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Working Mothers: The Relationship Between Intensive Mothering and Work-family
Conflict

By
Casey E. Baker

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
Education in Counselor Education and Supervision

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Mankato, Minnesota

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INTENSIVE MOTHERING AND WORKING MOTHERS

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Working Mothers: The Relationship Between
Intensive Mothering and Work-family Conflict

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INTENSIVE MOTHERING AND WORKING MOTHERS

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INTENSIVE MOTHERING AND WORKING MOTHERS

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between intensive mothering constructs and work-family conflict of working mother. The study consisted of 412 participants who identified themselves as mothers who work outside of the home. Participants identified mainly as Caucasian (97.57%), in a domestic partnership (80.3%), who worked 40 hours or more outside of the home (70.9%). The majority believed their work schedule was flexible (58.2%) and worked standard hours (86.2%). Results indicated mothers who worked outside of the home 10-20 hours per week were less likely to endorse Child-Centered, Stimulation, and Essentialism beliefs. Mothers who worked outside of the home 1-10 hours per week endorsed slightly higher Fulfillment and Essentialism beliefs. Overall, as the level of education increased endorsement of Child-Centered, Fulfillment, and Essentialism decreased. Further, mothers who reported their schedules as flexible identified slightly lower work-to-family direction of the conflict. Additionally, others who endorsed nonstandard hours endorsed higher levels of the work-to-family direction of conflict and slightly lower levels of the family-to-work direction of the conflict. A correlation matrix was utilized to assess the relationship between the intensive mothering constructs and the two directions and six dimensions of work-family conflict, which resulted in weak significant relationships between the variables. This quantitative study extends the research on intensive mothering by utilizing a quantitative measure of intensive mothering while focusing on additional factors including maternal employment, which is widely under-researched. Recommendations for further research ideas will be discussed.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Motherhood has been enforced as a primary role for women and significantly intertwined with the concepts of femininity and gender development (Chodorow, 1990; McMahon, 1995). Motherhood is a multifaceted relationship in which one engages in actions that involve nurturing and caring of their child(ren) (Ferree, 1990; Forcey, 1994). Some have depicted motherhood as a natural and fulfilling process in which one can instantly and inherently care for their children (Marshall & Woollett, 2000). A good mother is assumed to be a female adult who is completely fulfilled by domestic duties, takes care of her children full-time in the home, white, and middle class (Boris, 1994). This depiction of motherhood tends to be the standard by which women measure themselves against (Ussher, 2010).

This standard often creates dissonance for women which subsequently results in reevaluation and modification in areas of their identity including self-esteem, career aspirations, autonomy, physical appearances, sexuality, and interpersonal relationships (Nicolson, 1999; Parker, 1997; Steinberg, 2005). These reevaluations of identity and development of a motherhood identity can occur as early as pregnancy for some. For others, this can be a lifelong formulation (Smith, 1994). In general, this reevaluation of identity requires a transitional period which may have a positive and negative impact for women (Laney, Hall, Anderson, & Willingham, 2015; Smith, 1994; Weaver & Ussher, 1997).

The process of developing a motherhood identity is greatly influenced by one's beliefs about motherhood (Ussher, 2010; Weaver & Ussher, 1997). Intensive mothering ideology is a dominant belief of motherhood and will be the focus of this study (Hays, 1996; Liss, Schiffrin, Rizzo, 2013; Wall, 2010). Previous research is unclear as to whether this ideology helps support

this period of transition or becomes a barrier (Laney et al., 2015; Smith, 1994; Weaver & Ussher, 1997).

Hays (1996) coined the term intensive mothering in her book *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood*. In this book, she explained the strong emotional response to the topic of motherhood elicits, and the strong connection and emotional reaction individuals have to the topic of motherhood. Almost twenty years following the release of her book, intensive mothering continues to be one of the most popular and socially appropriate ideologies of parenting in Western society (Hays, 1996; Liss, Schiffrin, Mackinsotsh, Miles-McLean, & Erchull, 2013; Wall, 2010).

Intensive mothering is a belief that parenting is fulfilling, difficult, and primarily the responsibility of the mother who should prioritize her child's needs over her own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013; Wall, 2010). Some contest that intensive mothering serves as a means of social control, stigmatizing and punishing women who violate these beliefs (Caputo, 2007). Thus, the strong emotional response that occurs when discussing motherhood (Hays, 1996).

Mothers who do not identify or engage in intensive mothering beliefs may be categorized and identified as deviant. This deviancy discourse focuses on mothers' shortcomings instead of their strengths and is linked to mothers who do not fit into the good mother definition (Arendell, 2000). This discourse is a motivator for negative attacks against mothers who violate the societal norm of what a good mother entails. These attacks pin mothers against each other and further the divided which leads to categorizing mothers as good or bad (Arendell, 2000; Johnston & Swanson, 2004; Zimmerman, Aberle, Krafchick, & Harvey, 2008).

Countless women get identified as bad for not fitting into the good mother definition including those who are considered disadvantaged and marginalized. Young mothers, unwed

mothers, mothers lacking in education, single mothers (Coleman & Carter, 2006; Kirkman, Harrison, Hillier & Pyett, 2001; McDermott & Graham, 2005; Mollborn & Jacobs, 2012), mothers of color (Shanok & Miller, 2007), working mothers, mothers with disabilities, and mothers with children who are disabled are a few who do not fit within the mainstream good mothering ideology (Brown, 2006).

In 1975, 47% of women who had children under the age of 18 were employed; in 2013, 70% worked outside the home with children under the age of 18 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Although the majority of mothers who have children living in the home are employed, researchers suggest a number of these mothers endorse the belief that children are taken care of best when the mother is the primary caregiver (Hays, 1996; Johnston & Swanson, 2007). When mothers' employment decisions are incongruent with their beliefs about maternal employment, they tend to report greater depressive symptoms (Hock & DeMeis, 1990; Perry-Jenkins, Seery, & Crouter, 1992). Working mothers express guilt over being away from their children (Guendouzi, 2006). This guilt may motivate employed mothers to invest more effort into their parenting practices. For mothers who identify with intensive mothering, they may devote additional attention to the family to assist in relieving the guilt and becoming a "supermom" (DeMeis & Perkins, 1996). These mothers may give up their sleep, personal time, weekends, and own interests to devote additional time and energy to their children (Becker & Moen, 1999; Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer & Robinson, 2006; Maume, 2006).

At some level, society begins to identify mothers as good or bad by work status, the behavior of their child, and type of occupation (Austin & Carpenter, 2008; Caputo, 2007; Okimoto & Heilman, 2012). In one study, stay-at-home mothers identified a good mother as someone who is readily available for her children which led to categorizing full-time working

mothers as not readily available and bad mothers (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). In similar studies, employed mothers were perceived as being selfish and less committed to their children when compared to nonemployed mothers (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005).

The perceptions of what a good or bad parent entails may influence their decision to work outside of the home (Caputo, 2007; Johnston & Swanson, 2006). In one study, researchers examined a group of mothers who worked the night shift. Their decision to work night shift was due to being able to be their child's primary caregiver during the day. Working nonstandard hours led to negative consequences for the mother, but it assisted in being able to fulfill the good mothering role by being physically present for their child. Thus, mothers sacrificed their own mental and physical health to be a readily available primary caretaker for their child (Garey, 1999)

In additional studies, mothers of children who were identified as defiant, hyperactive, and non-conforming were blamed and described as bad mothers. This added more pressure and blaming when the mother worked outside of the home (Austin & Carpenter, 2008; Caputo, 2007). On top of that, mothers working in male-dominated occupations were seen as worse parents than those who were not working or working in a female-dominated occupation (Okimoto & Heilman, 2012). Whether these judgments are overt or covert, they influence the decision for mothers to work outside the home.

These judgments and assumptions of bad mothering lead to less tolerance of differences and more apparent attacks between women; this is often described as *Mommy Wars* (Crowley, 2015; Johnston & Swanson, 2004; Zimmerman et al., 2008). This war sets to dichotomize women and pin them against each other in the debate of whether a mother should solely stay home with her children or choose to work outside the home. A significant contributor to these

judgments and assumptions comes from the media, which assists in the expansion of these wars beyond the work issue to all aspects of parenting (Zimmerman et al., 2008).

Some research suggests mommy wars are more dominant in White, middle-class populations and less likely to be experienced in diverse populations (Crowley, 2015). This could be because research on mommy wars tends to focus on White, middle class, married populations. However, researchers have argued that diverse populations do engage in mommy war behaviors and is not exclusively found in the privileged (Crowley, 2015; Elliott, Powell, & Brenton, 2015; Johnston & Swanson, 2004; Zimmerman et al., 2008). It has been suggested that mommy war behaviors may be displayed differently in various populations (Elliott et al., 2015; Zimmerman et al., 2008).

The population of focus for this study is mothers who choose to work outside of the home. This study sets to examine the relationship between work-family conflict and intensive mothering beliefs. This research gives a glimpse into the relationship between intensive mothering belief system and the mother's ability to cope with competing roles within the home and work environments. Specifically, this study reviews whether intensive mothering can predict work-to-family or family-to-work direction of the conflict.

Theoretical Framework

Role theory is historically used to examine the relationship between work and family life. Role conflict is a component of role theory. Essentially, work-family conflict occurs because one is simultaneously engaging in multiple roles. For this study, mothers engaged in roles in both work and home domains. Serving both roles can make it difficult to do both successfully, and the pressures of each interfere with the other and create conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kahn et al. 1964). Conflict arises when pressures from different roles are at odds with each

other. Role conflict is important to understand for working mothers, as it explains the pressures to deal with the pressures of home and work. This pressure and conflict have been shown to negatively impact well-being and life satisfaction (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). It is theorized that they will also experience role conflict as their roles of mother and employee can conflict due to pressures for attention at the same time.

According to role theory and the scarcity perspective, individuals have only a limited amount of time and energy to devote to their roles (Goode, 1960). From this perspective, the scarcity hypothesis proposes the more roles an individual has, the greater chance for role strain and role conflict. This is due to a limited amount of resources divided among roles. As an individual devotes time and energy into one role, this depletes the available time and energy needed for other roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006). For women who have role obligations at both work and home, this causes a divide of the amount of time and energy spread between the roles. A mother with multiple roles must make decisions about where to spend her time, which may cause strain and stress (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004).

As role obligations increase, there is a decrease in the amount of time and energy that is spent on other roles (Goode, 1960). When conceptualizing the demands placed on mothers who work outside of the home, the conflict between the domains would make sense. The added demands of intensive mothering beliefs would provide pressure to be the ideal mother who is the primary caretaker of their children, successful in all areas, and whose child is the center of their world (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013; Wall, 2010). Within a day's time, women may have to assume multiple roles. These can include employee, boss, mother, wife, daughter, and volunteer, to name a few. It makes sense that the demanding nature of having to be an ideal mother and have a career will drain the time and energy from women and leads to work-family conflict.

Taking role theory further, Super's Life-span, Life-space theory has recognized career development involves a fundamental understanding of how work interacts with different roles. It explores the content, process, and outcomes of career choices throughout an individual's life development (Super, 1980). When examining the lifespan and arranging social roles, having too much or not enough life structure can cause a host of concerns for an individual. Therefore, attempting to achieve balance among these roles will elicit overall well-being and satisfaction (Niles, Herr, & Hartung, 2001).

Intensive mothering endorses constant stimulation for children which often means extracurricular activities. Further, essentialism refers to mothers being inherently better at parenting and lead a mother to do more of the household tasks (taking kids to extracurriculars, doctor appointments, cleaning) and surrounding their lives around their children (Hays, 1996). When adding this to the role of a worker, a mother's life can quickly become too structured. Multiple demands lead to problems balancing roles and lead to conflict between roles.

Further, Life-span, Life-space theory identifies nine major roles that are typical in one's life including a child, student, leisure, citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, and annuitant (Super, 1980). Of these roles, worker and parent tend to be core roles of the population explored in this study. Role salience is when an individual feel invested, participates, and realizes essential outcomes of a role. Life roles interact in many ways, which can be extensive, minimal, supportive, supplementary, compensatory, or neutral (Super, 1980). Within this study, the level of role salience a mother may have regarding her particular role as a worker or parent may influence the level of stress and conflict they may be experiencing between these roles. For example, if an individual over-invests in their worker role, she may neglect her parent role and cause some strain in the home and vice versa.

When examining role salience, one can look deeper into the different aspects of these roles that influence determinants of role salience (Allport, Vernon & Lindzey, 1970). Allport et al., (1970) identified specific life-role aspects that may provide a glimpse into the contextual factors that help support a particular role. These life-role aspects include role-expectations, role-conceptions, role-acceptance, and role-performance.

Role-expectations are historical and cultural expectations that are assigned to a particular role (Allport et al., 1970). For the population in this study, this includes both the parent and worker at a minimum. If an individual identifies with the intensive mother ideology, these increased expectations for the parent role may increase the amount of energy and time and deplete from other roles (worker). The deprivation from other roles could lead to family-to-work direction of conflict for the mother.

Role-conceptions are the way in which one interprets the role-related expectations (Allport et al., 1970). For example, one of the constructs for intensive mothering is stimulation. Everyone may have her perception of what stimulation may mean for them. For one individual, stimulation may mean that she has her children involved in multiple after school activities. For another, it might mean that she works each day with her child on their homework. The level of stimulation and amount of disruption that may occur will vary with each mother. Role-conceptions may account of the differences between mothers.

Role-acceptance is the individual's willingness to be in that role (Allport et al., 1970). For the population in this study, an individual may have felt family pressure to become a mother and thus experiences difficulties in her role-acceptance. On the other hand, the individual may have always wanted to be a mother and may experience an easier time moving into this role.

Role-performance is the actual behavior one engages in the actual role (Allport et al., 1970). Within this population, an individual may endorse intensive mothering ideology, but behaviors may be incongruent to this ideology. Thus, dissonance can occur with the individual. For example, a mother may believe she needs to be the sole caretaker but has to use daycare while she works. She may experience dissonance between her thoughts and experience, which may lead to conflict between her roles.

Definition of Key Terms

The key variables are described in greater detail. These variables include intensive mothering ideology, intensive mothering constructs, and work-family conflict.

Intensive Mothering Ideology

Intensive mothering ideology comes out of research by Hays (1996) work on intensive mothering. Within the literature, researchers explain intensive mothering using the terms ideology, expectations, and beliefs interchangeably. Intensive mothering ideology is an ideology that condones parenting should be fulfilling, challenging, and primarily the responsibility of the mother who should prioritize her child's needs over her own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013).

Intensive Mothering Constructs

Building off the initial work of Hays' (1996) intensive mothering research, researchers, operationalized the definition of intensive mothering into five constructs including essentialism, fulfillment, stimulation, challenging, and child-centered (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013).

Essentialism refers to the belief that mothers, when compared to fathers, are better and inherently driven to parent. Fulfillment refers to the belief that parenting is a fulfilling and rewarding process. Stimulation refers to the belief that parents should cognitively stimulate their

children. Challenging is the belief that parenting is difficult. Child-Centered refers to the belief that children's needs should be the primary focus for parents (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013).

Work-family Conflict

For this study, the interaction between work and life is explored through work-family conflict. Work-family conflict occurs when there are role pressures from both the work and family environment. These role pressures provide great stress and are incompatible (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Historically, the work-family conflict was measured only unidirectional. Over the years, research has expanded, and work-family conflict can be examined multi-directionally; the work-to-family direction of conflict and family-to-work direction of conflict (Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams, 2000). Further, researchers have operationalized work-family conflict into three forms of conflict including time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict (Carlson et al., 2000; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Stephens & Sommer, 1996). With the two directions and three forms of work-family conflict, there become six dimensions of work-family conflict. These include time-based work-to-family conflict, time-based family-to-work conflict, strain-based work-to-family conflict, strain-based family-to-work conflict, behavior-based work-to-family conflict, and behavior-based family-to-work conflict (Carlson et al., 2000).

Problem Statement and Research Questions

Women who have children and work outside of the home experience more stress than those without children. The increased stress is related to the balancing of multiple roles (Noor, 2004). In 1975, 47% of women who had children under the age of 18 were employed; in 2013, 70% worked outside the home with children under the age of 18 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). With the significant change in the last 30 years of women in the workplace, an increase in research on women in the workforce and additional challenges they may face has

become more apparent (Dey & Hill, 2007; Tower & Alkadry, 2008). Research is lacking in the area of the challenges working mothers face in the workforce, and the impact parenting beliefs have on their overall balancing of both home and work life. It is evident that although there may not be support for research on women's challenges in career development, women, including many who have children, are nonetheless in the workforce.

