

**WORK STRESS: THE REPERCUSSIONS  
ON FAMILY DYNAMICS**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This sociological study investigates the effects of work stress on family dynamics. Job demands, like heavy workload and working overtime, could have an effect on family members to fulfill role obligations and vital family functions according to Parsons's, Murdock's and Merton's functionalist theories.

By employing qualitative research techniques, fifty in-depth interviews guided by an interview schedule are conducted. The three research questions or tentative hypotheses, based on the functionalist theory, are answered by the findings from the data gathered. An inductive strategy is used to gather and interpret data to eventually build new theory. Theory is grounded in the data, hence grounded theory. The findings are categorized in terms of the research questions and describe and explain how the family is affected when work stress is experienced by the employee and family member. Possible explanations are offered as to why this occurs. Recommendations for further research are also made.

### **KEY TERMS**

Job-related Stressors; Roles; Role Conflict; Functions; Dysfunctions; Manifest and Latent Functions; Work-Family Conflict; Spillover; Family Adaptation to Work Stress; Workplace Support; Social Support.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The family provides for the socialization of values and norms and the child then internalizes these on the basis of consensus of all family members to become integrated into the culture and the relevant society. The internalization of values is crucial for young family members, and what work stress, with specific reference to job demands, could do is affect the significant family members from being able to adequately provide a stable home structure and an optimal environment for the internalization of these values.

The family is the primary socialization agent and when this vital core unit is affected, only some fundamental family functions are fulfilled and roles performed on a daily basis, during the weekdays when people work. The family could fulfill all of the remaining functions and roles over the weekends or enlist the assistance of spouses, family members and friends. What this study hopes to achieve is a continuing awareness that although people need to work for a living and that work is an important source of income in the lives of parents and children to ensure their financial survival, the family is able to adapt to changes in the environment, with specific reference to changing roles and workplace demands.

Thus, the interaction between family and work reflects on the family which provides the economy with workers, while consuming the goods produced by the workers. Workers, on the other hand, provide the family with resources, income, food and shelter. "It is not what a man does that



determines whether his work is sacred or secular, but why he does it" (Tozer, in Maxwell, Graves & Addington 2005: 135).

Furthermore, the researcher having worked in a financial institution, has a first-hand knowledge, understanding and experience of what work stress entails and the consequences of this on family life on a daily basis during the weekdays and sometimes over the weekends, but also how the family is able to adapt to these changes in order to survive. By speaking to individuals and discussing with them the demands of the workplace, it soon became evident that the stressful work environment was spilling over into their family lives and causing stress and conflict in their homes. What was required was for them to develop the adequate skills to be able to deal with this stress in an effective manner. The spouse could also be enlisted to provide assistance and support and be a valuable resource in helping the family member to cope with a stressful work environment.

The financial institution that the researcher was employed at, through feedback, realized the necessity for an intervention. An Employee Well-Being Center was created to provide employees with the necessary skills to manage their stress. Employees were taught to develop skills and techniques to manage the daily workplace stress. Stress management, time management and intensive planning and organizing workshops were compiled and offered to those individuals who needed these skills to help them manage the stressful workplace. The researcher has witnessed and experienced the effects of work-stress firsthand and realized that by providing the individual with the necessary skills and techniques to manage this stress, the consequences of this on family life may be reduced or eliminated.

The researcher also had an opportunity to volunteer at a daycare center and a pre-school and observed firsthand the stress that was present at the

workplace due to the work conditions or characteristics, with specific reference to the demands of the job (heavy workload and the overtime worked) on a daily basis. What is also important to note, is that the individuals affected by this stress were able to continue with the fulfillment of their basic family functions and roles, although at times they did comment that it was not always possible to do so on a daily basis during the weekdays. They also did manage to put in overtime from home as needed during the weekdays and during the weekends due to the support from family members and friends who offered assistance and support.

