative take children to and from child care was a way to keep roles separate, which allowed the GSM more time to prepare for and commute to her employee role. Avoiding weekend work and completing course assignments away from home also allowed the participants to maintain separation of their work, graduate student, and parent roles. Organizing schedules into one role per day was another role separation technique. The employed GSMs who used separation to manage their roles reported an increased ability to attend to each role fully. When role separation failed, and one role began to "bleed into" another, the women who employed this technique described experiencing role strain. For these participants, perhaps role separation was an attempt to reduce role challenges by permitting extended focus on one role at a time and thereby reducing the feeling of being pulled in more than one direction. At times, the circumstances surrounding and reasons for selecting particular role management techniques were unclear. It was unknown whether the women who chose role separation over role overlap did so for

personality or situational reasons. Therefore, this area appears to warrant further investigation.

### **Challenges and Benefits of Multiple Roles: Research Question 3**

The third research question was “What challenges and/or benefits of these roles do employed GSMs identify?” In the course of fulfilling multiple role demands, the participants experienced several challenges (role strain, role conflict, and role overload) and benefits (role resources and role enrichment).

#### **Challenges**

**Role strain.** Role strain, also known as stress, was experienced by all six participants in this study. Some women experienced stress when a heavy workload or school assignments interfered with family time, or when their children needed attention as they tried to accomplish school tasks. Other women experienced role strain when they were physically exhausted, had a sick child, forgot something important, or when one role demanded more attention than usual. Role strain tended to occur during times when two of their roles simultaneously demanded their time and attention. These findings aligned with previous literature which asserted that pressures which compete for an individual’s resources arise from the strain associated with each role (Goode, 1960; Kopelman et al., 1983).

**Role conflict.** The women in this study experienced the three major forms of role conflict—the process by which the demands and expectations of one role are mutually incompatible with the demands and expectations of another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1983). This role incompatibility occurs when participation in one role makes participation in another role more difficult.

***Time-based.*** The most common form of role conflict among the participants resulted from time pressures. Time-based conflict occurred when the time dedicated to one role made it difficult for GSMs to fulfill other role requirements. For example, work schedules often left the participants with little time to spend with their children in the evening, as young children tend to go to bed early. Family responsibilities often interfered with the graduate student role as well, since the need to complete assignments often occurred at the same time GSMs would spend with their families, on evenings and weekends.

The demands of the family role also took time away from work and student responsibilities. The time GSMs used to complete family responsibilities made it difficult to meet the demands and expectations of their student and employee roles. When time pressures were present, the participants described experiencing difficulties meeting the demands and expectations of their student, family, and work roles.

***Strain-based.*** In line with previous research, strain-based conflict occurred when strain produced in one role made it difficult for GSMs to fulfill the demands of another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1983). Sleep deprivation produced strain for the women with the youngest children and made it difficult to meet the demands of their student and work roles. Strain from physical exhaustion was significant when GSMs needed to complete assignments on weekday evenings after full work days and family responsibilities were accomplished. Heavy workloads and family illness also contributed to strain-based conflict, and weekend family demands often produced challenges for GSMs who wanted to use weekends to work on their graduate school assignments.

***Behavior-based.*** Behavior-based conflict occurred when the behavior required for one role was incompatible with the behaviors required to fulfill another role (Greenhaus &

Beutell, 1983). Due to the strain produced by the family role, the participants who experienced this form of role conflict reported that they produced and submitted work that was not “perfect,” but “good enough,” behavior that did not align with their typically high standards. For these women, the student role became more difficult because their normal behaviors in that role were incompatible with the behaviors necessary for their other family and work roles. Although they desired to submit and contribute their absolute best work, the participants did what they could to complete assignments and work responsibilities on time.

Additionally, the decision to avoid cross-country career options produced behavior-based conflict. This was significant because this form of conflict may potentially become a hindrance for post-doctoral career aspirations. The behavior required to secure a job after earning a graduate degree may include moving to another state, a move at least one participant was unwilling to make. The desire to maintain family stability may create difficulty in finding employment, and could lead to career disadvantage after graduation, a finding supported by previous research (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006; Springer et al., 2009).

**Role overload.** The demands of student, worker, and family roles required much time and many resources. Role overload occurred when too many role demands exceeded a participant’s available time and resources (Baruch et al., 1987; Coverman, 1989; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006). Consistent with previous literature, this study found that the extensive time demands of the graduate student role decreased the amount of time spent with family members, and vice versa (Dyk, 1987).