There are limited studies that explore the impact of intensive mothering on working mothers (Caputo, 2007; Hays, 1996; Johnston & Swanson, 2006; Liss et al., 2013). An understanding of the relationship between intensive mothering constructs and work-family conflict will assist in understanding the impact intensive mothering may have on a mother who works outside of the home.

The current study extends the research on intensive mothering by utilizing a quantitative measure of intensive mothering while focusing on additional factors including maternal employment, which is widely under-researched. Further, this study attempts to examine if the endorsement of intensive mothering beliefs can predict the conflict between work and home life. Two research questions will guide this study.

Research Questions

RQ 1: What is the relationship between endorsement of intensive parenting constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) and two directions and six dimensions of work-family conflict?

H1: It is hypothesized that the endorsement of intensive mothering will be strongly associated with work-family conflict. Specifically, the time-based and strain-based interference. Examining the information on life-span, life-space theory and life structure, the thought is that having too little or too much life structure will become problematic in one's life. Intensive mother

belief endorses constant stimulation and the mother being the sole provider which can cause more time and strain when balancing both the mother and worker role (Hays, 1996).

RQ 2: Does the endorsement of intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) predict family-to-work direction or work-to-family of conflict in women who work outside of the home?

H2: It is hypothesized that the intensive mothering constructs of Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered will predict family-to-work direction conflict and work-to-family direction of the conflict. The engagement of intensive mothering tends to require a significant amount of time and energy. Role theory suggests there is a limited amount of time and energy to spread between roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). With the added demands of intensive mothering ideology, a significant amount of time and energy is devoted to family life. This devotion is especially in Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered, which condones that mothers should be the primary caretakers who should prioritize her children's needs over her own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). With the added demands of the intensive mothering beliefs, mothers may have less energy and focus on the home which would lead to less focus at work. The demands may cause conflict between the domains.

Further, it is hypothesized that the intensive mothering constructs of Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered will predict the work-to-family direction of the conflict. The engagement of intensive mothering tends to require a significant amount of time and energy. Depending on the individual's job, work can require a significant amount of time and energy. With both the home and work roles, Role theory suggests that there is a limited amount of time and energy that is spread between roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). With the added demands of intensive mothering ideology, a significant amount of time and

energy is devoted to family life. Especially Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered, which condones that mothers should be the primary caretakers who should prioritize her children's needs over her own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). The conflict may occur when the mother has a career and must divide time and energy into multiple demanding roles. The more a mother devotes time and energy into work may lead to less time and energy at home and thus cause conflict.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the topic of motherhood and intensive mothering ideology. Intensive mothering is identified as one of the most popular and socially appropriate ideologies of parenting (Hays, 1996). Intensive mothering is the belief that parenting should be fulfilling, challenging, and primarily the responsibility of the mother who should prioritize her child's needs over her own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013; Wall, 2010). The pressure to adhere to the intensive mothering ideology can lead to the dichotomizing of women and reinforcement of mommy wars (Crowley, 2015; Johnson & Swanson, 2004; Zimmerman et al., 2008).

The pressure to adhere to these standards may be difficult for women who are employed (Walls et al., 2016). It is the assumption that women will continue to endorse or feel pressure to endorse intensive mothering ideology even though these beliefs are not conducive to their life due to social pressure (Hendersen, Harmon, & Newman, 2016). It is thought that the dissonance between underlying beliefs or assumptions of mothers and lived experience may cause work-family conflict for mothers (Henderson et al., 2016; Liss et al., 2013).

The purpose of this dissertation is to extend the work of intensive mothering ideology and work-family conflict. It goes beyond the most current literature because it examines the

endorsement of intensive mothering, maternal employment, and work-family conflict. This study sets to explore the relationship between intensive mothering and work-family conflict. Further, it will examine if the endorsement of intensive mothering ideology will predict work-family conflict. Chapter Two will provide an extensive overview of the literature on work-family conflict and intensive mothering.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

As described in Chapter One, women have increased challenges when deciding to work outside of the home (Dey & Hill, 2007; Tower & Alkadry, 2008). Women who choose to have both a family and career may retain traditional roles in the home, which can cause difficulties with balance both work and family life. This difficulty balancing both work and family can cause conflict to arise and negatively affect an individual's ability to feel successful in both the work and home environment (Lachance-Grzela & Buchard, 2010; Polasky & Holahan, 1998;).

As described prior, motherhood has been reinforced as a primary identity for women and depicted as a natural and fulfilling process (Chodorow, 1990; Marshall & Wollett, 2000; McMahon, 1995). Women tend to go through self-evaluation and transitional period when becoming a mother. This self-evaluation and transitional period vary for women (Laney et al., 2015). Beliefs regarding motherhood is a significant contributor to the self-evaluation period and modification of motherhood identity (Ussher, 1989; Weaver & Ussher, 1997). This self-evaluation includes decisions about care for children and working outside of the home. This period of transition can have a positive and negative impact on the mother (Laney et al., 2015; Smith, 1994; Weaver & Usser, 1997).

Engaging in a career and having a family provides women with both rewards and stresses despite identified ideology (Barnett & Marshall, 1991; Polasky & Holahan, 1998; Zhou & Buehler, 2016). The literature has documented conflict occurring between work and family life when strains between time and energy are experienced (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). While examining this conflict between work and family life, role theory scholars suggest an individual

has only a limited amount of time and energy to devote to these roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). For women who have role obligations in both home and work domains, time and energy is spread between the roles (Goode, 1960). With the added pressure to be the ideal mother, home life can easily drain time and energy for women which could lead to work-family conflict.

Further, Life-span, Life-space theory identifies nine major roles that are typical in one's life including a child, student, leisure, citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, and annuitant (Super, 1980). Of these roles, worker and parent tend to be core roles of the population explored in this study. Role salience occurs when a woman feels invested, participates, and realize essential outcomes of her roles. Life roles interact in many ways which can be extensive, minimal, supportive, supplementary, compensatory, or neutral (Super, 1980). Within this study, the level of role salience mothers may have regarding their particular role as a worker or parent may influence the level of stress and conflict they may be experiencing between these roles. For example, when an individual is overly invested in her worker role, she may neglect her parent role and cause some strain in the home and vice versa.

Work-family Literature

Within the human relations field, the merging of work and family life has been an important topic and studied in various ways. Work-family enrichment, work-family balance, work-family spillover, work-family conflict are all constructs explored within the literature (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Marshall & Barnett, 1993). Each of these constructs is defined and examined a little differently depending on the researcher's conceptual framework.

Within recent years, there has been a focus on work-family enrichment. Work-family enrichment focuses on the positive aspects of combining work and family (Greenhaus & Powell,

2006). Some positive aspects of combining work and family include developmental, emotional, capital, and productivity improvements. Also, there appears to be a definite increase in individual functioning within the home and work environment (Marshall & Barnett, 1993; Zhou & Buehler, 2016). Supportive factors tend to predict work-family enrichment in both the family and work environment. In the work environment, these can include supervisor support, social support, job rewards, benefits for children, and work commitment. At the family and individual level, social support, maternal education, and extroversion are associated with higher work-family enrichment (Cinamon & Rich, 2010; Zhou & Buehler, 2016).

The work-family spillover is the transferring of experiences within the work and family domains (Bass, Butler, Gryzwacz, & Linney, 2009). In a sample of married workers (N=1,026) in Singapore, researchers examined the work-family spillover of emotions. Specifically, they examined marital distress, physical and mental health, and work satisfaction. Researchers utilized a structural equation modeling analysis. Results indicated that marital distress was a significant predictor of work satisfaction, health, and depressive symptoms. Further, depression was found to be an indirect link between marital distress and work satisfaction (Sandberg, Yorgason, Miller, & Hill, 2012). In another study, similar results showed significant correlations between experiencing happiness, anger, and anxiety at work and in turn experiencing these emotions at home (Matjasko & Feldman, 2006). It seems apparent that emotions associated with work can spill over and affect maternal mental health and emotions occurring at home can spill over and affect the work environment indicating a somewhat reciprocal relationship (Matjasko & Feldman, 2006; Sandberg et al., 2012).

Of interest of the current study, the focus is on the work-family conflict on working mothers. Primarily defined, a working mother is a female who is employed and legally

responsible for a least one child (Poduval & Poduval, 2009). As discussed previously, working mothers may experience a high level of stress, which may result in conflict between roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). Work-family conflict is multidimensional which includes work to family conflict and family to work conflict. Work to family conflict refers to the conflict that happens when the time devoted or strain created by a job interferes with the individual's ability to engage in tasks related to family roles or responsibilities (Netemery, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996; Voydanoff, 2005). Although these are often researched separately, they are interrelated, and both play essential roles in the work-family experiences of working mothers (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Rupert, Stevanovic, & Hunley, 2009). Family to work conflict refers to the conflict that happens when the time devoted or strain created by the family environment interferes with the individual's ability to engage effectively in job roles or responsibilities (Eby et al., 2005; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2009)

Work-Family Conflict

When women choose to have both family and a career, they often retain traditional roles within the home (Polasky & Holahan, 1998). Not only do women experience additional challenges in the workplace environment, but they also tend to be responsible for a significant amount of the childrearing and homemaking. The added challenges lead to increased challenges for mothers who feel societal and home pressures to continue to engage in stereotypical roles within the home (Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). These additional challenges can influence and make balancing work and family life more difficult (Polasky & Holahan, 1998). Within Super's theory, it might be evidence that the individual has too much structure in their environment, which may lead to negative consequences (Super, 1980). Attempting to achieve balance among these roles will elicit overall well-being and satisfaction (Niles et al., 2001).

In contrast, studies have shown significant benefits for mothers who pursue careers including more positive mental and physical health (Barnett & Marshall, 1991). However, research has also found the demands of having multiple roles can cause strain on mothers' well-being (Polasky & Holahan, 1998). One could hypothesize the need to have a successful career and family may place a strain on the individual, family, and work environment and could lead to difficulties in balancing work and family. Further, the societal influence and expectations on women to become the stereotypical good mother may impact feelings of being able to engage in work and home life successfully.

Researchers have found a decline in household labor delegation in mothers primarily due to increases in their education, working status, income and job autonomy (Lam, McHale & Crouter, 2012). Even though there has been a decrease in household labor delegations, mothers continue to perform more child-rearing and domestic work than fathers within the home, even when both parents are employed (Craig & Mullan, 2010). While reviewing the literature on mothers who work outside of the home, mothers who perform most of the domestic and child-rearing responsibilities in addition to their work duties may feel more stressed and overwhelmed (Stewart, 2013; Zhao, Settles & Sheng, 2011). This stress can interfere with work responsibilities and create a family to work conflict for mothers who work outside of the home (Kotila, Schopp-Sullivan, & Dush, 2013). Mothers who work outside of the home who experience a less supportive workplace and greater work demands may feel overwhelmed, which may increase work to family conflict (Rupert et al., 2009).

Furthermore, using previous data collected from the 2000 National Survey of Parents (NSP), researchers analyzed the amount and type of time spent with children and the effect mothers' feelings of work-family conflict (Milkie, Kendig, Nomaguchi & Denny, 2010). The

NSP utilized time diaries with a sample of 1,200 parents who resided with children younger than 18 years of age. Mothers who were employed and worked more than one hour per week outside the home participated by attending to questions regarding work-family balance. A negative association resulted; when there was an increase in time spent in more routine care including basic day-to-day care, there was a decrease in feelings of successfully balancing work and family. Therefore, when mothers felt they were spending a significant amount of time doing more routine homemaking they felt less successful in balancing work and family. Further, an interesting finding revealed when the mothers felt satisfied with their children's well-being, they indicated more balance between work and family life (Milkie et al., 2010).

In the study presented previously, a negative association with feelings of successfully balancing work and family and the number of hours worked a week. So, as the number of hours working outside the home increased, mothers' feelings of successfully balancing work and family decreased (Milkie et al., 2010). This finding mirrored results from other studies that found when the number of hours a mother spent working outside of the home decreased their feelings of successful balancing their ability to manage both their work and family life were affected negatively (Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011).

Looking at the work environment including hours worked per week and supportive factors, researchers have suggested these may play a part in women's ability to manage both their roles at home and work. For example, one study conducted on 756 women who were at least six months postpartum, and employed at least 10 hours a week, found that when women described their jobs as more inferior in quality expressed greater conflict between work and family life (Marshall & Tracy, 2009). Further, utilizing archival data from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Study of Early Child Care and Youth

Development (SECCYD) which is a longitudinal study of 1,364 families in 10 different sites, researchers examined the relationship of work intensity, work schedule, schedule flexibility, working from home, and work stress on depressive symptoms of 570 women who were 6-24 months postpartum. The results indicated work stress was associated with an increase in work-family conflict (Shepherd-Banigan, Bell, Basu, Booth-LaForce, & Harris, 2016).

Similarly, researchers found that when women endorsed working more hours per week conflicts balancing the demands between their work and family life increased. These conflicts were experienced as struggles with energy levels, time, and schedule management (Marshall & Tracey, 2009). Results suggested that an increase in hours worked outside the home may have increased conflicts in balancing demands between multiple roles. In similar studies focusing on work-family conflict and hours worked outside the home, researchers utilized archival data from the NICHD SECCYD found that mothers who were employed full-time endorsed higher levels of work-family conflict when compared with mothers who were employed part-time (Buehler & O'Brien, 2011).

These results provided evidence to the role theory, which suggests there is a limited amount of time and energy to spread between roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). When examining life structure, having too much or not enough structure can cause a host of concerns for an individual. In studies discussed prior, it appears as though some of the participants had struggled with too much structure, which then led to more conflict (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Marshall & Tracey, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011; Shepherd-Banigna et al., 2016).

At times, the conflict that occurs within the work and family domains may lead to more severe problems including mental health symptoms. It appears that some job-related demands

may affect conflict between work and life. In one study, researchers examined full-time working mothers physical and mental health outcomes related to work-family conflict and job demands. In one study, mothers were randomly selected from births occurring within a specific time. Ultimately, 179 women participated in the study and were surveyed at three different points in time, four months postpartum, eight months postpartum, and 12 months postpartum (Carlson, Gryzywacz, Ferguson, Hunter, Clinch & Arcury, 2011).

Within this study, job demands were separated into two parts psychological and nonstandard work schedule. Psychological work demands refer to role conflict at work, work pressure, and work overload. Further, they examined if mothers' ability to control their schedule would buffer job demands as a potential protective factor. Results indicated a main effect between nonstandard work schedule and an increase in work-family conflict. There was not an association between psychological work demands and work-family conflict. However, psychological work demands had an association with work-family conflict but were moderated by having schedule control. Within this study, nonstandard work schedules were associated with more work-family conflict and having control over one's schedule was associated with the lessening of psychological work demands (Carlson et al., 2011).

To examine the reciprocal relationship between work-family conflict and maternal mental health, researchers examined the relationship across eight years of the family life cycle. Utilizing a systems framework, researchers utilized data from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) at five different time points 0-1 years, 2-3 years, 4-5 years, 6-7 years and 8-9 years (Westrupp, Strazdins, Martin, Cooklin, Zubrick, & Nicholson, 2016). Looking at the sample over the eight years, researchers utilized a strategic model approach to assess the reciprocal effect of psychological distress and work-family conflict. Results indicated

work-life conflict, and psychological distress continually influenced each other over time (Westrupp et al., 2016).

Utilizing the same data from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC), researchers looked specifically at mothers (n= 1,300) who were employed with an infant 12 months or younger with a mean age of 8.8 months. Specifically, they examined job quality and the impact on mental health symptoms (Cooklin, Canterford, Strazdin, & Nicholson, 2011). The job quality looked explicitly at favorable job conditions including job control, perceived job security, availability of flexible start and finish times, and the provision of family-related leave and maternal mental health. Logistic regression was utilized to examine the number of favorable job conditions on maternal mental health. As the number of favorable jobs conditions decreased, there were significantly more likely to report an increase in mental health symptoms. As a mother indicated poor job quality their mental health symptoms increased but was not impacted by the number of hours they worked per week. Further, results indicated no association between the number of hours a child was in non-maternal care or the type of childcare used for an infant with maternal mental health symptoms (Cooklin et al., 2011).

The demands between the work and home environment may increase conflict between the domains and could lead to more severe concerns including mental health symptoms. These domains may have potential supports to buffer demands; therefore, decrease work-family conflict. In one study, same-sex couples and the role of support in the work environment was examined. One study found supervisor support was negatively associated with work-to-family conflict as well as the mental health symptoms of anxiety and depression. So, participants indicating greater supervisor support endorsed less depressive and anxiety symptoms and less work to family conflict (Goldberg & Smith, 2013).