From the review of the literature, it is evident that although work stress, with specific reference to job demands has an effect on the family lives of employees in their day-to-day functioning during the weekdays and in some instances, over certain weekends as well, the family is able to adapt to changing roles and changes in their environment. The purpose of this research is to describe and explain the factors influencing work-family conflict, the role conflict people experience between work and the family, the spillover effect from work to home and the influence of time and energy demands of work in preventing family members from fulfilling all of their various roles and functions on a daily basis, during the work week. What is also significant to note, is that workplace support and broader social support have a vast influence with regard to reducing the effects of stress on the individual and the family.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

There is a degree of awareness of the effect of work stress on family dynamics in the United States. There are support and coping mechanisms in place, which need to be more effectively utilized. This study examines

the influence of work stress on the family; it further examines the consequences of this stress on family relationships. The focus is on the fulfillment of the functions of the family according to Parsons, a functionalist, and Murdock, a proponent of functionalism. The study also focuses on role conflict experienced by workers between their work and the family, and dysfunctions as a result of work stress according to Merton, a structural-functionalist. The ways in which the family adapts to changing roles in the environment are examined, although role conflict and dysfunctions of work stress are present. Family members are not always fulfilling their various functions and performing roles on a daily basis during the weekdays, because of job demands. In the light of the problem statement, the following specific research questions have to be answered in order to change and rectify wrong ideas, misconceptions and false assumptions:

1. What are the factors contributing to work stress and what influence do these factors have on family members?
2. Why does work stress contribute to work-family role conflict?
3. How is workplace support and social support beneficial to the individual experiencing work stress?

These questions serve as guidelines in the search for answers to the problem statement of the study. They also serve as tentative hypotheses in this qualitative study.

### **1.3 AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The manifest purpose of this study is to provide answers to the aforementioned three research questions. In order to attain this goal, a functionalist perspective is utilized to analyze existing literature and data gathered from the research. This information will be qualitatively analyzed as it relates to every particular case.

To explore the factors influencing work-family stress, the focus of this research is mainly on the fulfillment of family functions and roles, and the ways in which the family is able to adapt to role changes in the environment, although work stress, with specific reference to job demands (workload and overtime) is present and work-family role conflict and dysfunctions because of work stress is experienced by the individual employee who is also a family member with responsibilities and obligations to fulfill sexual, reproductive, economic and educational functions and instrumental-expressive roles.

In conjunction with Newman (1997: 28-29) and Merton (in Newman 1997: 38), an explanation of concepts is provided, and an application is made to explain this research study's focus on roles, role conflicts, functions, dysfunctions, non-functions, manifest functions and latent functions. Since family members are not always fulfilling their various family functions and roles because of work stress therefore, the main focus will be on:

1. Roles, meaning the behavior that is expected of a particular status. An employee is expected to perform the tasks at work for remuneration and a parent is expected to nurture and care for a child.

2. Role conflicts occur when two roles are in conflict. When the demands of one role for example, employee, conflict with the demands of another role for example, parent.

3. Functions relates in this study to work serving as a function, or a contribution to society to provide an income for the family. According to Murdock (in Ferreira, Rabe & Rautenbach 2007: 12) the nuclear family is universal as it fulfills certain functions for society; these are the sexual, reproductive, economic (this entails working to earn money) and educational functions. The family has these four important functions to fulfill so that society can continue its existence. According to Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13), the nuclear family serves two main functions, which are the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities. Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13-14) believes that for society to continue successfully, four functional prerequisites or functions, AGIL which stand for adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency have to be met. The latency function refers to pattern maintenance and tension control fulfilled by the family institution.

4. Dysfunctions refer to work stress which is dysfunctional for the family, as this affects family members negatively from performing all of their various roles and fulfilling functions on a daily basis.

5. Non-functions refer to effects or outcomes that are not important and not contributing to the structure that is being studied, therefore no function is fulfilled.

6. Manifest functions (with regards to the research, work provides a source of income for the family which is a manifest, intended function).

7. Latent functions (a latent, unintended function that work provides are the additional, unintended benefits of being employed, for example, personal growth and social interaction).