Role overload was evident for the women whose responses were riddled with statements which primarily described role challenges and conflict situations throughout the

interview. In addition, many of the women also reported experiencing feelings of guilt along with role challenges as they fulfilled their work, family, and student responsibilities, a finding consistent with previous research (Eckman & Kelber, 2009). Significant descriptions of role overload were present for two of the participants. Scarce time for family and class assignments were reported, along with graduate school often put the “back burner.” Some were uncertain about completing the graduate program on time, if at all.

### **Benefits**

**Role resources.** The most common role resource reported were the skills and perspectives gained in the course of role accumulation. Role resources occurred when the student, worker, or parent role generated resources that crossed domains into another role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). New skills and perspectives learned in the graduate student role were applicable within family and work roles. For instance, parental awareness of childhood stages and developmental milestones was enhanced by the student role, and had a direct impact on parenting. The skills generated in the student role were transferred directly to the mothering role in the form of new knowledge. This finding was consistent with previous literature which linked maternal employment and education to more optimal parenting styles (Demo, 1992; Etaugh & Bridges, 2006; Gottfried, et al., 2002). Similarly, performance in the work role was enhanced through the GSMs use of new skills generated in the student role. In this sense, a theory or other knowledge could be used in the course of the work role, a finding consistent with previous research on the expanded frame of reference that develops in the course role accumulation (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

Moreover, new skills and perspectives acquired in the graduate student role benefited the GSMs in their work roles, as they were able to apply them during therapy with clients,

classroom instruction, and in their administrative positions at their academic institutions. This application of new skills was possible because the GSMs were more informed and better able to respond to current situations in their work roles, and they knew more about the history of their employment institutions.

This study found that multiple roles also generated psychological and physical role resources for employed GSMs. Some participants remarked that their supervisor's psychological support for their graduate studies led to esteem in the work role. This esteem enhanced their efforts at work and encouraged them to use the resources gained from the student role to improve the circumstances in their work roles.

Satisfaction in the parenting role was also found to be a role resource. When the participants' time with their children was limited due to the demands in their student or work responsibilities, they reported more satisfaction with that time and described being fully present with their children. In these cases, satisfaction generated through the parenting role that could be drawn upon in the course of their work and student roles as the psychological and physical demands of their other roles increased. These findings supported previous literature which indicated that role resources can buffer the negative effects of one role (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Sieber, 1974) and be used across domains and drawn upon during challenging times (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Most of the women described their desire to be role models for their children as a psychological and physical resource of pursuing a graduate degree while working and parenting young children. They expressed hope that their children would see them study, work hard, and thereby develop an understanding of the significance of education and decide to pursue a degree themselves. For these GSMs, the self-reliance generated through

involvement in the graduate student role crossed domains and positively impacted the parenting role.

Social capital, or the development of beneficial interpersonal relationships, was also found to be a role resource for most the women in this study. The participants reported that being a graduate student had positive effects on their relationships with gatekeepers in their organizations of employment. These relationships provided access, information, and opened doors for advancement in their work roles.

Regardless of the number of hours worked per week, flexibility provided convenience and autonomy for the GSMs who were enrolled in hybrid programs that met at days and times that accommodated employed students. Convenient course meeting schedules, times, and academic advisement were provided by the participants' academic institutions. Daily schedule flexibility within the student role also permitted additional time with children, and therefore lowered childcare expenses. These findings are consistent with previous research which found that flexibility provides individuals with more convenient options for completing role requirements (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Consistent with previous findings, a few participants referenced money in the form of a pay increase as a role resource (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Although a pay raise would not be applied until they completed their programs, these women considered this promise a material resource of their graduate student roles. Furthermore, the work role was indicated a resource for the GSMs whose income contributed to education expenses and the household budget, which may contribute to overall enrichment by reducing financial stress (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

**Role enrichment.** The participants reported role enrichment, which occurs when resources generated in one role directly or indirectly transfer to, and enhance performance in, another role. In line with previous research, role enrichment occurs through both the instrumental (direct) and affective (indirect) pathways (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Instrumental role enrichment was reported by the GSMs whose graduate studies directly enhanced their performance in their family and work roles. Direct enhancement was described by the women whose graduate studies improved their parenting skills, provided a broader perspective of their employment organizations, and whose new knowledge helped assist in their work responsibilities (Chapter 4, Figures 5 and 6) (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). The enhancements generated through involvement in the graduate student role became role enrichment as they allowed the participants to perform better in their parenting and work roles through the development of additional competencies, gains in theoretical knowledge, and beneficial social connections.