Job satisfaction and work-family conflict may be impacted by the use of workplace supports. In one study, researchers examined 234 couples who had children and worked outside of the home. Results indicated work-family conflict, and job satisfaction had different relationships to the utilization of support. Job satisfaction increased with the utilization of support and work-family decreased (Hammer, Neal, Newsom, Brockwood & Colton, 2005).

Researchers have found that one-fifth of all working Americans follow a nonstandard work which may include evening shifts, rotating shifts, weekend shifts, or overnight shifts (Presser & Ward, 2011). To further explore the connection between work-family conflict and work schedules, researchers set to explore work schedules, work-family conflict, and well-being between married couples and cohabiting couples (Liu, Wang, Keesler & Schneider, 2010). Like what other researchers have found, this study supported the notion that married couples experience a positive association between flexible work schedules and well-being. However, cohabiting couples identified increased work-family conflict related to nonstandard work schedules. Nonstandard work schedules were associated with lower levels of mental health as described as psychological distress, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction (Liu et al., 2010).

One area of increasing support for working mothers' life satisfaction has been an increase in the flexibility of their work schedules. There have been multiple studies that indicated flexibility in work schedules as a predictors of work-family conflict and mental health symptoms (Carson et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2010) This mirrors results from another study that found a nonflexible work schedule was associated with increased work-family conflict and associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms (Goodman & Crouter, 2009).

Flexibility and control over one's schedule may be a source of support for women, but there tend to be conflicting thoughts on nonstandard work schedules as being either a support or

a challenge (Buehler & O'Brien, 2011; Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Liu et al., 2010). In a study presented prior, researchers examined nonstandard work schedules. Mothers reported greater work-family conflict when they reported having a nonstandard work schedule (Carlson et al., 2011). Similarly, while looking at cohabiting same-sex couples an increase in the work-family conflict was associated with nonstandard work schedule (Liu et al., 2010).

In addition to the work schedule and flexibility, organizational support for the demands between home life and work life is demonstrated through supervisory relationship and coworkers (Greenhaus, Ziegert, & Allen, 2012). These relationships have been shown in several studies to result in more positive outcomes including lower work-family conflict and increase in job satisfaction (Kooek, Pichler, Doner & Hammer, 2011; Michel, Michelson, Pichler, & Cullen, 2010). In one particular study, researchers examined 1,719 nurses. They compared both temporary and permanent employees to evaluate whether organizational support benefits either groups equally. In that study, it found temporary and permanent employees who had low coworker support had an increase level of work-family conflict (Mauno & Ruokolainen, 2017).

Intensive Mothering Ideology

The previous sections examined current literature on work-family conflict. This section will explore the current research on the intensive mothering ideology. While examining the research on intensive mothering and working mothers many themes emerged. Specifically, this section will explore work status, mental health outcomes, and child outcomes.

Work Status

To develop a quantitative means for assessing Intensive Parenting Attitudes (IPAQ), researchers operationalized the definition of Intensive Mothering into five constructs including Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered (Hays, 1996; Liss et al.,

2013). Essentialism refers to the belief that women are better and inheritably driven to parent when compared to men. Fulfillment refers to the belief that parenting should be a fulfilling and rewarding experience. Stimulation refers to the belief that parents should cognitively stimulate their children. Challenging is the belief that parenting is difficult. Lastly, Child-Centered refers to the belief that children's needs should be the primary focus for parents (Liss, Schiffrin, Mackinstosh, Miles-Mclean, Erchull, 2013; Hayes, 1996).

Within a validation study of the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ), 595 mothers surveyed found varied results for mothers while looking at work status. Work status includes mothers who identified as stay-at-home, working full time, and working part-time. Results indicated that mothers who identified as working outside of the home and those who identified as stay-at-home both endorsed intensive parenting beliefs, but were different in their particular constructs with which they strongly identified. Working mothers endorsed the construct of Stimulating while the stay-at-home mothers endorsed the construct of mothering as being Challenging. Working mothers endorsed the need for their children to be consistently stimulated cognitively while stay-at-home mothers endorsed parenting as being a challenging experience. Both working and nonworking mothers endorsed the belief that parenting should be fulfilling and child-centered (Liss et al., 2013).

These reflected similar results from a qualitative study of 95 mothers who identified as stay-at-home mothers, part-time employed mothers, and full-time employed mothers. The purpose of the study was to explore the cultural and personal expectations of mothering, work-family balance, and working mother identity (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). Themes that emerged included accessibility, mother-child happiness, and separation of life domains (2006). Themes differed when looking at mother's employment. Stay-at-home mothers defined being a

“good mother” as one who is always available for their children, which is similar to the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Construct of Essentialism and Child-Centrism (Johnston & Swanson, 2006; Liss et al., 2013).

When examining participants who identified as stay-at-home mothers, part-time employed mothers, and full-time employed mothers, there appeared to be a cyclical nature of parenting ideology, the decision to work outside of the home, and development of identity (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). Mothers who chose to stay at home did so primarily because of their parenting ideology. In comparison, part-time and full-time employed mothers identified their decision to be employed shaped their parenting ideology, and in turn, their parenting ideology was influenced by their decision to work part-time or full-time outside of the home (Johnston & Swanson, 2006, 2007; Liss et al., 2015). Full-time working mothers must juggle both their work identity and intensive mothering expectations. One possible solution has been seen in full-time working mothers changing logistical ways in which they work. Examples of this occurred when mothers were able to bring children to work, and when schedules could change to accommodate children and their activities (Johnston & Swanson, 2007). This reflects similar results discussed in the previous section describing flexibility in work schedule as being a decisive factor in less work-family conflict (Buehler & O’Brien, 2011; Goodman & Crouter, 2009)

Mental Health Outcomes

Themes within the literature have brought an awareness that endorsement of intensive mothering can negatively impact maternal mental health (Liss, Schiffrin, & Rizzo, 2012; Murray 2015; Rizzo, Schiffrin, & Liss, 2013; Wall, 2010). Full-time employment challenges intensive mothering beliefs (Dillaway & Pare, 2008), and failure to meet behavioral expectations of

intensive mothering may generate feelings of guilt for mothers who have held on to conventional notions of the good mother (Hays, 1996).

One specific study examined 283 women's experience with pressures to be the ideal mother and its relationship to maternal mental health. Findings suggested that women who felt as though they needed to be a perfect experienced high level of stress and low levels of self-efficacy. When mother identified the pressure to be an ideal mother, they reported feeling guilty for not being perfect, experienced lower self-efficacy, high anxiety, and high levels of stress (Henderson, Harmon, & Newman, 2016). Similar research that described the consequences of engaging in intensive mothering practices included increased stress, exhaustion, anxiety, and guilt. These consequences ultimately led mothers to begin to challenge the effectiveness of these practices (Wall, 2010).

Further, while examining mental health outcomes related to intensive mothering ideology, another study utilized the IPAQ and conducted correlational analyses to determine if there were any relationship between intensive mothering beliefs and mental health symptoms (Rizzo et al., 2013).

The researchers examined 181 mothers who identified as having children five years of age or younger. Results indicated the IPAQ construct of Essentialism to be negatively correlated with life satisfaction and positively correlated with stress levels (Rizzo et al., 2013). As the mothers increased their endorsement of the belief that women are inherently better at parenting than men, their life satisfaction declined and stress levels increased. While looking at the construct of Challenging, researchers found it negatively correlated with life satisfaction and positively correlated with depression and stress levels. Similar to the construct of Essentialism,

as mothers' identified a higher belief that parenting is challenging their life satisfaction decreased and depressive and stress levels increased (Rizzo et al., 2013).

Further, the construct of Child-Centered was negatively correlated with levels of life satisfaction. This correlation indicated that as mothers endorsed higher beliefs that their child should be the priority in their life, their levels of life satisfaction decreased (Rizzo et al., 2013). These results reflected similar results presented prior. Mothers with the added pressure to be an ideal mother experienced more mental health symptoms (Henderson et al., 2016).

In addition to the correlational analyses described above, the examiners of the previously presented study examined if the constructs of the IPAQ predicted any of the maternal mental health symptoms. They utilized a hierarchical regression and controlled for perceived family social support. The significant results indicated that Essentialism predicted a decrease in overall life satisfaction and Challenging beliefs predicted depression and stress levels (Rizzo et al., 2013).

Emerging studies had explored the societal pressures of being an ideal mother even when an individual mother did not explicitly endorse these beliefs (Henderson et al., 2016). Further, feelings of shame and guilt were evident when women felt they did not live up to the good mother expectations (Liss et al., 2013). Conversely, researchers have explored the notion that engaging in intensive mothering practice may not be what is responsible for an increase in mental health symptoms, but rather a lack of support from others (Luthar & Ciciolla, 2015). The importance of support is described throughout the research on mental health.

As previously described, intensive mothering beliefs are examined in the context of maternal mental health. These studies have examined and found connections between intensive parenting constructs and high levels of stress and low levels of self-efficacy. Mothers identified

feeling guilty for not being perfect, experienced lower self-efficacy, high anxiety, and high levels of stress (Henderson et al., 2016; Liss et al., 2012; Murray 2015; Rizzo et al., 2013). Further mental health concerns included increased stress, exhaustion, anxiety, guilt, and questioning of parenting practices (Wall, 2010).

Child Outcomes

One rationale for the endorsement of intensive mothering is the belief that engaging in these beliefs is essential in the development of children's happiness, success, and overall health. One component of intensive mothering is child-centrism, in which the mother's life revolves around the child(ren) (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013; Wall, 2010).

There is extensive research to support the importance of parental involvement in child development, and such involvement promotes positive outcomes in both the mother and child (Ashton-James, Kushlev, & Dunn, 2013). Additionally, researchers have found that too much or too little involvement can lead to potentially harmful outcomes for children. Parental over-involvement has been associated with an overall more critical family environment and leading to relationship difficulties (Segrin, Woszidlo, Givertz, & Montgomery, 2013). The literature has proposed an optimal amount of parental involvement to achieve positive outcomes for parents and children. However, it is unclear as to what this optimal amount may be (Grant & Schwartz, 2011; Schiffrin, Liss, Miles-McLean, Geary, Erchull, & Tashner, 2014).

The clear majority of parents do not intentionally want to harm their child, and most engage in over parenting practices with the assumption that they are protecting their children. However, current research is showing significantly more negative than positive outcomes for children of over-involved parents (Segrin et al., 2013; Willoughby, Hersh, Padilla-Walker, & Nelson, 2015).

Intensive parenting constructs were examined on 241 parents to determine whether or not the intensive mothering beliefs led to more happiness and success (Schiffrin, Godfrey, Liss & Erchull, 2014). This study examined intensive mothering beliefs, anticipatory problem solving (APS), enrollment in activities, and developmental outcomes of participants' children with the purpose of examining if there is a correlation between parenting beliefs and behaviors and the development of the children (Schiffrin et al., 2014). Results indicated high scores on the IPAQ (scales described prior) scales of Child-Centered, Stimulation, and Challenging. Generally, mothers in this study identified the desire to have a Child-Centered environment which their children were intellectually stimulated, which predicted a likelihood of those mothers anticipating and solving problems for their children. Further, the more mothers identified with anticipating and solving problems for their children, that predicted the amount of structured activities children were engaged in. However, the increase in structured activities did not correlate with an increase in skills or happiness (Schiffrin et al., 2014). In this study and similar studies, there have been no correlations between intensive parenting ideology, anticipating and solving children's problems, and engaging in structured activities with an increase in the children's skill development or happiness. There are suggestions that these behaviors can lead to coping deficits and characterological issues in children (Segrin et al., 2015; Shiffrin et al., 2014).

Summary

According to the literature, motherhood, despite the identified ideology, has both rewards and struggles. Looking specifically at mothers who have balanced both career and motherhood, there can be a conflict that occurs between work and family (Buehler & O'Brien, 2011; Goodman & Crouter, 2009; Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Milkie et al., 2010; Shepherd-Banigan et al., 2016). An increase in research on women in the workforce and additional challenges they

may face is necessary (Dey & Hill, 2007; Tower & Alkadry, 2008). There is limited research about the challenges working mothers face in the workforce. It is essential to be able to research areas of vulnerability that can lead to work-family conflict and the potential impact the mental health of the mother. These challenges become more apparent when mothers receive pressures to engage in the social expectations of the good mother ideal.

The review of the literature provided a glimpse into the experiences of working mothers. Working mothers endorsed depressive, anxiety, and stress symptoms when they felt as though their work environment was not flexible, they were not satisfied in their work, and did not live up to the good mother ideology (Goldberg & Smith, 2013; Marshall & Tracey, 2009; Shepherd et al., 2016). Also, balancing work and life domains became difficult in situations where mothers felt as though they spent less time at home and in situations in which their time was filled with household duties (Milkie et al., 2010; Marshall & Tracey, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011).

In addition to stressors that may be present in work settings, the amount of time spent at home has been identified as impactful in mothers' feelings of balancing their roles. In one study, researchers found when the number of hours a mother spent working outside of the home their feelings of successful balancing their ability to manage both their work and family life was affected negatively (Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011). It was not investigated in this study, but one could hypothesize that impact of societal roles of mothers as the primary provider could have impacted their feelings of balancing their roles, leading to greater conflict. Further, it appears the endorsement of intensive mothering may lead to adverse mental health outcomes for mothers. As an added concern, the outcomes of the children did not appear to be of benefit when mothers had engaged in intensive mothering (Segrin et al., 2015; Shiffrin et al., 2014).

If a woman endorses intensive mothering or feels pressure to engage in intensive mothering ideology, the belief is the mother should be the primary caretaker who feels fulfilled, challenged, and is available at any time for their children (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). The pressure to adhere to these standards has been tough for women who are employed (Walls et al., 2016). It is the assumption that women will continue to endorse or feel pressure to endorse intensive mothering ideology even though these beliefs are not conducive to their life due to social pressure (Henderson et al., 2016). It is thought that the dissonance between underlying beliefs or assumptions of mothers and lived experience may cause work-family conflict for mothers (Henderson et al., 2016; Liss et al., 2013).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN & METHOD

Building off the initial work of Hayes (1996) and a quantitative measure of intensive mothering, the IPAQ, the current study examined the relationship between intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered) and work-family conflict. The current study extends the work on intensive mothering by exploring the five constructs and their relationship between work-family conflict for mothers who work outside of the home. Further, the study examined endorsement of the five constructs and whether they could predict conflict between work and family domains. This chapter will discuss the quantitative descriptive correlational research design and methodology. Specifically, this chapter will provide details including participants, instruments, procedures, research questions, and data analysis.

Participants

Participants consisted of a convenience sample of individuals who self-identified as mothers who worked outside of the home. Recruitment occurred by contacting schools, daycares, and childcare resource centers in Minnesota and Iowa via phone and email (Appendix A). The initial contact provided an overview of the study and request for assistance in the protocol. This researcher proposed three different means of distribution of the survey including hard copy, email, and social media. The school and daycare administration identified which means would work best for their situation. Final recruitment included one school district in northwest Iowa, nine daycare facilities in southern Minnesota and northwest Iowa, and the child care resources and referral program that oversees all registered childcare in the state of Iowa. The recruitment sites utilized either email or social media to distribute the survey.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria. The current study focused on mothers who worked outside of the home. The recruitment email and social media post provided a brief overview of the study which included the invitation for mothers who worked outside of the home to complete the survey. Two questions were embedded in the survey to assist in the exclusion process. These included “do you work outside of the home?” and “do you have children 18 and under who currently reside with you?” If participants answered no to these questions, they were directed to the end of the survey and excluded from the analysis.

Sample Size. When determining the appropriate sample size, many factors were considered including the statistical test being used, level of confidence, power, number of predictors, and effect size (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). For this study, the level of significance was $\alpha = .05$. The power determined was .80. The study used correlations and multiple regressions to analyze research questions. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) provided the following equation for determining sample size utilizing a multiple regression with a significance of .05 and power of .80: $N \geq 50 + 8m$ (predictor variables). For this study, there will be five predictor variables. A minimum number of 90 participants was needed to complete the study. The goal was to gain more than 90 to account for missing data and outliers. The minimum number of participants was 90; however, this study recruited 548 participants. After data cleaning and screening, the final sample consisted of 412 participants whom all identified themselves as mothers who work outside of the home.

Instruments

This study utilized two previously developed instruments to measure intensive mothering ideology and work-family conflict. A request to use the instruments were gained through the appropriate means identified in the original articles (Carlson et al., 2000; Liss et al., 2013). The

recruitment sites requested to distribute the instruments digitally. Instruments were formatted and distributed through an online survey management program, Qualtrics.