The purpose of the study is furthermore to examine the extent to which workplace support and broader social support is available from work and the family. Support entails being available to listen to problems as well as providing assistance. This includes providing help by seeking solutions and problem resolution. The purpose is also to offer recommendations that would help to alleviate the stress on family relationships, although retaining the goal of business to continue making a profit.

When the job demands (workload and work hours) are managed and dealt with by the employee in terms of acquiring and developing coping skills with particular reference to stress management, time management and planning and organizing skills, the goal of business, to continue to make a profit, is retained. It is to be noted that the researcher utilized businesses that operate to make a profit; non-profit organizations were not utilized in the study.

#### **1.4 TENTATIVE HYPOTHESES/CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENTS**

A functionalist theoretical perspective is employed as a research tool to analyze and interpret the identified research problems, and to attain the aim of the study. The approach is, *inter alia*, concerned with the contribution each institution, eg. the family makes towards social order and stability of the whole society. Since this is a qualitative study definite hypotheses are not stated yet. Hypotheses will be formulated from the data to confirm and build theory. Therefore theory is grounded in the data, hence grounded theory. In order to guide this qualitative research and with

reference to the research questions asked, the following tentative hypotheses and central theoretical statements are described:

1. The higher the work stress experienced by the individual, the higher the incidence of family members not fulfilling all of their various functions and roles on a daily basis. Work stress is the independent causal variable, while not fulfilling functions and roles is the effect or dependant variable in the research.

2. The higher the work stress experienced by the individual, the higher the work-family role conflict experienced. Work stress is the independent causal variable, while work-family role conflict is the effect or dependant variable in the research.

3. The greater the workplace support and social support available to the individual, the lesser the effects of work stress on the individual. Workplace support and social support is the independent causal variable, while the effects of work stress is the dependant variable in the research.

The independent variable points to the cause, while the dependent variable points to the effect.

## **1.5 THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE AND TECHNIQUES**

The qualitative research was conducted amongst 50 respondents in the city of Las Vegas, Nevada. The following research procedure was used in order to obtain answers to the stated research questions and to verify the tentative hypotheses: in-depth interviews in terms of an interview schedule to allow a one-on-one detailed response from the interviewee. The Structural-functionalist perspective referring to Talcott Parsons's family

functions, George P. Murdock's family functions as well as Robert K. Merton's perspective on functions, dysfunctions and non-functions underlie the interview schedule.

The Interview Schedule consisted of firstly, biographical information. Thereafter, questions were posed pertaining to the functions and purpose of work, a description of the workplace with regards to the workload and length of hours worked, conflict experienced at work, the time and energy utilized at work, support at work, spillover from work to home, fulfillment or neglect of the family functions and roles, role conflict between work and family, conflict experienced at home, support at home and finally, any additional comments that the respondents would like to make with regards to stress experienced at work and the effect that it has on their families. With regard to this research study, a description is given of how the family is affected when work stress is experienced by the employee and possible explanations are offered as to why this occurs.

## **1.6 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF TERMINOLOGY**

### **1.6.1 WORK**

For the purposes of this research, the definition of work is restricted to full-time employment, where individuals engage in an entire day's work and receive remuneration, as opposed to part-time work where individuals are not engaged in a full day's work and receive remuneration according to the number of hours worked or unpaid/volunteer work where individuals willingly offer their services and remuneration is not received. In this research study, the respondents that were interviewed, male or female, who experienced work stress, were engaged in full-time employment.



## **1.6.2 FAMILY**

“The family is an intimate domestic group made up of people related to one another by bonds of blood, sexual mating, or legal ties” (Scott and Marshall 2005: 212). The family structure in the research study is the nuclear family. “The term nuclear family is used to refer to a unit consisting of spouses and their dependent children” (Scott and Marshall 2005: 211). The type of family in the research study is “dual-earner families...where both partners are formally employed...” (Scott and Marshall 2005: 170).