Affective role enrichment was described by the participants whose graduate studies indirectly enhanced their performance in their work and family roles. For these women, graduate studies bolstered confidence at work and allowed them to model academic commitment for their children. These findings supported previous research which indicated that role resources generated in one role can influence performance in another role through positive emotions and affect (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

### **Participants' Perspectives of Multiple Roles: Research Question 1**

The first research question was “What overall perspective is reflected in the participant’s descriptions of their experience of fulfilling the roles of graduate student, mother, and employee?” A role is a pattern of behavior and attitudes expected of people in



certain social positions (Rahim, 2001; Sieber, 1974). In addition to work and family roles, the employed GSMs in this study had an additional student role. With multiple roles come many opportunities for challenges and benefits; however the individuals' perspective of their roles may influence the overall experience of conflict or enrichment, as they have been found to be separate constructs (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Tiedje et al., 1990). This study found that GSMs experienced both conflict and enrichment in the course of meeting the demands of their employee, parent, and graduate student roles, and the overall perspective may be influenced by specific factors within the parent and graduate student roles.

### **Conflict Perspective**

An overall conflict perspective was evident for the two GSMs whose responses indicated that they had experienced each of the three role challenges: role strain, role conflict, and role overload (see Table 3). The conflict perspective asserts that work and home pressures will ultimately compete for an individual's time and resources, which contribute to the experience of role strain, conflict, and overload (Allen et al., 2000; Goode, 1960; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kopelman et al., 1983). Competing pressures were identified throughout the participants' descriptions, and all reported difficulty with meeting role demands. Not often discussed in previous literature was the inclusion of a student role and its potential role challenges to the work/family interface. However, graduate student mothers did experience additional academic pressures, and it appeared that these pressures, in combination with the demands of their work and family roles, contributed to their overall conflict perspective.

Consistent with previous literature, family factors that are related to an overall conflict perspective included having young children and having more than one child

(Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Related academic factors seemed to be whether or not the GSM was in the middle stage of her graduate work and used role separation to manage role demands. Both women in this category had two of the youngest children (age 3 and age 9 months) in the study, and both were in the midst of their graduate programs. The high physical demands and round-the-clock care associated with having a younger child may have contributed to these GSMs overall perspective of conflict (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). It is unknown why position in the graduate program seemed to be related to the overall perspective, but perhaps the midpoint may be a period of transition during which coursework ends while the GSMs own projects and other milestones begin, thereby starting the next phase before the previous phase ends.