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics were gathered to gain information to complete the study. Participants were asked to report their age in years, identified gender, the highest level of education, marital status, ethnic and racial identity, income level, and number of children. Also, participants self-identified work status, work hours, flexibility, and schedule. Specific questions can be reviewed on the demographic questionnaire in Appendix C.

The final sample consisted of 412 participants. The age of the mothers ranged from 21 to 59 with a mean age of 36.82 years ($SD = 6.90$). The majority of the mothers (97.57%) self-reported their ethnicity as White/Caucasian ($n = 402$), .01% Hispanic or Latina ($n = 4$), .01% Asian ($n = 4$), .01% Other ($n = 5$), .002% American Indian/Alaska Native ($n = 1$), .002% Black/African American ($n = 1$). Participants resided 49% in urban cluster areas, 49.8% in rural areas, and 10% in urban areas and 1.2% did indicate their residence.

The majority of the mothers reported being married or in a domestic partnership (80.3%), 10.4% were divorced, 5.6% were single (never married), 1.2% widowed, 1.2% separated, 1.0% other, .02% did not indicate their status. For this sample, the mean number of children was 2.28 ($SD = .97$). The Median income was \$70,000-80,000. Of the mothers who completed the survey, 36.9% of participant's had a Bachelor's degree, 25.9% had an Associate's Degree, 17.1% had a High School/GED, 17.1% had a Master's Degree, 2.7% Doctoral Degree, and .2% less than high school degree.

Participants self-reported the number of hours worked outside of the home: 70.9% ($n = 292$) worked outside of the home for 40 or more hours per week, 18.9% ($n = 78$) worked 30-39

hours, 6.8% ($n= 28$) worked 20-30 hours, 1.9% ($n= 8$) worked 10-20 hours per week, 1.5% ($n= 6$) worked 1-10 hours per week. In addition to the number of hours worked per week, 58.2% ($n= 239$) identified they felt their work schedule was flexible, while 41.2 % ($n= 172$) identified that it was not, .2 did not indicate ($n= 1$). The majority of participant's (86.2%) identified working standard hours while the other endorsed working nonstandard shifts (13.8%).

Intensive Mothering

Intensive mothering ideology is a crucial variable explored in this study. It was measured utilizing the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ) developed out of Hays' (1996) ideology of intensive mothering. The IPAQ is a 25-item measure that operationalized the intensive mothering ideology into five scales including Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenge, and Child-Centered (Liss et al., 2013).

Essentialism is explained as the belief that women are better at parenting when compared to men. Fulfillment refers to the belief that parenting should be a fulfilling and rewarding experience. Stimulation is the belief that parents should cognitively stimulate their children. Challenging is the belief that parenting is a stressful experience. Lastly, Child-Centered refers to the belief that children's needs should be the primary focus for parents (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013).

For each of the 25 items, participants rated each on a Likert-type scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Essentialism is composed of eight items with two reversed scored (i.e., "Although fathers are important, ultimately children need mothers more"). Fulfillment has four items with one reversed scored (i.e., "Being a parent brings a person the greatest joy he or she can experience"). Stimulation is composed of four items (i.e., "It is important for children to be involved in classes, lessons, and activities that engage and stimulate them"). Challenging

consists of six items (i.e., “Parents never get a mental break from their children, even when they are physically apart”). Lastly, Child-Centered is made up of three items (i.e. “Children should be the center of attention”). Each construct is scored by calculating the means of all items. The higher mean scores indicated greater endorsements of the particular intensive parenting belief. Currently, there are no established benchmarks for scores (Liss et al., 2013).

Tests for validity and reliability were conducted during the initial and subsequent studies. During the validation study, the IPAQ indicated having support for construct validity. The study measured the relationship between the IPAQ (Liss et al., 2013) and Parental Investment in the Child Questionnaire (PIC) (Bradley et al., 1997), which is a measure of parental investment and identified as a measure of intensive mothering (Bradley, 1998; Hays, 1996). The most significant difference between the IPAQ and PIC is that the IPAQ measures attitudes and PIC measures behaviors (Bradley et al., 1997; Liss et al., 2013).

Further, internal consistency reliability of the scales was estimated with Cronbach’s alphas. Alphas for the five scales from the validation study were $\alpha = .85$ for Essentialism, $\alpha = .77$ for Fulfillment, $\alpha = .64$ for Stimulation, $\alpha = .76$ for Challenging, $\alpha = .70$ for Child-Centered (Liss et al., 2012). Other studies in which the IPAQ was utilized found Cronbach’s alphas ranging from $\alpha = .77$ to $.85$ for Essentialism, $\alpha = .69-.79$ for Fulfillment, $\alpha = .58-.67$ for Stimulation, $\alpha = .69-.73$ for Challenging, and $\alpha = .61$ to $.75$ for Child-Centered (Liss et al., 2013; Rizzo et al., 2013; Schiffrin et al., 2014). For the current study, internal consistency reliability of the scales were Essentialism $\alpha = .82$, Fulfillment $\alpha = .73$, Stimulation $\alpha = .46$, Challenging $\alpha = .60$, and Child-Centered $\alpha = .73$.

Work-family Conflict

The second key variable in the study was work-family conflict. The Work-Family Conflict Scale was utilized and is an 18-item scale developed by Carlson et al., (2000). The scale is measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) with a low score indicating low conflict. The measure consists of two subscales that measures work to the family direction of conflict and family to work direction of the conflict. Also, the scale offers the researcher the ability to measure dimensions of the two subscales of work-family conflict including time-based interference, strain-based interference, and behavior-based interference (Carlson et al., 2000).

When examining work to family direction of conflict, an example of a time-based work interference includes “My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like.” A strain-based work interference includes “When I get home from work I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/responsibilities.” A behavior-based work interference includes “Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at work would be counterproductive at home” (Carlson et al., 2000).

When examining family to work direction of conflict, a time-based family to work interference includes “The time I spend on family responsibilities often interfere with my work responsibilities.” Strain-based family interference includes “Due to stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work.” Behavior-based family interference includes “The behaviors that work for me at home do not seem to be effective at work” (Carlson et al., 2000).

Validity and reliability were measured during the initial and subsequent studies. Discriminant validity was assessed on two different samples. The initial study reported a comparison study of three other types of work-family conflict to which they identified as a three-

factor model, two-factor model, and a one-factor model. Results from the confirmatory factor analysis found correlations ranging from .24-.83 with two above .60 (Carlson et al., 2000).

Further, Cronbach's alpha for the validation study was .87 for time-based work to family conflict, .79 for time-based family to work conflict, .85 strain-based work to family conflict, .87 strain-based family-to-work conflict, .78 behavior based work to family conflict, and .85 for behavior-based family to work conflict (Carlson et al., 2000). In another study reviewed, Cronbach's alpha for the work to family conflict direction of conflict was .91. The Cronbach's alpha for the family-to-work direction of conflict was .92 (Carlson, Grzywacz & Zivnuska, 2009).

The internal consistency for each scale in the current study were: work to family conflict $\alpha = .85$, family to work conflict $\alpha = .83$, time-based work to family conflict $\alpha = .83$, time-based family to work conflict $\alpha = .80$, strain-based work to family conflict $\alpha = .86$, strain-based family to work conflict $\alpha = .90$, behavior-based work to family conflict $\alpha = .80$, behavior-based family to work conflict $\alpha = .86$.

Procedure

The current study is a quantitative descriptive correlational research design and methodology. A descriptive correlational study is a nonexperimental design utilized to examine relationships between variables without changing anything within the environment (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). This study utilizes a cross-sectional approach in which there will be a one-time interaction with participants using an online survey (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017).

Participants consisted of a convenience sample of individuals who self-identified as mothers who work outside of the home. Participants were recruited through schools and

daycares in southern Minnesota and northwest Iowa. Recruitment occurred by contacting schools and daycares by phone and email to provide them with information regarding the proposed study. This researcher proposed three different means of distribution of the survey including hard copy, email, and social media. The school and daycare administrators identified which means would work best for their situation. All the sites utilized either email or social media to distribute the survey. This researcher provided an email and social media post containing a general overview of the study, link to the online survey, and a message to re-post and/or email to others interested (Appendix A). Participants were able to click on a link which took them to the informed consent (Appendix B). Once they reviewed, participants were able to complete the survey.

The online social media message was “I am looking for volunteers to complete a survey regarding the experience of a mother who works outside of the home. If you are a mother and work outside of the home, please click the link below to complete the survey. The completion of the survey should take around 10-15 minutes. Complete the entire survey for a chance to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. Please share this information with anyone who might be interested!”

The email message was “Good Morning, my name is Casey Baker, and I am a doctoral candidate at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am looking for volunteers to complete a survey on experiences of being a mother who works outside of the home. If you are a mother and work outside of the home, please click the link below to complete the survey. The survey should take around 10-15 minutes to complete. Complete the entire survey for a chance to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. Please share this information with anyone who might be interested!”

Potential participants were able to click on a link that brought them to the informed consent page. The informed consent (Appendix B) outlined the purpose of the study, benefits,

risks, and contact information of the researcher. Once the participants read this thoroughly, they clicked on a link indicating they gave consent and would like to complete the study.

Participants then completed the survey. At the completion of the survey, participants were asked to provide their email address to be entered for a chance to win the \$50 gift card. Email addresses remained separate from survey data. At the end of the study, one winner was randomly selected to receive the gift card.

Research Questions

This study extends previous research, as it not only utilizes a quantifiable measure to assess intensive mothering, but it explores the relationship between intensive mothering and work-family conflict. Further, this study attempts to explore if the endorsement of intensive mothering constructs can predict work-family conflict. The study focused specifically on mothers who worked outside of the home. Two research questions guide this study.

RQ 1: What is the relationship between endorsement of intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) and two direction and six dimensions of work-family conflict?

H1: It is hypothesized that the endorsement of intensive mothering will be strongly associated with work-family conflict. Specifically, the time-based and strain-based interference. Reviewing the information on life-span, life-space theory and life structure, the thought that having too little or too much life structure will become problematic in one's life. Intensive mothering endorses constant stimulation and the mother being the sole provider which can cause more time and strain when balancing both the mother and worker role (Hays, 1996).

RQ 2: Does the endorsement of intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) predict family-to-work and work-to-family direction of conflict in women who work outside of the home?

H2: It is hypothesized that the intensive mothering constructs of Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered will predict family-to-work direction conflict and work-to-family direction of the conflict. The engagement of intensive mothering tends to require a significant amount of time and energy. Mothers who engage in intensive mothering beliefs and work outside of the home engage in multiple roles. Role theory suggests that there is a limited amount of time and energy that can be spread between roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). With the added demands of intensive mothering ideology, a significant amount of time and energy is devoted to family life. Especially Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered, which condones that mothers should be the primary caretakers who should prioritize her children's needs over her own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). With large demands in the home domain, mother's energy and time may increase at home and lead to less energy and time to use at work. This role strain may lead to conflict between the domains.

Further, it is hypothesized that the intensive mothering constructs of Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered will predict the work-to-family direction of the conflict. The engagement of intensive mothering tends to require a significant amount of time and energy. Depending on the individual's job, work can require a significant amount of time and energy. With both the home and work roles, Role theory suggests that there is a limited amount of time and energy that can be spread between roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). With the added demands of intensive mothering ideology, a significant amount of time and energy is devoted to family life. Especially Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and

Child-Centered, which condones that mothers should be the primary caretakers who should prioritize her children's needs over her own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). The conflict may occur when the mother has a career and has to divided time and energy into multiple demanding roles. The more a mother devotes time and energy into work may lead to less time and energy at home and thus cause conflict.

Data Analysis

Data were screened using the recommendations outlined by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and the appropriate steps were conducted to manage missing data and outliers. Further, an initial analysis was conducted to test for assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017).

Normality is the assumption that each variable is normally distributed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). To assess normality, a scatterplot was utilized for each variable. This provided a visual representation of whether or not normality had been violated. Further, Skewness and Kurtosis will evaluate the symmetry and peakedness of the distribution. These assess if the assumption of a normal distribution has been violated (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017).

Linearity is the assumption that there is a linear relationship between two variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). To assess linearity, residual plots were utilized (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). Nonlinearity will be shown by a curved pattern on the residual plot with a linear relationship fall along the zero line (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Lastly, homoscedasticity is the assumption that the variance around the regression line is roughly similar for all values of the predictor variable (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). Bivariate scatterplots were used to assess homoscedasticity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Further, descriptive statistics were conducted and reported on to analyze the frequency of responses as well as measures of central tendency, variability, and relationships between variables. This will provide an overall range of test scores and what might be strongly and least actively endorsed. This is explained further in Chapter 4.

Research Question One

What is the relationship between endorsement of intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) and two direction and six dimensions of work-family conflict?

Statistical Test. This research question will be measuring the relationship between two or more variables. Pearson r will test this question as it is the most commonly used correlation statistic, which uses interval or ratio data (Mertler & Vannatta, 2017). Specifically, a correlation matrix will be utilized to assess the relationship between the pairings of each variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Variables. The variables that will be measured include the five subscales of the IPAQ: Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered. Further, the six dimensions of work-family conflict including work-to-family time-based interference, family-to-work time-based interference, work-to-family strain-based interference, family-to-work strain-based interference, work-to-family behavior-based interference, and family-to-work behavior-based interference.

Research Question Two

Does the endorsement of intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) predict family-to-work and work-to-family direction conflict in women who work outside of the home?

Statistical Test. To test this hypothesis, a correlation matrix with the predictor variables will be initially be reviewed to address multicollinearity (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). Following this, two simultaneous multiple regressions were utilized. Within a simultaneous multiple regression, each of the independent variables is entered in the equation at once. Within the literature on work-family conflict for mothers, there was no evidence to suggest the need to utilize a hierarchical or stepwise multiple regression (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Variables. The predictor variables include four subscale scores of the IPAQ including Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered and the criterion variable is family-to-work and work-to-family direction of the conflict.

Summary

Chapter Three provided an overview of the research design and method utilized in the current study. Specifically, this chapter reviewed participants, instruments, procedures, research questions, and data analysis. The purpose of this dissertation is to extend the work of intensive mothering and work-family conflict. It goes beyond the most current literature because it examines the endorsement of intensive mothering with mothers who work outside of the home. It focuses on the relationships between intensive mothering constructs and two directions and the six dimensions of work-family conflict. Further, this study examined whether intensive mothering constructs can predict work to the family direction of conflict or family to work direction of the conflict.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Introduction

Chapter 4 will cover data cleaning procedures, descriptive statistics, assumptions of the test statistics, and findings of the data analysis. The current study used a quantitative methodology to examine the relationship between intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered) and work-family conflict. Qualtrics was utilized to develop an anonymous online link to recruit and record data from participants. Once the study had concluded, data was exported into IBM SPSS 23 for screening and analysis.

Pre-Analysis Data Screening and Scoring

As reported in Chapter 3, data were screened and cleaned using the recommendations outlined by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) and Mertler and Reinhart (2017). The current study utilized a multivariate statistical method, reviewing the raw data for missing data, outliers, and testing the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity are required before analysis.

Missing data

Given the measures used to assess work-life conflict and intensive mothering scales all consisted of few items, if a participant left even one item blank, it would result in a large percentage of the test left unanswered. All potential participants, $n= 548$, were logged into Qualtrics after clicking on the link. Of the 548, 96 were excluded due to not meeting inclusion criteria of working outside of the home and having children living within the home. A total of 36 participants left at least one item blank on the work-life conflict or intensive mothering scales; thus, they were dropped from the final sample.

Outliers

To assess for outliers, the researcher examined frequencies, scatterplots, and z scores. Through this, four participants were removed from the final sample. The final sample consisted of 412 individuals who self-identified as mothers who work outside of the home.

Scoring

The next step in the process was scoring of the measures. Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ) is a 25-item measure with three items needing reversed scored. Per the authors' instructions, all the items were scored by calculating the means of all items for each construct (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered). The higher scores indicated greater endorsements of the intensive parenting construct (Liss et al., 2013). Lower scores indicated less endorsement. At this time, there were no specific benchmarks established.

Internal consistency of the scales was estimated with Cronbach's alphas. For the current study, internal consistency for each scale was Essentialism $\alpha = .82$, Fulfillment $\alpha = .73$, Stimulation $\alpha = .46$, Challenging $\alpha = .60$, and Child-Centered $\alpha = .73$. Essentialism, Fulfillment, and Child-Centered were all above the acceptable range of $\alpha = .70$. Stimulation and Challenging were in the unacceptable range for internal consistency.