## **1.6.3 FAMILY DYNAMICS**

“Within a family systems framework, the family can be defined as a complex structure consisting of an interdependent group of individuals who (1) have a shared sense of history; (2) experience some degree of emotional bonding; and (3) devise strategies for meeting the needs of individual family members and the group as a whole” (Anderson and Sabatelli 1999: 3).

“*Family systems theory* allows one to understand the organizational complexity of families, as well as the interactive patterns that guide family interactions” (Fleming 2010: 599).

With regard to this study, family dynamics refers to family relations, relationships and interactions in the fulfillment of fundamental family functions and roles according to the functionalist perspective.

According to Murdock (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 12), the nuclear family is universal as it fulfills certain functions for society. These are the sexual, reproductive, economic (this entails working to earn a living) and

educational functions. The family has these four important functions to fulfill so that society can continue its existence.

According to Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13), the nuclear family serves two main functions, which are the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities. Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13-14) believes that for society to continue successfully, four functional prerequisites or functions, AGIL which stand for adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency have to be met.

#### **1.6.4 STRESS**

“The term *stress* is used ... to refer to stressors or perceived stresses ...” (House 1981: 4). This stress exerts a negative influence on the individual, in terms of anxiety, health problems, unable to cope with the workload and overtime worked as opposed to a positive effect. “It may refer to external situational pressures (stressors) or to the responses to them (stress reactions)...” (Scott and Marshall 2005: 640). An example of stress is where the individual employee may not be communicative, he/she may become withdrawn, there could be a loss of interest in the job and there could also be a disregard for the quality of work submitted, as well as a disregard for meeting deadlines. “... the term *stressor* is used ... to refer to the actual or objective nature of a situation such as a job” (House 1981: 4). The job is the stressor that is referred to in this research study, with specific reference to the demands of the job. This entails heavy workload and working overtime. The job may or may not involve a signed contract between employer and employee, which outlines the tasks and responsibilities of the employee, the start and end of the work day, as well as the paid number of working hours per day.

### **1.6.5 JOB-RELATED STRESSORS**

“By job-related stressors, we refer to demands of a particular job” (Broman 2001: 835). The demands of the job are the individual’s stressor that is present at the workplace. In terms of this study, the stress that is experienced at work due to the characteristics of the job and working conditions is with specific reference to the job demands (heavy workload and working overtime). With regard to the current research study, the employee is unable to manage the heavy workload and working overtime. Work characteristics, with specific reference to job demands in terms of heavy workload and working overtime could affect the fulfillment of family functions and roles on a daily basis during the work week and at times, over the weekends, depending on the work schedule.

### **1.6.6 SUPPORT**

For the purposes of this research, the definition of support refers to the extent to which workplace support and social support, in terms of being available to listen to problems that the individual is experiencing as well as providing assistance by helping him/her find solutions, is available from work and family.

### **1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- When families are affected by work stress and certain important family functions, roles, responsibilities and obligations are unable to be performed on a daily basis during the work week, some respondents become very emotional, and further probing is more difficult to pursue.
- Since conflict between family and work is very “close to home” for so many respondents, emotions are affected and many of the responses are curtailed. Further probing is cautiously and empathetically attempted.

- Role conflict between work and the family is a very emotional topic and participants feel guilty at being unable to always perform what they regard as basic parental roles on a daily basis. It was communicated to them that the results of this research will contribute to assisting to the awareness of the effects that work stress has on their families, as well as on the ability of the family to adapt to changes in the environment.
- When extreme anger is displayed, especially when employers, work conditions, the overall work environment and the work atmosphere are being discussed, further probing has to be halted as the rights of the respondent are to be respected and ethical research procedures followed.

## **1.8 THE PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY**

- In Chapter 1 the introduction and orientation of the study has been provided. The research questions, tentative hypotheses and theoretical statements were formulated. The aim and purpose of the study was described.
- Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework of the study which focuses on the Functionalist theoretical perspective of Talcott Parsons, the family functions of Talcott Parsons and George P. Murdock, as well as the Structural-Functionalist theoretical perspective of Robert K. Merton. These theories are utilized to fulfill the purpose of integrating the research into a broader framework of relevant theory.
- Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in the research, together with the information on how the 50 interviews were conducted. This entails a discussion of the following: the research procedure and techniques utilized, the unit of analysis, reliability and validity of the research study,

the conducting of in-depth interviews with an interview schedule and the method used in the analyses of the data.