### **Enrichment Perspective**

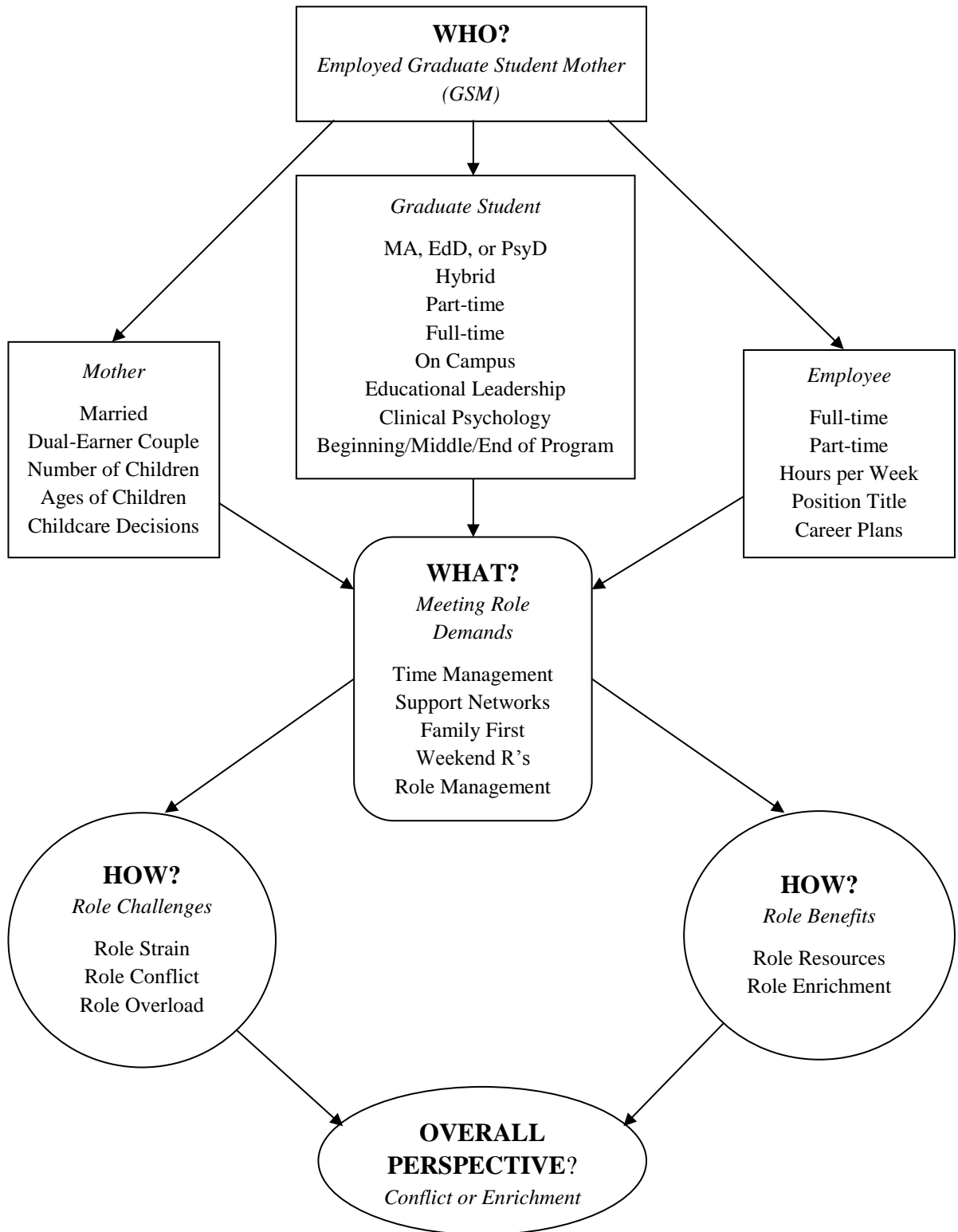
The two GSMs whose responses indicated that they experienced three or more role resources, both types of role enrichment, and no role overload, were determined to have an overall enrichment perspective (see Table 3). The enrichment perspective asserts that involvement in multiple roles may generate role resources that directly and indirectly cross domains and enhance life (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). The participants' responses indicated role benefits, and all reported ways in which their graduate student role generated resources they could draw upon in their work and family roles. Again, the inclusion of a student role in the work/family interface has not been frequently studied, but it was clear that these women experienced role benefits as graduate students and that these benefits contributed to an overall enrichment perspective.

Factors contributing to the experience of overall enrichment appeared to be having older children, (ages 4 or 5), using the role overlap technique, and being at either the

beginning or end of the graduate program. This may be because children over three are more self-reliant and less physically demanding than younger children. Additionally, the demands of the academic role may have already surpassed the peak, or may not have peaked yet, for these women. The findings of this study are illustrated in a composite sequence analysis (Figure 7).

### **Unknown Perspectives**

The overall perspectives of the participants for whom there was no interview transcript are unknown. While the ages of their children (3 and 9 months) suggested a conflict perspective according to the findings of this study, one participant was at the end of her program, and neither participant described experiencing role overload. It is unfortunate that holistic analysis was not possible, as it is quite likely that these two participants were the only in the study who may have indicated both conflict and enrichment in their overall perspective, a finding which would have been in support of Tiedje et al.'s role combination (1990) study.



**Figure 7.** Composite Sequence Analysis: Benefits, Challenges, and Perspectives of Employed GSMs

### **Lack/Withdrawal of Support**

Three women reported a lack of or withdrawal of support after informing advisors, classmates, and employers of their pregnancies. This finding suggests that not all graduate programs designed with working professionals in mind are ‘family friendly.’ Moreover, supervisor support in the form of work schedule flexibility allowed one participant to spend more time in her student and family roles—temporarily. As the demands of the work role increased, an increase in work hours was necessary, but an increase in work hours may present role conflict as the demands of the graduate student role had also increased.