An 18-item work-family conflict scale developed by Carlson et al., (2000) was utilized for this study. The scale consists of two subscales that measure the work-to-family direction of conflict and family-to-work direction of the conflict. Also, the scale offers the researcher the ability to measure dimensions of the two subscales of work-family conflict including time-based interference, strain-based interference, and behavior-based interference (Carlson et al., 2000). Per the authors' instructions, means were calculated for both the two subscales and then again for

each of the six dimensions. The higher scores indicated a greater endorsement of the subscale or dimension. Similarly, with the IPAQ, no specific benchmarks have been established.

Internal consistency of the scales was estimated with Cronbach's alphas. The internal consistency for each scale in the current study for were: work to family conflict $\alpha = .85$, family to work conflict $\alpha = .83$, time-based work to family conflict $\alpha = .83$, time-based family to work conflict $\alpha = .80$, strain-based work to family conflict $\alpha = .86$, strain-based family to work conflict $\alpha = .90$, behavior-based work to family conflict $\alpha = .80$, behavior-based family to work conflict $\alpha = .86$. All scales were above the acceptable range of $\alpha = .70$.

Normality

A normal probability plot, *normal Q-Q plot*, was utilized for each variable to provide a visual representation of whether normality had been violated. With this sample, each variable resembled a straight line, indicating normally distributed data. Each of the variables was within acceptable limits for skewness and kurtosis.

Linearity, Homoscedasticity

To assess the assumption of linearity and homoscedasticity, residual plots were utilized (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). Nonlinearity is shown by a curved pattern on the residual plot with a linear relationship fall along the zero line. Heteroscedasticity results in clusters on the right or left side (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Residual plots were generally in the middle and free from a curved pattern or clusters on either the right or left side. Because extreme clustering is not displayed, it is concluded that the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity for each of these variables were not violated.

Multicollinearity

Because a multiple regression is being utilized in this study, multicollinearity needs to be assessed before analysis. Multicollinearity occurs when the independent variables are highly correlated with each other with an $r = .9$ or higher. The correlation matrix was reviewed to address multicollinearity with the predictor variables (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). Because each of these variables is scales within the same instrument, it is expected there to be some intercorrelations between the five predictor variables. The highest of the correlations were between Child-Centered and Fulfillment with $r = .44$, which indicates a small-medium correlation and no violation of the assumption of multicollinearity.

Descriptive Statistics

Before running test statistics, descriptive statistics of the variables, five intensive mothering constructs, and the two directions and six dimensions of work-family conflicts, such as means, standard deviations, kurtosis, and skewness were obtained. This provided an overall range of mean scores and what might be strongly and least strongly endorsed (Table 2).

Intensive Mothering

The IPAQ consists of 25 items, which are broken down into five scales. Skewness and kurtosis of each variable are within appropriate limits. These scales include Child-Centered ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.02$), Challenging ($M = 4.11$, $SD = .72$), Stimulation ($M = 4.96$, $SD = .62$), Fulfillment ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .90$), and Essentialism ($M = 2.28$, $SD = .78$). The higher scores indicated greater endorsements of each scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) (Liss et al., 2013).

Examining these scores a bit further, mothers who worked 1-10 hours per week ($n = 6$) identified a mean score of 3.67 on Child-Centered, 4.17 on Challenging, 4.92 on Stimulation, 4.71 on Fulfillment, and 2.54 on Essentialism. Mothers working 10-20 hours per week ($n = 8$) identified mean scores of 2.87 on Child-Centered, 4.12 on Challenging, 4.66 on Stimulation,

4.12 on Fulfillment, 2.05 on Essentialism. Mothers who worked 20-30 hours per week ($n= 28$) had mean scores of 3.33 on Child-Centered, 3.99 on Challenging, 4.85 on Stimulation, 4.27 on Fulfillment, and 2.53 on Essentialism. Mothers working 30-39 hours per week ($n= 78$) reported mean scores of 3.67 on Child-Centered, 4.06 on Challenging, 4.97 on Stimulation, 4.47 on Fulfillment, 2.35 on Essentialism. Mothers who worked outside of the home 40+ hours ($n= 292$) had mean scores of 3.34 on Child-Centered, 4.13 on Challenging, 4.98 on Stimulation, 4.49 on Fulfillment, and 2.25 on Essentialism. Looking at hours worked outside of the home results, a few differences stood out between mothers. Mothers who worked outside of the home 10-20 hours per week were less likely to endorse Child-Centered, Stimulation, and Essentialism beliefs. Mothers who worked outside of the home 1-10 hours per week endorsed slightly higher Fulfillment and Essentialism beliefs.

Mothers who endorsed their highest level of education as being high school/GED ($n= 70$) reported a mean score of 3.67 on Child-Centered, 3.99 on Challenging, 4.99 on Stimulation, 4.74 on Fulfillment, and 2.41 on Essentialism. Mothers whose highest level of education was an associate degree ($n= 105$) reported a mean score of 3.55 on Child-Centered, 4.11 on Challenging, 5.03 on Stimulation, 4.57 on Fulfillment, and 2.32 on Essentialism. Mothers whose highest level of education was a bachelor's degree ($n= 151$) reported a mean score of 3.3 on Child-Centered, 4.16 on Challenging, 4.88 on Stimulation, 4.33 on Fulfillment, and 2.30 on Essentialism. Mothers whose highest level of education was a master's degree ($n= 70$) reported a mean score of 3.09 on Child-Centered, 4.18 on Challenging, 5.02 on Stimulation, 4.37 on Fulfillment, and 2.20 on Essentialism. Mothers whose highest level of education was a doctoral degree ($n=11$) reported a mean score of 3.03 on Child-Centered, 3.64 on Challenging, 4.75 on Stimulation, 4.18 on Fulfillment, and 1.84 on Essentialism.

Within this sample, Mothers with bachelor's degrees and lower endorsed slightly higher Child-Centered beliefs. Mothers with doctoral degrees had the lower endorsement of Challenging, Stimulation, Fulfillment, and Essentialism beliefs. Overall, as the level of education increased endorsement of Child-Centered, Fulfillment, and Essentialism decreased.

The current study had a large portion of mothers from rural and urban clusters. Mothers who identified they resided in a rural community ($n= 164$) reported a mean score of 3.43 on Child-Centered, 4.07 on Challenging, 4.91 on Stimulation, 4.44 on Fulfillment, and 2.25 on Essentialism. Mothers who identified residing in an urban cluster ($n= 202$) reported a mean score of 3.39 on Child-Centered, 4.14 on Challenging, 5.00 on Stimulation, 4.53 on Fulfillment, and 2.33 on Essentialism. Mothers who identified living in an urban area ($n= 41$) reported a mean score of 3.27 on Child-Centered, on 4.14 Challenging, 4.91 on Stimulation, 4.30 on Fulfillment, and 2.23 on Essentialism. Rural mothers endorsed higher levels of Child-Centered beliefs and lower endorsement levels of Challenging beliefs. Urban others endorsed lower fulfillment beliefs.

Work-Family Conflict

Work-Family Conflict Scale consists of two subscales that measures of the direction of conflict as well as the six dimensions of conflict. There are 18 questions ranging from zero to five scale, zero indicating strong disagreement with conflict and five indicating strong agreement with conflict. (Carlson et al., 2000). Descriptive statistics of these scales and dimensions include work to family direction of conflict ($M= 2.62$, $SD= .70$), family to work direction of conflict ($M= 2.38$, $SD= .63$), time-based work to family conflict ($M= 2.74$, $SD= .96$), time-based family to work conflict ($M= 2.40$, $SD= .84$), strain-based work to family conflict ($M= 2.09$, $SD= .72$), strain-based family to work conflict ($M= 2.30$, $SD= .88$), behavior-based work to family conflict

($M= 2.35$, $SD= .79$), behavior-based family to work conflict ($M= 2.44$, $SD= .81$). The higher scores indicated a greater endorsement of each scale: Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Skewness and kurtosis of each variable are within appropriate limits.

Looking at work schedule flexibility, mothers who identified their work schedule as flexible ($n= 239$) reported a mean of 2.52 on the work-to-family direction of conflict and family-to-work direction of conflict of 2.37. Mothers who reported that their work schedule was not flexible ($n= 172$) reported a mean of 2.76 on the work-to-family direction of conflict and family-to-work direction of conflict of 2.35. While just examining the means, mothers who reported their schedules as flexible identified a slightly lower work-to-family direction of the conflict.

Examining types of hours worked revealed similar results. Mothers were able to indicate whether they work standard (dayshift) hours or nonstandard (evenings, overnights, weekends, etc.) hours. Within this sample, mothers who endorsed standard hours ($n= 355$) reported a mean of 2.59 on the work-to-family direction of conflict and 2.38 on the family-to-work direction of the conflict. Mothers who endorsed nonstandard hours ($n= 57$) reported a mean of 2.84 on the work-to-family direction of conflict and 2.28 on the family-to-work direction of the conflict. Looking that the means, mothers who endorsed nonstandard hours endorsed higher levels of the work-to-family direction of conflict and slightly lower levels of the family-to-work direction of the conflict.

Mothers who reported working 1-10 hours per week ($n=6$) reported a mean of 2.35 on the family-to-work direction of conflict and 2.37 on the work-to-family direction of the conflict. Mothers who reported working 10-20 hours per week ($n=8$) reported a mean of 2.50 on the family-to-work direction of conflict and 2.19 on the work-to-family direction of the conflict. Mothers who reported working 20-30 hours per week ($n=28$) reported a mean of 2.25 on the

family-to-work direction of conflict and 2.33 on the work-to-family direction of the conflict. Mothers who reported working 30-39 hours per week ($n=78$) reported a mean of 2.45 on the family-to-work direction of conflict and 2.64 on the work-to-family direction of the conflict. Mothers who reported working 40+ hours per week ($n=292$) reported a mean of 2.35 on the family-to-work direction of conflict and 2.66 on the work-to-family direction of the conflict. A couple of conclusions are drawn from the results presented. While looking at the work-to-family direction of conflict, mothers working 30+ hours per week reported higher levels of conflict.

Research Question One

What is the relationship between endorsement of intensive parenting constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) and the two direction and six dimensions of work-family conflict?

Findings of Research Question One

A correlation matrix was utilized to assess the relationship between each variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The results showed several statistically significant correlations between the variables, but many of these correlations were relatively small. For this study, Cohen's standard was utilized to evaluate the correlation coefficient to determine the strength of the relationship. Correlations reflect the degree of relatedness among variables and can range from -1.0 to 1.0 . Correlational coefficients between $.10$ and $.29$ indicate a small-weak relationship, coefficients between $.30$ and $.49$ represent a medium relationship, and coefficients of $.50$ and above represents a large relationship (Cohen, 1988).

The Essentialism scale had statistically significant correlations with all eight variables: work-to-family conflict $r=.18$, $p<.000$; family-to-work conflict $r=.28$, $p<.000$, time-based work-to-family conflict $r=.13$, $p<.006$; time-based family-to-work conflict $r=.19$, $p<.000$;

strain-based work-to-family conflict $r = .15$, $p < .003$, strain-based family-to-work conflict $r = .28$, $p < .000$; behavior-based work-to-family conflict $r = .16$, $p < .001$; behavior-based family-to-work conflict $r = .15$, $p < .003$, These correlations were positive in nature so, as the endorsement for essentialism increased or decreased, so did the eight work to family conflict variables. Although these scales showed statistically significant results, the relationships between the variables were small. With highest correlations coming with essentialism and family-to-work direction of conflict and strain-based family-to-work conflict.

The Fulfillment scale correlated statistically significant with three of the work-family conflict variables: family-to-work conflict $r = -.16$, $p < .001$; strain-based work-to-family conflict $r = -.21$ $p < .014$, strain-based family-to-work conflict $r = -.20$, $p < .000$. These were negative relationships, so as the fulfillment scale increased or decreased the four work-to-family conflict variables did the opposite. The Stimulation scale correlated statistically significant with one of the work-family conflict variables: behavior-based work-to-family conflict $r = -.12$, $p < .012$. Like the Fulfillment scale, the Stimulation scale showed a negative relationship, so as the scores on the Stimulation scale increased or decreased the behavior-based work-to-family conflict scores did the opposite. Although these scales showed statistically significant results, the relationships between the variables were small.

The Challenging scale had statistically significant correlations with all eight variables: work-to-family conflict $r = .21$, $p < .000$; family-to-work conflict $r = .24$, $p < .000$, time-based work-to-family conflict $r = .15$, $p < .003$; time-based family-to-work conflict $r = .19$, $p < .000$; strain-based work-to-family conflict $r = .24$, $p < .000$, strain-based family-to-work conflict $r = .26$, $p < .000$; behavior-based work-to-family conflict $r = .12$, $p < .017$; behavior-based family-to-work conflict $r = .13$, $p < .009$. Although these scales showed statistically significant results, the

relationships between the variables were small. Surprisingly, Child-Centered scale had no relationship to any of the work-family conflict scales.

Research Question Two

Does the endorsement of intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) predict family-to-work direction or work-to-family direction of conflict in women who work outside of the home?

Findings of Research Question Two

A simultaneous multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine if the five scales of Intensive Parenting (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, Child-Centered) can predict family to work direction of conflict in women who work outside of the home. Because the literature did not provide a strong indication about which variables would create the best prediction equation, simultaneous multiple regression was chosen as the method. In simultaneous multiple regression, all independent variables are simultaneously entered into the analysis (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017).

The findings of the simultaneous multiple regression can be reviewed into three parts: model summary, ANOVA, and coefficients. These are all utilized in interpreting the findings of the multiple regression (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). As described prior, data were screened to identify missing data, outliers, and to evaluate test assumptions. The final sample size of $n=412$ was utilized in the multiple regression. Tables 4-6 display the information on the model summary, ANOVA, and Coefficients.

Model Summary, ANOVA summary, and Coefficients (Tables 4-6) indicate the overall model of the five predictor variables (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and

Child-Centered) predicts family-to-work life conflict, $R=.391$, $R^2=.153$, and $R^2 \text{ adj}=.142$, $F(5,406) = 14.64$, $p < .000$.

Often, beta values (β) or standardized regression coefficients are often utilized to create a prediction equation for the standardized variables. Beta values are used to compare the variables and are based upon z-scores with a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). A review of the beta weights in Table 6 shows only three variables appeared to have significant relationships with the dependent variable, Essentialism ($\beta = .248$, $t(406) = 5.21$, $p < .000$), Challenging ($\beta = .208$, $t(406) = 4.35$, $p < .000$), and Fulfillment ($\beta = -.175$, $t(406) = -3.87$, $p < .001$). Although the results of the multiple regression show a statically significant result, Essentialism, Challenging, and Fulfillment are relatively weak at predicting family-to-work conflict.

A second simultaneous multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine if the five scales of Intensive Parenting (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, Child-Centered) can predict the work-to-family direction of conflict in women who work outside of the home. As explained prior, literature did not provide a strong indication about which variables would create the best prediction equation; simultaneous multiple regression was chosen as the method. All independent variables were simultaneously entered into the analysis (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017).

Findings of the simultaneous multiple regression can be reviewed into three parts: model summary, ANOVA, and coefficients. These are all utilized in interpreting the findings of the multiple regression (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). As described in previous chapters, data were screened to identify missing data, outliers, and to evaluate test assumptions. The final sample

size of $n=413$. Tables 7-9 display the information on the model summary, ANOVA, and Coefficients.

Model Summary, ANOVA summary, and Coefficients (Tables 5-7) indicate that the overall model of the five predictor variables (essentialism, fulfillment, stimulation, challenging, and child-centered) predicts work-to-family conflict, $R=.274$, $R^2=.075$, and $R^2 \text{ adj}=.64$, $F(5,406) = 6.59$, $p < .000$. Although the results of the multiple regression show a statistically significant result, the predictor variables are relatively weak at predicting work-to-family conflict.

Often, beta values (β) or standardized regression coefficients are often utilized to create a prediction equation for the standardized variables. Beta values are used to compare the variables and are based upon z-scores with a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 (Mertler & Reinhart, 2017). A review of the beta weights in Table 9 specifies that only two variables appeared to have significant relationships with the dependent variable, Essentialism ($\beta = .149$, $t(406)=3.00$, $p < .003$), Challenging ($\beta = .192$, $t(406)=3.85$, $p < .000$). Although the results of the multiple regression show a statically significant result, Essentialism and Challenging are relatively weak at predicting work-to-family conflict.

Summary

As outlined prior, steps were taken to clean and prepare the data for the analysis. Before running the statistical analyses, assumptions of each test were analyzed to determine if violations were made. Participants were removed through the data cleaning process with an ending sample of 412.