- Chapter 4 presents a review of the literature, which is a background to the study. The focus of this chapter is work characteristics or conditions with specific reference to job demands (heavy workload and working overtime), family characteristics and the spillover effect between work and the family. The following information serves as background to and correlates with the categories for analysis: changing roles in the family, investment in work and family roles, time and energy demands of work, work stress and physical/emotional health, role conflict between work and family, workplace support and social support and family adaptation to work stress.
- Chapter 5 provides the qualitative analyses of the data and interpretation of interviews. Verbatim quotes are given to substantiate the data and different corresponding topics have been categorized in order to answer the research questions of the study.
- Chapter 6 presents the final conclusions, recommendations for the findings and further research to be conducted. The three key research questions and relevant tentative hypotheses are answered in this chapter.

## **1.9 THE VALUE OF THE STUDY**

The sociological value and relevance of this study refers to the fact that information is described, analyzed and explained from a functionalist theoretical perspective. Endeavors to eliminate misconceptions on why, what and how family members got involved in conflict are made to serve as contributions to the study. In the light of these contributions, it is necessary and of value that an investigation be undertaken since it is important in the lives of families, which are the basis of society.

With regards to the sociological relevance, the family functions of Parsons and Murdock are utilized, in addition to the description of role conflict provided by Merton to further describe, analyze and explain the information. According to Merton (in Neuman 2000: 114), research studies and research results on social phenomena assist us to possess a more effective understanding of the social world and this enables us to assess the manner in which we can transform it for the benefit of all, as the sharing of knowledge results in progress for society.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

A functionalist theoretical perspective is employed as a research tool to analyze and interpret the identified research problems and to attain the aim of the study. In terms of integrating the research into a broader framework of relevant theory, Talcott Parsons's Functionalist theory, with specific reference to the family functions and the four functional prerequisites which have to be met in order for society to continue to exist and be effective, George P. Murdock's family functions as well as Robert K. Merton's Structural-Functionalist theory, are to be utilized to fulfill this purpose. Merton's theory is relevant to provide a foundation for the description of the role conflict that employees experience when faced with the demands of the workplace and fulfilling their role obligations as parents and spouses in the home. The focus of the research is the inability of some employees to fulfill their expected family functions and roles on a daily basis as a result of work stress, with specific reference to job demands. Structural-functionalism offers insights on the concepts of status, roles, role conflict, functions, dysfunctions, non-functions, manifest and latent functions, that are relevant to the objectives of this study.

In conjunction with Newman (1997: 28-29) and Merton (in Newman 1997: 38), an explanation of concepts is provided, and which is then applied to explain this research study's focus on roles, role conflicts, functions, dysfunctions and non-functions, and manifest and latent functions:

- \* **Roles** are the expectations of behaviors attached to the status of mother, father, spouse and employee. It is the behavior that is expected of a particular status. An employee is expected to perform the tasks at work for remuneration and a parent is expected to nurture and care for the child.
- \* **Role conflicts** refer to the situation when two roles are in conflict, when the demands of one role conflict with the demands of another role, eg. the role of mother and that of employee at work.
- \* **Functions** refer to work which serves as the economic function of the family to provide an income for the family and the family fulfills the function of providing food, clothing, shelter and socialization skills.
- \* **Dysfunctions** refer to work stress, which is dysfunctional and does not make a contribution to orderly family functioning, as family members may not be fulfilling their various functions on a daily basis due to work stress.
- \* **Non-functions**, according to Merton (in Ritzer 1996: 251), are repercussions that are no longer important to the structure that is being studied. Thus no relevant function is fulfilled.
- \* **Manifest functions** are intended functions. With regard to the research, work provides an intended source of income for the family, which is a manifest function.
- \* **Latent functions** are unintended. Latent functions of work are the additional benefits of being employed, for example, social interaction with other adults and personal growth.