### **Limitations**

This study had several limitations that need to be addressed. This study took place in southern California, with employed graduate student mothers of children ages 9 months through 5 years studying and working in the education and psychology fields. The sample was somewhat homogeneous in that the participants were all married and enrolled in similar degree programs. All participants were enrolled in practitioner programs, as the sample did not contain women pursuing the research degree of PhD. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized to locations, populations, academic programs, or employment outside of these parameters. Moreover, there were no men included in this study, so these findings may not apply to graduate student fathers.

Due to the number and nature of the roles required for participants in study, this dissertation had only six women. A larger sample of women (and men) with various aged children, in multiple places of employment, drawn from multiple universities, and including undergraduates, is necessary to theoretically construct and enhance our understanding of the

student-work-family interface. Additional research with the student role as the unit of analysis, and its influence on the experience of conflict and enrichment is also needed.

Perhaps the most significant limitation of this research is the fact that, due to researcher error, two of the six participant interviews were not voice recorded. Without transcripts for those two interviews there was potential for error in analysis, as no verbatim quotes (outside of short phrases written in the researchers' notes) could be used to confidently identify an overall perspective for the affected participants.

### **Implications for Practice and Directions for Future Research**

This exploratory study found that six employed graduate student mothers (GSMs) experienced many challenges and benefits in the course of meeting multiple role demands. The participants employed common practices to fulfill these roles, and overall both conflict and enrichment perspectives were reflected in their descriptions. In the current study, GSMs with at least one child age 3 or younger, who engaged in role separation, and were also in the middle of a degree program experienced all three types of role challenges and described an overall conflict perspective. The women who described an enrichment perspective had children over age 3, were either at the beginning or end of their degree programs, primarily used the role overlap technique, and described fewer role challenges.

Interestingly, with the exception of role overload (a key indicator of an overall conflict perspective) both groups of women had nearly the same number of role challenges and benefits. This may suggest that role overload has a more powerful influence than other factors on the perspectives of GSMs. Although the women had various work schedules, the number of hours did not appear to be a strong factor in the overall experience of conflict or enrichment, rather it was the flexibility and structure of the work role that was cited as a

factor in the GSM's ability to meet their role demands (Eckman & Kelber, 2009; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Future quantitative research in this area is warranted to determine the nature and strength of these associations.

### **Individuals and Families**

The findings of this study can inform individuals, families, and be used by decision-makers in academic and professional organizations. These findings may be relevant for working mothers of young children who are deciding whether or not to pursue a graduate degree. For example, a woman with at least one child aged 3 years and under may choose to wait until her youngest child is at least four before enrolling in a graduate program. Currently enrolled GSMs, or employed mothers who plan to enroll with a child three and under can expect role challenges to peak upon reaching the midpoint of their graduate programs and that meeting role demands may be more difficult for women who maintain consistent role separation. More research is needed on what occurs at the peak of graduate programs and how these challenges can be best addressed. These findings can also inform the families of employed GSMs. Similar to previous studies (Lynch, 2008), this study found that support from immediate and extended family members was highly valued and essential to the GSMs' ability to meet multiple role demands and help reduce role challenges.

These findings are not causal in nature. In the future, quantitative study with several participants in various locations would be necessary to confirm any relationship between the age of a GSMs' child(ren), her position in a graduate program, and the overall experience of role conflict or enrichment. As mentioned previously, this research did not include men, but future study of graduate student fathers (GSFs) is also necessary. Perhaps GSFs experience, perceive, and meet the demands of their multiple roles in different ways. Further, all the

GSMs in this study were married, and spousal support was described as especially helpful. Future research should also explore the experiences, perceptions, and role demands of single GSPs. Additionally, the participants in the study used the market approach to childcare (Barnett & Hyde, 2001), so these findings may not apply to women who use other childcare options. When viewed from the family adaptations perspective (Gottfried et al., 2002), these women functioned effectively with the support of spouses whose increased participation in childrearing and household tasks facilitated their involvement in multiple roles.