Descriptive statistics revealed essential distinctions in the endorsement of intensive mothering and work-family conflict in the sample. While examining hours worked outside of

the home, a few differences stood out between mothers. Mothers who worked outside of the home 10-20 hours per week were less likely to endorse Child-Centered, Stimulation, and Essentialism beliefs. Mothers who worked outside of the home 1-10 hours per week endorsed slightly higher Fulfillment and Essentialism beliefs. Within this sample, Mothers with bachelor's degrees and lower endorsed slightly higher Child-Centered beliefs. Mothers with doctoral degrees had a lower endorsement of Challenging, Stimulation, Fulfillment, and Essentialism beliefs. Overall, as the level of education increased endorsement of Child-Centered, Fulfillment, and Essentialism decreased. Rural mothers endorsed higher levels of Child-Centered beliefs and lower endorsement levels of Challenging beliefs. Urban others endorsed lower fulfillment beliefs.

Examining means of work-family conflict in the sample, mothers who reported their schedules as flexible identified the slightly higher work-to-family direction of the conflict. Additionally, others who endorsed nonstandard hours endorsed higher levels of the work-to-family direction of conflict and slightly lower levels of the family-to-work direction of the conflict.

A correlation matrix was utilized to examine the relationship between the five intensive mothering constructs and the two directions and six dimensions of work-to-family conflict. There were statistically significant results, but with small overall correlations. Essentialism was statistically significantly correlated with the eight variables on work-to-family conflict. This was an overall positive relationship indicating that as the endorsement on the essentialism scale increased or decreased so did the work to family conflict variables. Essentialism refers to the believe mothers, when compared to fathers, should be primary caretakers and are inherently driven to the parent (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013).

Further, Fulfillment was statistically significantly correlated with three of the work-to-family conflict variables: family-to-work conflict, strain-based family-to-work conflict, strain-based work-to-family conflict. This was a negative relationship, so as mothers endorsed fulfillment the three work-to-family conflict variables would do the opposite. Fulfillment refers to the belief that parenting is a fulfilling and rewarding process (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Although they were statistically significant, the relationships were small.

Stimulation was statistically significantly correlated to behavior-based work-to-family conflict. This was a negative relationship, so as mothers endorsed stimulation behavior-based work-to-family conflict would do the opposite. Stimulation refers to the belief that parents should cognitively stimulate their children (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Although they were statistically significant, the relationship was small.

Challenging was statistically significantly correlated with the eight variables on work-to-family conflict. This was an overall positive relationship indicating that as the endorsement on the challenging scale increased or decreased so did the work-to-family conflict variables. Challenging refers to the belief that parenting is difficult (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Although they were statistically significant, the relationships were small.

Two multiple regression was conducted for the second research question to determine if the independent variables (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, Child-Centered) predicted either work-to-family direction of conflict or family-to-work direction of the conflict. Although the findings indicated the models were significant, the relationships were weak.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

Women who have children and work outside of the home experience more stressors than those without children. This may be due in part to the balancing of multiple roles (Noor, 2004). With the significant change in the last 30 years of women in the workplace, an increase in research on women in the workforce and additional challenges they may face has become more apparent (Dey & Hill, 2007; Tower & Alkadry, 2008). Mothers tend to measure themselves against a good mother ideal which is assumed to be a female adult who is fulfilled by domestic duties and takes care of children full-time in the home (Boris, 1994; Ussher, 2010).

This study explored mothers' beliefs about motherhood. Specifically, it explored intensive mothering. Intensive mothering is a dominant belief of motherhood which is a belief that parenting is fulfilling, difficult, and primarily the responsibility of the mother. Further, mothers should prioritize their child's needs over their own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013; Wall, 2010).

There are limited studies that explore the impact of intensive mothering on working mothers (Caputo, 2007; Hays, 1996; Johnston & Swanson, 2006; Liss et al., 2013). An understanding of the relationship between intensive mothering constructs and work-family conflict will assist in understanding the impact intensive mothering may have on a mother who works outside of the home.

This study extends the research on intensive mothering by utilizing a quantitative measure of intensive mothering while focusing on additional factors, including maternal

employment, which is widely under-researched. Further, this study attempted to examine if endorsing intensive mothering beliefs can predict the conflict between work and home life.

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings. The first section presents a brief overview of the study. The next section presents the findings to the research questions that drove this study and connects them to relevant literature and theory. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the study's limitations and recommendations for further research.

Overview of Study

Mothers face a difficult bind when attempting to carry out their caretaker role and worker role simultaneously. Some mothers may be able to separate their work and mothering roles, which has been shown to reduce their work-family conflict (Knox, 2010). Women who choose to have both a family and career may retain traditional roles in the home, which can cause difficulties with balance both the work and family life. This difficulty balancing both work and family can cause conflict to arise and negatively affect a mother's ability to feel successful in both the work and home environment (Buehler & O'Brien, 2011; Goodman & Crouter, 2009; Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Milkie et al., 2010; Shepherd-Banigan et al., 2016).

While examining the conflict between work and family life, role theory authors suggest that an individual has only a limited amount of time and energy to devote to these roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). From this perspective, the scarcity hypothesis proposes the more roles an individual has, the greater chance for role strain and role conflict because of a limited amount of resources being divided among roles. As an individual devotes time and energy into one role, this depletes the available time and energy needed for other roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006). For women who have role obligations at both work and home, this causes the amount of time and energy to be spread between the roles. A mother with multiple roles must make

decisions about where to spend their time which may cause strain and stress (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004).

When conceptualizing the demands placed on mothers who work outside of the home, the conflict between the domains would make sense. The added demands of intensive mothering beliefs would provide pressure to be the ideal mother who is the primary caretaker of their children, successful in all areas, and whose child is the center of their world (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013; Wall, 2010). The demanding nature of having to be an ideal mother and have a career will drain the time and energy from women and leads to work-family conflict.

Working mothers endorsed depressive, anxiety, and stress symptoms when they felt as though their work environment were not flexible, they were not satisfied in their work, and did not live up to the good mother ideology (Goldberg & Smith, 2013; Marshall & Tracey, 2009; Shepherd et al., 2016). Also, balancing work and life domains became difficult in situations in which mothers felt as though they spent less time at home and in situations in which their time at home was filled with household duties (Marshall & Tracey, 2009; Milkie et al., 2010; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011). If a woman endorses intensive mothering or feels pressure to engage in intensive mothering ideology, the belief is the mother should be the primary caretaker who feels fulfilled, challenged, and is available at any time for her children may find it difficult when she is employed (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013; Walls et al., 2016). These demands may add to the stress between the two roles and lead to more conflict.

The current study extends the literature on intensive mothering by exploring the constructs by utilizing a quantitative measure of intensive mothering while focusing on working mothers. This study explored the relationship between intensive mothering beliefs and work-family conflict. Further, it attempted to examine if the endorsement of intensive mothering

constructs could predict the conflict between work and family. This study utilized a quantitative descriptive correlational research design.

Participants were a convenience sample of mothers who self-identified as working outside of the home. Mothers were recruited online through an anonymous link that was distributed by schools and daycares in Iowa and Minnesota. The study recruited 548 participants, but the final sample consisted of 412 mothers who work outside of the home. The age of the mothers ranged from 21 to 59 with a mean age of 37 years ($SD = 6.9$). The majority of the mothers (97.57 %) self-reported their ethnicity as White/Caucasian ($n = 402$) and identified as residing in rural areas (40.4%), urban cluster areas (48.9), and urban areas (10.7%).

Most of the mothers reported being married or in a domestic partnership (80.3%) and on average two children. Of the mothers who completed the survey, 36.9% of participants had a Bachelor's degree, 25.9% had an Associate's Degree, 17.5% had a High School/GED, 17.1% had a Master's Degree, 2.7% Doctoral Degree, and .2% less than high school degree.

The mothers self-reported the number of hours worked outside of the home working 30 or more hours per week (89.9%) and had a standard work schedule (86.2%). About half felt as though their work schedule was flexible.

Mothers were given the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ), which was developed out of Hays' (1996) ideology of intensive mothering to measure their beliefs. The IPAQ is a 25-item measure that operationalized the intensive mothering ideology into five scales including Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenge, and Child-Centered (Liss et al., 2013). To measure work-to-family conflict, mothers were given an 18-item measure developed by Carlson et al. (2000). The measure consists of two subscales that measure the work-to-family direction of conflict and family-to-work direction of the conflict. Also, the scale offers

the researcher the ability to measure dimensions of the two subscales of work-family conflict including time-based interference, strain-based interference, and behavior-based interference. Leading to two directions and six dimensions of work-family conflict (Carlson et al., 2000).

Discussion of Results

The purpose of this study was to examine intensive mothering ideologies utilizing a quantitative measure of intensive mothering. To take this further, this study examined intensive mothering and its relationship to work-life conflict. Not only did it explore the relationship between the variables, but also examined if intensive mother ideology could predict work-to-family conflict or family-to-work conflict.

While reviewing descriptive data on the IPAQ, it appears to be relatively similar to previous research (Liss et al., 2013). Results of these scales were Child-Centered ($M=3.4$, $SD=1.03$), Challenging ($M=4.12$, $SD=.69$), Stimulation ($M=4.94$), Fulfillment ($M=4.45$, $SD=.91$), and Essentialism ($M=2.29$, $SD=.79$).

The higher scores indicated greater endorsements of each scale: strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) (Liss et al., 2013). Mothers in the current sample indicated higher endorsements of the scales including Stimulation, Challenging, and Fulfillment. These findings suggest the mothers have endorsed the intensive mothering beliefs, which is consistent with the literature (Arendell, 2000; Hays, 1996; Johnston & Swanson, 2006). Interestingly, the sample did not endorse Essentialism beliefs. They disagreed with the notion that mothers are inherently better and drive to parent when compared to men (Hays 1996; Liss et al., 2013). In one study, researchers found a negative correlation between Essentialism and life satisfaction and positively correlated with stress levels. As mothers identified higher levels of Endorsement, their life satisfaction decreased, and stress levels increased (Rizzo et al., 2013). While examining the

current findings, the sample endorsed lower levels of Essentialism. As explained prior, work-family conflict and the relationship to intensive mothering constructs were significant but rather low. One possible explanation could be that the sample had lower levels of Essentialism and possibly then less stress and more life satisfaction. This might lead to mothers balancing both home and work domains and in turn had less role and work-family conflict.

Further, previous research examined intensive mothering and mother's work status. Results indicated that working mothers endorsed higher values of Stimulation, Fulfillment, and Child-Centered (Liss et al., 2013). In the current study, rural mothers endorsed higher levels of Child-Centered beliefs and lower endorsement levels of Challenging beliefs. While looking at the sample as a whole, working mothers endorsing higher values of Stimulation and Fulfillment. The results supports and, perhaps, amplifies that previous work.

Looking at work hour specific results, differences stood out between mothers in the study. Mothers who worked outside of the home 10-20 hours per week were less likely to endorse Child-Centered, Stimulation, and Essentialism beliefs. Mothers who worked outside of the home 1-10 hours per week endorsed slightly higher Fulfillment and Essentialism beliefs. While there are no studies that break down endorsement of intensive mothering to this extent, there are some similarities between previous research. In a previous study, mothers who stayed home with their children did so primarily because of their parenting ideology (Johnston & Swanson, 2007). In the current study, mothers who worked outside of the home for 1-10 hours per week endorsed higher Essentialism beliefs. It would make sense that mothers who identified more with the belief that women are inherently driven and more capable of parenting would work fewer hours outside of the home. It would be interesting to explore if the congruence between beliefs and practices lead to less conflict and the overall experiences for these mothers.

Within this sample, mothers with bachelor's degrees and less education endorsed slightly higher Child-Centered beliefs. Mothers with doctoral degrees had the lower endorsement of Challenging, Stimulation, Fulfillment, and Essentialism beliefs. Overall, as the level of education increased endorsement of Child-Centered, Fulfillment, and Essentialism decreased. Mothers with higher levels of education in the study were less likely to endorse intensive mothering ideologies.

One could assume, the more education a mother has, the more likely they work outside of the home. As discussed previously, mothering ideology has been connected with mothers decision to work outside of the home. Overall, there appears to be a cyclical theme that emerges between mothering ideology, work decision, and identity development whereas identity and mothering ideology may influence the decision to work outside of the home and vice versa (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). Mothers with higher education may be more apt to reject the intensive mothering ideologies and develop one that better fits their identity.

Endorsing an ideology that is congruent to their situation may have an overall more positive impact which may result in less conflict between work and home domains. Previous research has indicated that when a mother does not believe she is meeting the good mothering ideal, they experience feelings of guilt, high anxiety and stress, low self-efficacy (Hays, 1996; Henderson et al., 2016; Wall, 2010). Increased in congruency between their identify, home, and work will result in higher role salience. Role salience is when an individual feel invested, participates, and realizes essential outcomes of a role. Having higher role salience would likely result in less role and work-family conflict and more positive outcomes. It would be of interest to explore these mothers to get an accurate representation of their experiences as they have lower endorsement of the intensive mothering constructs.

Continuing, there have been multiple studies that indicated flexibility in work schedules as a predictor of work-family conflict (Carson et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2010). In this study, mothers who reported their schedules as flexible identified slightly lower work-to-family direction of the conflict. This mirrors results from another study that found a nonflexible work schedule was associated with increased work-family conflict and was associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms (Goodman & Crouter, 2009). The current study supports previous research on the flexibility in one's schedule is a supportive factor for mothers. As seen in prior studies, mothers have changed the logistical way in which they work to fulfill both their work and mother identities. Examples could be mothers being able to bring their children to work, and schedules changing to accommodate children and their activities (Johnston & Swanson, 2007). Having a flexible schedule and being able to fulfill both work and mother identities are supportive factors that may lead to less work-family conflict.

Flexibility and control over one's schedule may be a source of support for women, but there tends to be conflicting thoughts on nonstandard work schedules as being either a support or a challenge (Buehler & O'Brien, 2011; Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Liu et al., 2010). Researchers have found that one-fifth of all working Americans follow a nonstandard work which may include evening shifts, rotating shifts, weekend shifts, or overnight shifts (Presser & Ward, 2011). In a study presented prior, researchers examined nonstandard work schedules. Mothers reported greater work-family conflict when they reported having a nonstandard work schedule (Carlson et al., 2011). Similarly, while looking at cohabiting same-sex couples, authors found an increase in the work-family conflict was associated with nonstandard work schedule (Liu et al., 2010). In the current study, mothers who endorsed nonstandard hours endorsed higher levels of the work-to-family direction of conflict and slightly lower levels of the family-to-work direction

of the conflict. Like what other researchers have found, this study supported the notion nonstandard hours increased work-family conflict.

In the current study, mothers working 30+ hours per week reported higher levels of conflict. In a previous study, mothers reported a negative association with feelings of successfully balancing work and family and the number of hours worked a week. Meaning as the number of hours working outside the home increased, mothers' feelings of successfully balancing work and family decreased (Milkie et al., 2010). This finding mirrored results from other studies that found when the number of hours a mother spent working outside of the home decreased their feelings of successful balancing their ability to manage both their work and family life were affected negatively (Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011).

Similarly, researchers found that when women endorsed working more hours per week conflicts balancing the demands between their work and family life increased. These conflicts were experienced as struggles with energy levels, time, and schedule management (Marshall & Tracey, 2009). This suggested that an increase in hours worked outside the home may have increased conflicts in balancing demands between multiple roles. In similar studies focusing on work-family conflict and hours worked outside the home, researchers utilized archival data from the NICHD SECCYD found that mothers who were employed full-time endorsed higher levels of work-family conflict when compared with mothers who were employed part-time (Buehler & O'Brien, 2011).

These results provided evidence to the role theory, which suggests there is a limited amount of time and energy are spread between roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). When examining life structure, authors identify that having too much or not enough structure can cause of a host of concerns for an individual. In studies discussed prior, it appears as though

some of the participants had struggled with too much structure, which then led to more conflict (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Marshall & Tracey, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011; Shepherd-Banigna et al., 2016).

Research Question One

What is the relationship between endorsement of intensive parenting constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) and two directions and six dimensions of work-family conflict?

It is hypothesized that the endorsement of intensive mothering will be strongly associated with work-family conflict. Specifically, relationships with the time-based and strain-based interference would be present. A correlation matrix was utilized to examine the relationship between the five intensive mothering constructs and the two directions and six dimensions of work to family conflict. However, an unanticipated finding of the current study was there were significant, but the relationships between the variables were weak.