Parsons's and Murdock's functionalist theories propose that the family needs to fulfill significant functions in order for society to continue its existence. Merton's structural-functionalist theory provides a foundation for the description of the role conflict that employees experience when faced with the demands of the workplace and fulfilling their role obligations as parents and spouses in the home. Functionalist theory is therefore the most adequate sociological theory for this study to provide a



foundation for the description of the significant functions that the family needs to fulfill in order to survive.

## **2.2 TALCOTT PARSONS'S, GEORGE P. MURDOCK'S AND ROBERT K. MERTON'S THEORY:**

### **2.2.1 TALCOTT PARSONS'S THEORY**

According to Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13), the nuclear family serves two main functions, which are the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities. Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 137) views society as a system and he (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 10) proposes that any social system has four basic functional prerequisites or needs which have to be met in order for society to continue to exist and be effective. Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13-14) believes that for society to continue successfully, these four functional prerequisites or functions, AGIL, which stands for adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency have to be met. Adaptation entails adapting to the environment in order to obtain necessities to support oneself and this is fulfilled by the economic institution. Goal attainment involves the setting of societal goals and the ways in which they can be attained are fulfilled by the political institution. Integration is the minimizing and settling of disputes in society which are fulfilled by the judicial institution. Latency is the pattern maintenance and tension control which are assigned to the family, education and religious institutions. Pattern maintenance in the family plays a significant role in socialization by instilling into the young members of society values and norms that are religiously sanctioned. The behavior of the young is brought into accordance with the cultural prescriptions of society and this contributes to the co-existence of members of society in an orderly manner. As an agent for tension control, the family plays a significant role in the stabilization

of adult personalities as the greater the number of stable adult personalities in society infers less conflict, and a greater inclination and ability to resolve conflicts.

To apply the theory to the current research study: the interaction between family and work reflects on the family, which provides the economy with workers, while consuming the goods produced by the workers. Workers, on the other hand, provide the family with resources, income, food and shelter. Family is functional as it provides for the physical needs of the child in terms of food, clothing and shelter, as well as socialization for the integration of the human being into the society. In terms of functions of the family, children are provided with the required socialization as the family is the primary socialization agent in the life of the child. Work is functional as well, in that it provides an income for the financial survival of the family. The family is able to exist financially in society because of the income that is provided by the employer.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 9) states that the various parts or institutions of society are interconnected and that to understand the family, this part (the family) must be understood in relation to society as a whole, with specific reference to how it contributes to maintaining the social system. Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 9-10) further states that behavior in society is governed by rules, hence the orderliness and recurring patterns of relationships. He also states that norms and values guide behavior, more specifically with regard to roles and norms, and that the main institutions of society, for example, the family, the economy, the educational and political systems are main components of the social structure, which are governed by these norms. With regard to the family, this institution is a structure, which consists of interrelated roles and norms, for example, the roles of husband, father, wife, mother,

son and daughter and these social relationships in the family are governed by norms.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 10) proposes that functional analysis studies the way in which a structure functions and this entails a study of the relationship between the various parts of the structure and their relationship to society, and from this, the functions of institutions are realized. In terms of the family, its significant function is socializing children, who are the new members of society, and this is a vital contribution to society in terms of maintaining society, as the learned shared norms and values help to maintain order, stability as well as cooperation.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 10) proposes that the basic needs of societies, the functional prerequisites (adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency) must be met if societies are going to continue to exist. A main function of the economic system linked to the adaptation function of institutions refers to providing food and shelter. These are functional prerequisites, without which people, the members of society will not survive. Without culture, referring to the latency and pattern maintenance function of the family, social life is not possible, therefore the socialization of children, the new members of society, is a functional prerequisite.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 10) also states that society is a system consisting of interrelated parts, or institutions. Each part affects every other part and the entire system. Thus, institutions are interdependent and interrelated. One of the functional prerequisites of society requires that the parts be integrated, and that this integration is based on members of society agreeing on values. This is based on value consensus.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 11) further states that the values have to be internalized and transmitted through the socialization of children, therefore the family is such a significant institution of the social system. Once these values have been socialized, they have to be maintained through social control as this helps to maintain the social order. Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 509) also states that the culture has to be learnt as well as be internalized.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 132) proposes that the female's role in the family is the expressive one as she is the one who provides warmth, security and emotional support, and that the male's role in the family is the instrumental one as he spends his day working in a society that is achievement oriented and this role leads to stress and anxiety. Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 132) further proposes that the female's expressive role is necessary for performing the two basic functions of the family (the primary socialization of young children and the stabilization of adult personalities).