### **Academic and Professional Organizations**

The women in this study were employed in different organizations and had children of varying ages, but they had a common academic goal: A desire to seek a graduate degree while concurrently parenting. To help assist this population of graduate students to meet their academic goals, higher education administrators, academic departments, and professors could support, create, implement, or expand resources and policies which support the efforts of employed GSMs (Kennelly & Spalter-Roth, 2006; Mason & Eckman, 2007; Springer et al., 2009). This can be done through child care grants for students in the midst of their programs, family leave without academic or financial prejudice or penalty, and promoting wide availability of institutional and community resources for this population.

Employer support was also described as a crucial benefit to a GSM's continued enrollment. Supervisor support in the form of tuition remission, flexible schedule arrangements, and mentoring may help generate role resources which lead to increased productivity. In addition, supportive professors who allow students to make class schedule arrangements and alter cohort status after parenthood, or post-pregnancy, without penalty may help reduce role challenges for employed GSMs.



More research on the student-work-family interface is needed. This area is understudied, but its significance will continue to grow as more students with multiple roles continue to enroll in graduate programs, especially employed mothers.

### **Conclusions**

The employed GSMs in this study experienced both role challenges and role benefits in the course of meeting multiple role demands. Role challenges presented role strain, role conflict, and role overload. Role benefits included several types of role resources and role enrichment. These findings are consistent with previous literature (Tiedje et al., 1990) and are offered tentatively, as the sample size was small and two perspectives were unable to be fully analyzed with written notes. For instance, the age and number of children, the GSMs position in her graduate program, and her role management technique seemed to be the factors with the strongest influence on the participants' overall perspective. Perhaps not surprisingly, the participants who had more than one child and/or a child aged 3 or under and were in the midst of their graduate programs described experiencing more challenges in meeting multiple role demands. Indeed, caring for an infant or toddler combined with being at the midpoint in a graduate program seemed to be a most challenging time for the women in this study.

Interestingly, the participants who had an overall conflict perspective experienced similar role benefits and challenges as the participants who had overall enrichment. However, the women who had an overall enrichment perspective did not describe role overload. Further, the role management techniques of the women also seemed related to the participants' overall experience. The findings are not causal, but since previous research has found that the experience of role conflict is negatively related to satisfaction, it can be

speculated that perhaps the enrichment group were more satisfied in their roles as employed graduate student mothers than the conflict group (Tiedje et al., 1990). Role satisfaction was not measured in this study, but the findings are in line with Marks' (1977) and Sieber's (1974) theory that when satisfied in their roles, role resources outweigh the challenges.

Appendix A: Letter of Request to the Program Director (Graduate Program)

Date

Name

Title

City, State, Zip

Name:

I am writing to request permission to interview students in the Graduate Psychology program at \_\_\_\_\_ University. As you know, I am a student at the University of California Santa Barbara. I am conducting research for my doctoral dissertation in the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education.

The purpose of my study is to explore how employed graduate student mothers experience and meet the demands of their roles as graduate student, mother, and employee. I am selecting a sample of women who are concurrently:

- a. Enrolled in a graduate program (M.A., M.B.A., Ed.D., or Ph.D.)
- b. Employed (either full- or part-time), and
- c. The mother of at least one preschool-aged child.

This study will involve a participants' completion of a screening form, a demographic questionnaire, a 45- to 60-minute interview, and a follow-up call or e-mail. Participation is completely voluntary and the University's identity and the identity of each participant will remain confidential. I intend to begin conducting interviews in March 2014. The participants who complete the study will receive a \$10 Target gift card. The interviews will not interfere with class time and will be scheduled at the students' convenience, outside of class time.

I look forward to your response. Please contact me via phone or e-mail with any questions or for additional information. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Tanisha DuBransky, M.A.  
Ph.D. Candidate, Gevirtz Graduate School of Education  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
Ph. 805.419.0479  
tanisha@uemail.ucsb.edu

Appendix B: Letter of Request to the Program Director (Child Care Center)

Date

Name

Title

Address

City, State Zip

Name:

I am writing to request permission to recruit \_\_\_\_\_ parents in my research study. As you know, I am a student at the University of California Santa Barbara conducting research for my doctoral dissertation in the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education.

The purpose of my study is to explore how employed graduate student mothers experience and meet the demands of their roles as graduate student, mother, and employee. I am selecting a small sample of (6 to 8) women who are concurrently:

- a. Enrolled in a graduate program (M.A., M.B.A., Ed.D., or Ph.D.)
- b. Employed (either full- or part-time), and
- c. The mother of at least one preschool-aged child.