Going back to the information on life-span, life-space theory and life structure, there is thought that having too little or too much life structure will become problematic in one's life (Super, 1980). This researcher anticipated there to be stronger relationships between the variables due to the significant amount of time and energy devoted to each domain. The participants in the current study did endorse higher levels of Stimulation, Challenging, and Fulfillment. In general, these three constructs do require more energy and time from a mother. The question then becomes what factors came into play that assisted the mothers in not experiencing work-family conflict?

While looking at the correlations, there were some weak relationships. These correlations were statistically significant but were not strong relationships. Essentialism had small

statistically significant correlations with the eight variables of work-family conflict. Essentialism refers to the belief that mothers, when compared to fathers, should be the primary caretaker and are inherently driven to parent (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013).

The most significant correlation came between Essentialism and family-to-work conflict, specifically strain-based family-to-work conflict, time-based family-to-work conflict. These findings are congruent with the literature on intensive mothering (Arendell, 2000; Hays, 1996; Johnston & Swanson, 2006) as well as role theory (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). When conceptualizing the demands placed on a woman who might identify more with Essentialism, it makes sense that there becomes conflict in the family-to-work direction of the conflict. With the added demands of needing to be the primary caretaker, women have been placed with the pressure of being the ideal mother who inherently can care for her children (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013; Wall, 2010). The more essential the belief for the mother to be the full-time caretaker role and inherently better at parenting may place a strain on the family-to-work direction of the conflict. Again, these results were weak so that hypotheses can be drawn from the results.

Although the mothers in this study identified more conflict when they endorsed Essentialism, it is unclear as to what might lead to more conflict. In a study presented prior, Essentialism was negatively correlated with life satisfaction and stress level. Thus, the increase in endorsement of the belief that women are inherently better at parenting is associated with a decline in their endorsement of life satisfaction and an increase in stress (Rizzo et al., 2013). Although this study did not specifically examine work-family conflict, it is noted that an increase in stress particularly in the home may result in more conflict between the family and work domains.

However, the participants in the current study endorsed lower levels of essentialism than in previous studies (Arendell, 2000; Hays, 1996; Johnston & Swanson, 2006). This means mothers in the study did not believe they needed to be the primary caretakers and experienced lower levels of work-family conflict. While examining the relationship between essentialism and work-family conflict, the most significant relationship came between essentialism and family-to-work conflict and strain-based family-to-work conflict. It is hypothesized that when mothers do not believe that they are inherently better at parenting and need to be the primary caregiver are likely to experience conflict between the home and work domains.

The population of focus for this study was on working mothers. For most working mothers, they need to rely on others to care for their children. About half of the population in the study reported residing in rural areas. In rural communities, there are fewer community resources including child-care. Families may need to rely on family and friends in a more collective way. Looking at the hours worked per week, Mothers who identified as working 1-10 hours per week endorsed slightly higher essentialism beliefs. It is possible mothers may work fewer hours to meet their beliefs regarding mothers needing to be the primary caregivers

Further, Fulfillment was negatively correlated to three of the work-to-family conflict variables: family-to-work conflict, strain-based family-to-work conflict, strain-based work-to-family conflict. These results were weak, but general hypotheses are made.

While looking at fulfillment, Super suggests attempting to achieve balance among home and work roles would elicit overall well-being and satisfaction (Super, 1980). It could be that individuals who generally endorse being fulfilled by their role as a mother, may feel a better sense of balance in their roles and less likely to identify conflict.

The results showed a negative relationship with the endorsement of the belief that parenting is fulfilling and family-to-work conflict. In this sample, mothers endorsed higher levels of fulfillment, and thus less family-to-work conflict was endorsed. It could be that this population experienced a high level of role salience.

Role salience is vital in the overall development of life-roles as when role salience is high that role is more critical to the individual, and thus they would engage in the behaviors necessary to be successful in that role (Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996). Therefore, as mothers endorse more fulfillment in parenting, they may feel more invested, participate more, and understand the overall importance of their role. They then may be able to better balance their roles at home and work.

Further, the correlation matrix showed the construct of Stimulation was negatively related to the behavior-based work-to-family conflict. This correlation was weak; therefore, the discussion is a general hypothesis. When looking at Stimulation, the researcher refers to this as a belief that parents should cognitively stimulate their children (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Mothers who endorsed higher levels of stimulation and the belief that parents should cognitively stimulate their children may experience less behavior-based work-to-family conflict. Thinking again about role salience, when individuals feel more engaged and the desire to do something, they engage in these behaviors which may make conflict less (Super, 1980).

Lastly, Challenging had a weak positive correlation to the eight variables on work-to-family conflict. The literature describes Challenging as the belief that parenting is difficult (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). The highest correlation was with strain-based work-to-family conflict, strain-based family-to-work conflict, and family-to-work conflict. Again, this relationship is weak, so this researcher is unable to draw reliable conclusions.

Surprisingly, Child-Centered beliefs were not correlated to any of the work-family conflict dimensions. The research has suggested that mothers who perform most of the domestic and child-rearing responsibilities on top of their work duties may feel more stressed and overwhelmed, which may lead to greater family to work conflict (Stewart, 2013). Because child-centeredness sets to prioritize child's needs over mothers, one would have thought Child-Centered beliefs would be strongly correlated to work-family conflict.

Research Question Two

Does the endorsement of intensive mothering constructs (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-centered) predict family-to-work or work-to-family direction of conflict in women who work outside of the home?

It was hypothesized that the intensive mother constructs would predict the family-to-work direction of the conflict. Because the engagement of intensive mothering requires a significant amount of time and energy, it is thought that it would result in conflict within the work and family environments. This study utilized a multiple regression to assess to whether the endorsement of intensive mothering could predict the family-to-work direction of the conflict.

As the results in research question one, there were statistically significant results, but the prediction was weak and thus unable to accurately determine if the five constructs of intensive mothering predict the family-to-work direction of the conflict. These results were unanticipated but can assist in the furthering of future research. As described in the previous section, the research has indicated supportive factors that may assist in the buffering of work-family conflict (Carson et al., 2011; Cooklin et al., 2011; Goldberg & Smith, 2013; Goodman & Crouter, 2009; Liu et al., 2010; Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011; Shepherd-Bangian et al.,

2016). In the future, supportive factors could be controlled when attempting to assess the family-to-work direction of the conflict.

Further, it is hypothesized that the intensive mothering constructs of Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered will predict the work-to-family direction of the conflict. The engagement of intensive mothering tends to require a significant amount of time and energy. Depending on the individual's job, work can require a significant amount of time and energy. With both the home and work roles, Role theory suggests that there is a limited amount of time and energy to spread between roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Goode, 1960). With the added demands of intensive mothering ideology, a significant amount of time and energy is devoted to family life. Especially Essentialism, Stimulation, Challenging, and Child-Centered, which condones that mothers should be the primary caretakers who should prioritize her children's needs over her own (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). The conflict may occur when the mother has a career and has to divided time and energy into multiple demanding roles. The more a mother devotes time and energy into work may lead to less time and energy at home and thus cause conflict.

There were statistically significant results, but the prediction was rather small and thus unable to accurately determine if the five constructs of intensive mothering predict the work-to-family direction of the conflict. Similar as with the other two results, these unanticipated results can assist in tailoring future research. As described in the previous sections, the research has indicated supportive factors that may assist in the buffering of work-family conflict (Carson et al., 2011; Cooklin et al., 2011; Goldberg & Smith, 2013; Goodman & Crouter, 2009; Liu et al., 2010; Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011; Shepherd-Bangian et al., 2016). In

the future, supportive factors could be controlled when attempting to assess the work-to-family direction of the conflict.

Limitations of the Study

As with all research, this study has limitations to consider when interpreting the findings. The limitations include strategies related to data collection, the actual data selected for analysis and the methods of analysis. Because the survey was online, there could have been technical issues that caused mothers to answer differently than they would have otherwise. Some may not have finished due to technical issues or distractions while taking the survey. Because our population has both family and work obligation, it is likely participants who have difficulties balancing both roles would have enough time to prioritize completing a survey. The response could be influenced due to the time constraints of working parents.

Further, the lack of diversity is of great concern. The group of participants was generally homogenous; therefore, readers and researchers should use caution when generalizing these findings to other populations. Participants were a convenience sample of mothers who work outside of the home. Most of the mothers self-reported their ethnicity as White/Caucasian and married or in a domestic partnership (80.9%). Most participants had a college degree (82.2%) and worked 30 or more hours per week. Most identified that they worked standard hours (86.4%). Each area of participant's lives could have been represented in entirely different ways; for example, there may have been different study results had more of the participants been women of color, single mothers, women who did not have a college degree or women who did shift work. Lack of diversity in study participants has been a limitation across the literature on intensive mothering (Liss et al., 2012; Murray, 2015; Rizzo et al., 2013; Wall, 2010), so, while a limitation, it is still in line with other research findings.

An additional limitation is an area of which mothers were recruited. The sample was a convenience sample recruited out of Iowa and Minnesota, which limits the ability to generalize the findings to mothers in other geographic or socioeconomic regions of the United States. Thus, the experiences of mothers who live in other areas may vary significantly in their experiences with intensive mothering and work-family conflict.

Finally, it should be noted that the reliability of two of the intensive mothering construct scale was low including Stimulation $\alpha = .46$, Challenging $\alpha = .60$. For this particular sample, low Chronbach's alphas demonstrate a lack of reliability for the constructs of Stimulation and Challenging in intensive mothering. This makes it difficult to interpret the findings that include these scales.

Recommendations for Further Research

To address this study's unanticipated findings and limitations, future research direction is explored. Participants were a convenience sample with homogeneous demographic characteristics, which limits the generalizability of the results. Lack of diversity has been a limitation across the literature on intensive mothering (Liss et al., 2012; Murray, 2015; Rizzo, Schiffrin, & Liss, 2013; Wall, 2010). Therefore, it is imperative to examine the concept of intensive mothering on a more heterogeneous demographics sample, including those with different levels of education, racial/ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic levels. The expectation for the researcher to continue the work and advance the field. This would further the understanding of intensive mothering and how beliefs may vary across differing groups. It is possible, for example, this researcher's hypotheses would have been supported if mothers from these different groups had been studied. In extending the work of intensive mothering and work-family conflict, the literature would benefit by incorporating data from multiple sources,

dyadic data, and observational data. This would be useful to better understand the dynamics of intensive mothering and work-family conflict.

The research has suggested that mothers who perform most of the domestic and child-rearing responsibilities on top of their work duties may feel more stressed and overwhelmed. This can lead to greater family-to-work conflict (Stewart, 2013). Within this current study, it is unclear as to the amount of conflict comes from performing domestic or child-rearing responsibilities. For future research, it would be beneficial to examine if the intensive mothering construct of Challenging coincided with having to perform most of the domestic and child-rearing responsibilities. The literature describes Challenging as the belief that parenting is difficult (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Taking this a step further, researchers could examine if the construct of Challenging and performing domestic duties are associated with work-family conflict.

Also, examining the relationship between hours worked per week, intensive mother ideology, and work-family conflict would further the field. Research on work-family conflict had indicated an increase in struggles with time, schedule management, and energy levels when work hours increased (Goldberg & Smith, 2013; Marshall & Tracey, 2009). While looking at hours worked per week, previous research has examined intensive mother constructs and work-family conflict separately. The current study touched on the exploration of the three variables, but further research is needed to fully understand the interactions.

Also, furthering and expanding the research on the merging of work and family life can be done by focusing on work-family enrichment. Work-family enrichment focuses on the positive aspects of combining work and family (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). The strength-based approach may provide researchers with positive aspects of merging work and family. This could

assist in the understanding of role salience and other factors that lead an individual's having an overall balance in their work and family life. Because the results of the current study indicated a little relationship between intensive mothering and work-family conflict, the rationale could be because mothers experience more positive aspects of combining the two domains vs. experiencing conflict. It could be important to expand upon and examine the more positive aspects of combining the two roles and the supportive factors that may be in place.

Through the literature review, it was identified that supportive factors tend to predict work-family conflict in both the family and work environment. In the work environment, these can include supervisor support, social support, job rewards, benefits for children, and work commitment (Carson et al., 2011; Cooklin et al., 2011; Goldberg & Smith, 2013; Goodman & Crouter, 2009; Liu et al., 2010; Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011; Shepherd-Bangian et al., 2016). At the family and individual level, social support, maternal education, and extroversion have been associated with higher work-family enrichment (Cinamon & Rich, 2010; Zhou & Buehler, 2016). It would be interesting to assess whether mothers who endorse any of the intensive mothering ideologies also engage in any supportive factors. These supportive factors could lead to a reduction the work-family conflict.

Also, the use of relational data and social network analysis tools would be potentially useful to identify helpful resources for mothers in the workplace and at home. Community-level resources should also be explored in future studies in the context of creating positive spillover effects for mothers who work outside of the home.

Although the mothers in this study identified higher endorsement of Fulfillment, Stimulation, and Challenging, it is unclear as to what the impact of these may have. It would be beneficial to utilize qualitative data to understand better the experience of mothers who do

endorse these intensive parenting beliefs. This may pinpoint areas of concern and what might be supportive factors for mothers.

Future research should focus more on women who do not fit into the mainstream mothering. These include those who are considered disadvantaged and marginalized. Young mothers, unwed mothers, mothers lacking in education, single mothers (Coleman & Carter, 2006; Kirkman, Harrison, Hillier & Pyett, 2001; McDermott & Graham, 2005; Mollborn & Jacobs, 2012), mothers of color (Shanok & Miller, 2007), mothers with disabilities, mothers with children who are disabled are a few who do not fit within the mainstream good mothering ideology (Brown, 2006). It would extend the field to explore and identify the experiences of these mothers.

Also, it would be beneficial to examine the experiences of fathers and same-sex couples and their experiences with intensive mothering ideologies and work-family conflict. This would broaden the understanding of work-family conflict and the impact that it may have on the individual, couple, and children.

A great deal more research is needed to set the foundation for understanding the relationships before interventions can be implemented. In this study, some additional information was collected from the mothers but was not the primary focus in this study including age, the household income, the highest level of education of the parents, number of children, hours worked outside of the home, geographical area, and type of hours worked. Each of these variables could be studied more closely to determine how they relate to the outcomes of work-family conflict.

Conclusion

Although there is previous research on the experiences of mothers who work outside the home, the examination of parenting beliefs and the relationship between work-family conflict had yet to be examined in detail. This study examined the specific parenting belief of intensive mothering. Further, it explored the relationship between intensive mothering and work-family conflict. Additionally, this study examined if the intensive mothering constructs could predict work-family conflict. It was the hope this study would be able to extend the literature on intensive mothering and work-family conflict.

The current study began the process of examining the relationship between intensive mothering and work-family conflict. The goal of the study was to explore the relationship between intensive mother ideology and work-life balance in a quantitative format. A correlation matrix was utilized to examine relationships between scores on the five scales of the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ) and the two directions and six dimensions of work-family conflict. The findings indicated small relationships between the variables. Specifically, there were small relationships between Essentialism and the eight work-family conflict variables.

Additionally, Fulfillment had a small relationship with four of the work-family conflict variables including the family-to-work direction of conflict, time-based family-to-work conflict, strain-based work-to-family conflict, and strain-based family-to-work conflict. Stimulation had a small relationship with behavior-based work-to-family conflict. Challenging had a small relationship with all eight of the work-to-family conflict variables. No significant relationships were reported between Child-Centered and the eight work-family conflict variables.

Descriptive statistics revealed essential distinctions in the endorsement of intensive mothering and work-family conflict in the sample. While examining hours worked outside of

the home, a few differences stood out between mothers. Mothers who worked outside of the home 10-20 hours per week were less likely to endorse Child-Centered, Stimulation, and Essentialism beliefs. Mothers who worked outside of the home 1-10 hours per week endorsed slightly higher Fulfillment and Essentialism beliefs. Within this sample, Mothers with bachelor's degrees and lower endorsed slightly higher Child-Centered beliefs. Mothers with doctoral degrees had lower endorsement of Challenging, Stimulation, Fulfillment, and Essentialism beliefs. Overall, as the level of education increased endorsement of Child-Centered, Fulfillment, and Essentialism decreased. Rural mothers endorsed higher levels of Child-Centered beliefs and lower endorsement levels of Challenging beliefs. Urban others endorsed lower fulfillment beliefs.

Examining means of work-family conflict in the sample, mothers who reported their schedules as flexible identified slightly higher work-to-family direction of the conflict. Additionally, others who endorsed nonstandard hours endorsed higher levels of the work-to-family direction of conflict and slightly lower levels of the family-to-work direction of the conflict.