This study will involve a participants' completion of a screening form, a demographic questionnaire, a 45- to 60-minute interview, and a follow-up call or e-mail. Participation is completely voluntary and both the child care facility's identity and the identities of each participant will remain confidential. I intend to begin conducting interviews in March 2014. The participants who complete the study will receive a \$10 Target gift card.

I look forward to your response. Please contact me via phone or e-mail with any questions or for additional information. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Tanisha DuBransky, M.A.

Ph.D. Candidate, Gevirtz Graduate School of Education

University of California, Santa Barbara

Ph. 805.419.0479

tanisha@umail.ucsb.edu

Appendix C: Research Participant Interest Form

Thank you for your interest in this study. Please complete the following information. This information will only be used to determine your eligibility to participate in the study. This information will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

YOUR INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Discipline (Major): \_\_\_\_\_

Enrollment:            Full-time            Part-time

Program:            On-campus            Online            Hybrid

EMPLOYMENT

Position/Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours Worked per Week: \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD(REN)

	Age	Gender
Child 1		
Child 2		
Child 3		
Child 4		

For your children who have NOT entered Kindergarten:

Number of days/week in child care: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of hours/day in child care: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D: Background Questionnaire

I am interested in the characteristics of each interviewee within the scope of this study. Your personal information will be kept confidential, your identity will not be shared, and your personal identifying information will not be revealed.

### BACKGROUND

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

### WORK/EMPLOYMENT

2. Position/Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are your career plans? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Is your work:      \_\_\_ full-time      \_\_\_ part-time

5. How many hours per week do you spend doing compensated work? \_\_\_\_\_

### PARENTING

6. Are you:    Single            Married            Partnered

7. How many dependent children do you have (living with you)? \_\_\_\_\_

8. How old is (are) your child(ren)? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Who cares for your child(ren) during your work and school hours?

\_\_\_ Spouse/Partner

\_\_\_ Older Sibling

\_\_\_ Grandparent

\_\_\_ Other Relative

\_\_\_ Babysitter (in home)

\_\_\_ Child care provider (in facility/preschool)

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### EDUCATION

10. Institution name: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Which graduate degree are you currently seeking?

\_\_\_ MA or MS (Circle)

\_\_\_ MBA

\_\_\_ PhD, PsyD, or EdD (Circle)

12. Area of Study (Emphasis): \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Interview Protocol

Thank you for granting me the opportunity to interview you. For this project, I am primarily interested in exploring how employed graduate student mothers experience and meet the demands of their multiple roles. Of interest are graduate students who are simultaneously in the positions of mother and employee. I chose you because you are an employed mother with (a) child(ren) pursuing a graduate degree. This interview is confidential, and you will not be identified by name.

### INTRODUCTORY/BACKGROUND QUESTION(S)

When you decided to attend graduate school, were you already a mother, and were you working?

Probe: How did it happen that you are in all 3 roles concurrently?

### EXPERIENCE (PROCESS) QUESTIONS

*Let's talk about the process of how you experience your parent and work roles.*

1. How would you describe your experience of attending *graduate school* while concurrently working and raising (a) child(ren)?

Probe: What is your regular routine?

2. Tell me about a situation in which *graduate school* responsibilities converged with your work or your role as a *mother*.

Probe: How was the situation resolved?

Probe: How did you feel about the resolution?

*Next, I'm going to ask you about the benefits and challenges you've experienced as a graduate student mother.*

3a. How do you think graduate school is benefitting you in your role as a mother?

3b. How do you think graduate school is challenging you in your role as a mother?

Probe: Do you believe your institution/department has a family friendly culture?

4a. How do you think graduate school is benefitting you in your role as an employee?

4b. How do you think graduate school is challenging you in your role as an employee?

Probe: Do you think your employer is supportive of your academic goals?

### MEETING ROLE DEMANDS (PRACTICE) QUESTIONS

*Let's talk about how you meet the demands of your multiple roles.*

5. How do you organize your time in order to meet the demands of your multiple roles?

Example: A required class is offered on the one night per week your spouse/child care provider is unavailable to care for your child(ren).

Probe: Can you walk me through the process?

Probe: When do you do the cleaning, laundry, groceries?

6. When you have a good day and your roles as student, mother, and employee are equally demanding, what does that day look like?