A correlation matrix was utilized to examine the relationship between the five intensive mothering constructs and the two directions and six dimensions of work-to-family conflict. There were statistically significant results, but with small overall correlations. Essentialism was statistically significantly correlated with the eight variables on work-to-family conflict. This was an overall positive relationship indicating that as the endorsement on the essentialism scale increased or decreased so did the work to family conflict variables. Essentialism refers to the believe mothers, when compared to fathers, should be primary caretakers and are inherently driven to parent (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013).

Further, Fulfillment was statistically significantly correlated with three of the work-to-family conflict variables: family-to-work conflict, strain-based family-to-work conflict, strain-based work-to-family conflict. This was a negative relationship, so as mothers endorsed fulfillment the three work-to-family conflict variables would do the opposite. Fulfillment refers to the belief that parenting is a fulfilling and rewarding process (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Although they were statistically significant, the relationships were small.

Stimulation was statistically significantly correlated to behavior-based work-to-family conflict. This was a negative relationship, so as mothers endorsed stimulation behavior-based work-to-family conflict would do the opposite. Stimulation refers to the belief that parents should cognitively stimulate their children (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Although they were statistically significant, the relationship was small.

Challenging was statistically significantly correlated with the eight variables on work-to-family conflict. This was an overall positive relationship indicating that as the endorsement on the challenging scale increased or decreased so did the work-to-family conflict variables. Challenging refers to the belief that parenting is difficult (Hays, 1996; Liss et al., 2013). Although they were statistically significant, the relationships were small.

Two multiple regression was conducted for the second research question to determine if the independent variables (Essentialism, Fulfillment, Stimulation, Challenging, Child-Centered) predicted either work-to-family direction of conflict or family-to-work direction of the conflict. Although the findings indicated the models were significant, the relationships were weak.

As with any study, there were some limitations to guide future research. For example, the participants in this study had homogenous demographics and were primarily made up of mothers from a White, educated, daytime-working background. The mothers in this study represented a

very homogenous sample of individuals who identified themselves as Caucasian who was either married or in a domestic partnership. Mothers were recruited from Iowa and Minnesota, thus making it difficult to generalize the results. It would be fascinating and relevant to learn about the experiences of intensive mothering and work-family conflict from the perspective of mothers representing other populations.

Lastly, the intensive mothering construct scales of Stimulation and Challenging had low internal reliability making it difficult to interpret those scales with high accuracy. It would be helpful for intensive mothering and work-family conflict researchers and mental health practitioners to know if these constructs would be more reliable for mothers of other backgrounds.

Within this current study, it is unclear as to the amount of conflict that comes from performing the domestic or child-rearing responsibilities. For future research, it would be beneficial to examine if the intensive mothering construct of Challenging coincided with having to perform most of the domestic and child-rearing responsibilities. Further, extending the work of intensive mothering and work-family conflict would benefit by incorporating data from multiple sources, dyadic data, and observational data would be useful to better understand the dynamics of intensive mothering and work-family conflict.

Although the mothers in this study endorsed higher scores on Essentialism, Stimulation, and Challenging, it is unclear as to what the impact is of these scores. It would be beneficial to utilize qualitative data to understand better the experience of mothers who do endorse these intensive parenting beliefs. This may pinpoint what is of concern and what might be supported for mothers. Lastly, it would be beneficial to examine the experiences of fathers and same-sex couples and their experiences with intensive mothering ideologies and work-family conflict. This

would broaden the understanding of the experience one may have to combine both work and family life.

Although the results were unanticipated, they do assist in the development of future research. While looking at the literature on work-family conflict, many supportive factors have been identified in the buffering of work-family conflict. Not explicitly examined in this study, but number of hours worked per week (Marshall & Tracy, 2009; Nomahuchi & Brown, 2011), job quality (Marshall & Tracy, 2009; job flexibility (Shepherd-Bangian et al., 2016), supervisor support (Cooklin et al., 2011; Goldberg & Smith, 2013), and job flexibility (Carson et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2010; Goodman & Crouter, 2009) have been examined and have been shown to provide protective factors to mothers who work outside of the home. In addition to protective factors, some mothers may compartmentalize or separate their work and mothering roles, which has been shown to reduce their work-family conflict (Knox, 2010). No research to date has examined parenting beliefs and the relationship with work-family conflict.

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Table 1

IPAQ Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Essentialism		.084	-.044	.210**	.174**
2. Fulfillment	.084		.343**	.067	.425**
3. Stimulation	-.044	.343**		.159**	.330**
4. Challenging	.210**	.067	.159**		.194**
5. Child-Centered	.174**	.425**	.330**	.194**	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD
TB WIF	2.74	.96
TB FIW	2.40	.84
SB WIF	2.09	.72
SBFIW	2.30	.88
BBWIF	2.35	.79
BBFIW	2.44	.81
WIF	2.62	.70
FIW	2.38	.63
Child-Centered	3.40	1.02
Challenging	4.11	.72
Stimulation	4.96	.62
Fulfillment	4.47	.90
Essentialism	2.28	.78

Table 3

Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. FWC	1												
2. WFC	.606**	1											
3. BBFWC	.652**	.528**	1										
4. BBWFC	.549**	.642**	.709**	1									
5. SBFWC	.814**	.447**	.318**	.350**	1								
6. SBWFC	.494**	.827**	.365**	.365**	.403**	1							
7. TBFWC	.736**	.402**	.178**	.192**	.485**	.355**	1						
8. TBWFC	.407**	.810**	.244**	.266**	.300**	.557**	.373**	1					
9. Essent	.280**	.177**	.146**	.161**	.277**	.148**	.193**	.134**	1				
10. Fulfil	-.160**	-.076	-.038	-.071	-.200**	-.121**	-.091	.004	.084	1			
11. Stimul	-.095	.002	-.054	-.124*	-.073	.019	-.066	.073	-.044	.343**	1		
12. Challen	.239**	.215**	.128**	.118**	.257**	.237**	.186**	.148*	.210**	.067	.159**	1	
13. Child-C	-.010	.004	.054	-.030	-.040	-.027	-.014	.059	.174*	.425**	.330*	.194*	1

Table 4

RQ2: Multiple Regression 1

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.391 ^a	.153	.142	.267	.271

a. Predictors: (Constant), Essentialism , Fulfillment, Challenging , Stimulation, Child-Centered

b. Dependent Variable: FIW

Table 5

RQ2: Multiple Regression 1

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.85	5	4.97	14.64	.000 ^b
	Residual	137.84	406	.340		
	Total	162.70	411			

a. Dependent Variable: FIW

Table 6

RQ2: Multiple Regression 1

Coefficients

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.99	.282		7.085	.000					
Child-Centered	-.013	.033	-.021	-.372	.710	-.039	-.020	-.018	.744	1.344
Challenging	.182	.042	.208	4.349	.000	.239	.206	.194	.916	1.091
Stimulation	-.058	.051	-.058	-1.139	.255	-.075	-.013	-.012	.802	1.247
Fulfillment	-.128	.036	-.175	-3.368	.001	-.176	-.173	-.162	.754	1.327
Essentialism	.200	.038	.248	5.210	.000	.272	.248	.236	.926	1.080

a. Dependent Variable: FIW

Table 7

RQ 2: Multiple Regression 2

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.274 ^a	.075	.064	.68422	.804

a. Predictors: (Constant), Essentialism , Fulfillment, Challenging , Stimulation, Child-Centered

b. Dependent Variable: WIF

Table 8

RQ 2: Multiple Regression 2

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.436	5	3.087	6.595	.000 ^b
	Residual	190.070	406	.464		
	Total	205.507	411			

a. Dependent Variable: WIF

b. Predictors: (Constant), Essentialism , Fulfillment, Challenging , Stimulation, Child-Centered

Table 9

RQ 2: Multiple Regression 2

Coefficients

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	1.819	.331	4.79	.000						
	Child-Centered	-.017	.038	-.02	-.58	.664	-.016	-.031	-.029	.744	1.344
	Challenging Stimulation	.189	.049	.19	3.11	.000	.198	.162	.157	.916	1.091
	Fulfillment	.022	.060	.02	1.12	.709	.019	.059	.057	.802	1.247
	Essentialism	-.076	.042	-.10	2.16	.073	-.100	-.113	-.109	.754	1.327
		.135	.045	.14	3.33	.001	.191	.173	.168	.926	1.080

a. Dependent Variable: WIF

Appendix A

Recruitment Script

Recruitment will occur by contacting administrators at schools and daycares by phone and email to provide them with information regarding the proposed study and ask for assistance.

Proposed script for phone and email:

Good Afternoon,

My name is Casey Baker and I am a doctoral candidate at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am completing my dissertation, which examines the experiences of mothers who work outside of the home. I am looking for assistance in gathering this information through email or your preferred social media outlet. I would provide you with a proposed email or social media post that contains a link to an online survey. The survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete. At the completion of the survey, participants can provide their email address or phone number if they want to be entered in to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. Below is a link to the online survey.

If you are willing and able to assist, please contact me via email at casey.baker@mnsu.edu or phone at 712.363.3411. If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact me. Thank you for your time.

Best,

Casey Baker

Recruitment Email

Good Morning,

My name is Casey Baker and I am a doctoral candidate at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am looking for volunteers to complete a survey on experiences of being a mother who works outside of the home. If you are a mother and work outside of the home, please click the link below to complete the survey. The completion of the survey should take around 10-15 minutes to complete. Complete the entire survey for a chance to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. Please share this information to anyone who might be interested!

[Click to take survey](#)

Best,

Casey Baker

MSU IRBNet ID# 1139738

Social Media Post

“I am looking for volunteers to complete a survey regarding the experience of being a mother who works outside of the home. If you are a mother and work outside of the home, please click the link below to complete the survey. The completion of the survey should take around 10-15 minutes. Complete the entire survey for a chance to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. Please share this information to anyone who might be interested!”

[Click here to take survey](#)

MSU IRBNet ID# 1139738

Appendix B

Informed Consent

You are requested to participate in research conducted by Casey Baker and supervised by Dr. Karin Lindstrom Bremer. The purpose of the study is to examine the experiences of mothers who work outside of the home. Specifically, it will examine parenting beliefs and work-family conflict. To complete this request, you will be asked to answer a series of questions related to your experience. The survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact Casey Baker, MS, LMFT, LMHC, RPT, NCC at casey.baker@mnsu.edu or 712.749.2174. You may contact Dr. Karin Lindstrom Bremer at karin.lindstrom-bremer@mnsu.edu or 507-389-2423.

Participation is voluntary. You have the option not to respond to any of the questions. You may stop taking the survey at any time by closing your web browser. The decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with Minnesota State University, Mankato, and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits. If you have questions about participants' rights and for research-related injuries, please contact Dr. Barry Ries, Administrator of the Institutional Review Board, at 507-389-1242 or barry.ries@mnsu.edu.

Responses will be anonymous. However, whenever one works with online technology there is always the risk of compromising privacy, confidentiality, and/or anonymity. If you would like more information about the specific privacy and anonymity risks posed by online surveys, please contact the Minnesota State University, Mankato Information and Technology Services Help Desk (507-389-6654) and ask to speak to the Information Security Manager. The risks of participating are no more than are experienced in daily life.

At the end of the survey, you will be asked to provide your email address or phone number to be entered in a drawing to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. This is voluntary. If you do not provide your information you will not be entered in for the drawing. If you choose to provide your email address or phone number, your participation in this research study is no longer anonymous.

You will be asked if you are interested in participating in future research regarding the experiences of working mothers. This is voluntary. If you choose to provide your contact information for future research, your participation in this research study is no longer anonymous. The researchers may contact you by mail, phone, or email regarding research opportunities. There are no benefits in completing this survey. Further, society will benefit from an increase in understanding of parenting beliefs and their relationship to work-family conflict.

Submitting the completed survey will indicate your informed consent to participate and indicate your assurance that you are at least 18 years of age.

Please print a copy of this page for your future reference.

MSU IRBNet ID# 1139738

Appendix C
Demographic questionnaire

1. Do you work outside the home?

Yes

No

2. If yes, approximately how many hours do you work outside the home?

1-10

10-20

20-30

30-39

40+

3. If you work outside the home, what best describes your work schedule:

Standard (Dayshift hours)

Nonstandard (evenings, overnights, weekends, etc.)

4. Would you consider your work schedule to be flexible?

Yes

No

5. Do you have children 18 and under who currently reside with you?

Yes

No

6. How many children do you have?

Child Age 1_____

Child Age 2_____

Child Age 3_____

- Child Age 4_____
- Child Age 5_____
- If you have 5 or more children, list ages here:_____

7. What is your racial or ethnic identification? (Check all that apply)

- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Hispanic or Latino/a
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Asian
- Black/African American
- Caucasian (other than Hispanic)
- Other: _____

8. What is your age in years? _____

9. What is your identified gender? _____

10. What is your current marital status?

- Single, never married
- Married or Domestic Partnership
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Other: _____

11. What is your total annual household income?

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$20,000

- \$20,000 - \$30,000
- \$30,000 - \$40,000
- \$40,000 - \$50,000
- \$50,000 - \$60,000
- \$60,000 - \$70,000
- \$70,000 - \$80,000
- \$80,000 - \$90,000
- \$90,000 - \$100,000
- \$100,000 - \$150,000
- \$150,000+

12. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than high school
- High school/GED
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctoral degree

13. Which best describes the area where you reside?

- Rural (Population of 1-2,499 people)
- Urban Cluster (Population of 2,500-50,000)
- Urban Areas (Population of 50,000 or more)

Appendix D

Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire

Please use the following scale to choose the answer that best describes your beliefs:

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

1. Both fathers and mothers are equally able to care for children
2. Although fathers may mean well, they generally are not as good at parenting as mothers
3. Parents should begin providing intellectual stimulation for their children prenatally, such as reading to them or playing classical music
4. Although fathers are important, ultimately children need mothers more
5. Parents never get a mental break from their children, even when they are physically apart
6. Ultimately, it is the mother who is responsible for how her child turns out
7. Being a parent brings a person the greatest joy he or she can possibly experience
8. Parenting is exhausting
9. It is important for children to be involved in classes, lessons, and activities that engage and stimulate them
10. Parenting is not the most rewarding thing a person can do
11. The child's schedule should take priority over the needs of the parent's
12. Men do not recognize that raising children is difficult and requires skills and training

13. Child rearing is the most demanding job in the world
14. Holding his or her baby should provide a parent with the deepest level of satisfaction
15. Being a parent means never having time for oneself
16. Women are not necessarily better parents than men
17. Men do not naturally know what to do with children
18. A parent should feel complete when he or she looks in the eyes of his or her infant
19. Children should be the center of attention
20. Men are unable to care for children unless they are given specific instructions about what to do
21. Finding the best educational opportunities for children is important as early as preschool
22. It is harder to be a good parent than to be a corporate executive
23. To be an effective parent, a person must possess wide ranging skills
24. Children's needs should come before their parents
25. It is important to interact regularly with children on their level (e.g. getting down on the floor and playing with them)

Scale Coding

Items are presented on a scale from 1 = (strongly disagree) to 6 = (strongly agree).

Essentialism: 1(r), 2, 4, 6, 12, 16(r), 17, 20

Fulfillment: 7, 10(r), 14, 18

Stimulation: 3, 9, 21, 25

Challenging: 5, 8, 13, 15, 22, 23

Child-Centered: 11, 19, 24

Appendix E

Work-family conflict

Please use the following scale to choose the answer that best describes your situation:

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neither disagree nor agree

Strongly Agree

Time-Based work interference with family

1. My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like
2. The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities.
3. I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities.

Time-Based family interference with work

4. The time I spend on family responsibilities often interfere with my work responsibilities.
5. The time I spend with my family often causes me not to spend time in activities at work that could be helpful to my career.
6. I have to miss work activities due to the amount of time I must spend on family responsibilities.

Strain-based work interference with family

7. When I get home from work I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/responsibilities.

8. I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family.
9. Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home I am too stressed to do the things I enjoy.

Strain-based family interference with work

10. Due to stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work.
11. Because I am often stressed from family responsibilities, I have a hard time concentrating on my work.
12. Tension and anxiety from my family life often weakens my ability to do my job.

Behavior-based work interference with family

13. The problem-solving behaviors I use in my job are not effective in resolving problems at home.
14. Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at work would be counterproductive at home.
15. The behaviors I perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse.

Behavior-based family interference with work

16. The behaviors that work for me at home do not seem to be effective at work.
17. Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at home would be counterproductive at work.
18. The problem-solving behavior that work for me at home does not seem to be as useful at work.