- Probe: What are the things that happen that make your day easier?
7. When you have a bad day and your roles as student, mother, and employee are equally demanding, what makes that day go so poorly?
- Probe: What are the things that happen that mess up your day?

#### CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

*Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. I would like to conclude with the following questions that draw on your experience of being an employed graduate student mother.*

8. What resources do you have available to you?
- Probe: Do you have family in the area?
- Probe: Do you have fellowships or scholarships?
9. What are you aware of now that you were not aware of when you started graduate school?
- 10a. What advice would you give to a working mother who is considering graduate school?
- 10b. What recommendations do you have for graduate schools as more working mothers are seeking advanced degrees?
11. What are your concerns, if any, about your future career plans in terms of managing your multiple roles/work-life balance?
12. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about how you handle being a graduate student, parent, and employee that you believe might be helpful?



## Appendix F: Consent to Participate in Research

### Study Description

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to explore what graduate student mothers are experiencing through involvement in multiple roles. Specifically, how women with preschool-aged children meet the demands of their graduate programs, parental responsibilities, and compensated work. I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education at the University of California Santa Barbara. I am conducting this research for a doctoral dissertation.

### Procedures

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a short participant interest form to confirm that you meet the criteria, complete a preliminary questionnaire to collect information about your multiple roles, and participate in an interview of approximately 1 hour in length. The interviews will be audio recorded (with your permission) for the purpose of transcription. The purpose of the interview is to learn more about your experience fulfilling the roles of employee, mother, and graduate student. This is a small study consisting of six to eight subjects. Should you feel a topic is too sensitive, the interviewer will stop recording at your request.

### Confidentiality

Your name, and any other identifying information you mention in the course of the interview, will be removed from the final write-up. You may decline to answer any question(s) and/or discontinue the interview at any time. The audio recordings will be destroyed once the interviews have been transcribed. This consent form will not be kept in the same location as your interview transcript. Pseudonyms will be used in place of your name, affiliated university, and/or child care center, and anyone you mention by name in the course of the interview. Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, since research documents are not protected from subpoena. As a researcher, I am required by State Law to report to the relevant authorities any known or suspected child abuse and neglect revealed during the course of this study.

### Potential Risks

You may experience negative emotions when considering some of the questions or when remembering the challenges you have faced, and/or any unpleasant experiences that have occurred in the course of managing your multiple roles.

### Potential Benefits

The primary benefit is sharing with others what it is like to manage multiple roles and responsibilities. You may find yourself reflecting on your life and recalling fond memories of your achievements and successes in each of your roles.

### Compensation

You will be offered a \$10 Target® gift card as appreciation for your participation. If you decide to withdraw from the study, or decline to answer questions, you will still receive the

Target card for your time. The gift card will either be delivered to you in person at your convenience, or mailed to the address you provide.

Right to Refuse or Withdrawal

You may refuse to participate and still receive any benefits you would receive if you were not in the study. You may change your mind about being in the study and quit after the study has started.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research project or if you think you may have been injured as a result of your participation, please contact:

Sharon Conley, Ph.D., Advisor and Chairperson  
Phone: 805.893.7199  
Email: sconley@education.ucsb.edu

If you have any questions regarding your rights and participation as a research subject, please contact the Human Subjects Committee at (805) 893-3807 or hsc@research.ucsb.edu. Or write to the University of California, Human Subjects Committee, Office of Research, Santa Barbara, CA 93106-2050.

Consent Statement

I have read the above information. I have received answers to my questions and consent to participate in the study. I know that I have the right to discontinue my participation at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Printed Name

## Busy Moms Research Study

Are you a mother working part-time or full-time while also attending graduate school?

Are you interested in sharing your experience with managing your multiple roles?

---

I am conducting research for a doctoral dissertation. I'm interested in how mothers who work and attend graduate school meet the demands of their multiple roles.

---

To qualify, you must be concurrently:

- The mother of at least one infant, toddler, or preschool-aged child
- Enrolled in a graduate program (MA/MS, MBA, EdD/PsyD/PhD)
- Employed (either full-time or part-time)

Participation in the study includes completion of:

- An interest form and a short background questionnaire
- A 1-hour, voice recorded, personal interview

Women who qualify and complete the study will receive a Target® gift card for their participation. To express your interest, please contact Tanisha DuBransky at 805.419.0479, or email:

[tanisha@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:tanisha@umail.ucsb.edu).

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