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 509) states that families provide warmth, security and mutual support which is required for primary socialization, and once the personality has been developed, it needs to be kept stable, which is the second function of the family, the stabilization of adult personalities. He further states that the focus here is on the marital relationship and the emotional security and support that the husband and wife give to each other; this in turn is a protection from the stress and strain of everyday life, which affects the personality and makes it unstable.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 525) states in his theory of social differentiation and change that institutions evolve slowly and gradually, specializing in fewer functions. He states that the family

performs fewer functions and that the economy, schools, hospitals, police forces and churches perform many of the former functions of the family. This is called differentiation and specialization, which is the transfer of various functions from the nuclear family to the other structures of society.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 1038) further states that the institutions responsible for adaptation, goal attainment, integration and pattern maintenance are interrelated and that a change in one will affect the others, and furthermore, once a disturbance is introduced to a system that is in equilibrium, there will be a reaction to this disturbance to restore the system to equilibrium, but he also states that social systems do not attain complete equilibrium; they move towards this state. He further states that a reaction to the disturbance will involve some change in the system as a whole. With regard to this study, work stress (the disturbance) has an effect on the fulfillment of family functions, but the spouses could give assistance and support; the family could thus adapt to this work stress as being a disturbance to their equilibrium and continue to work towards what Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 1038) calls a moving equilibrium; social change can be perceived as moving equilibrium. Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 1038) sees social change as a process of social evolution and that change in adaptation is the main motivating force of social evolution.

### **2.2.2 GEORGE P. MURDOCK'S THEORY**

“The nuclear family is a universal human social grouping...it exists as a distinct and strongly functional group in every known society” (Murdock 1949: 2). According to Murdock (1949: 3) “...the nuclear family...always has its distinctive and vital functions”. Murdock (1949: 2-3) proposes that the nuclear family as a universal group is functional for society, as the purpose of the family is to fulfill the sexual, economic, reproductive and educational functions for society.

“In the nuclear family...we thus see assembled four functions fundamental to human social life, the sexual, the economic, the reproductive, and the educational. Without provision for the first and third, society would become extinct, for the second, life itself would cease; for the fourth, culture would come to an end. The immense social utility of the nuclear family and the basic reason for its universality thus begin to emerge in strong relief” (Murdock 1949: 10). Murdock (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 12) states that the nuclear family has these four important functions to fulfill so that society can continue its existence. Murdock (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 12) further states that the sexual function refers to limiting the sexual conduct to husband and wife only, the economic function entails working for a living for basic needs, the reproductive function entails biological reproduction to continue the species and the educational function refers to the socialization of new members of society into its culture for the maintenance of order and stability in terms of value consensus.

### **2.2.3 ROBERT K. MERTON'S THEORY**

Merton (in Haralambos and Holborn 1991: 778) proposes that functional analysis should begin with the assumption that any institution or component of society may be functional, dysfunctional or non-functional. What is also important is that the units for which a particular part is functional, dysfunctional or non-functional must be clearly stated. Merton goes on to mention that these units may be individuals, groups or society. With regard to the research study, the unit of analysis is the individual worker who is also part of a family, work is functional for the family as the economic function of providing for the family is fulfilled, however work stress is dysfunctional for the family as family functions could be neglected on a daily basis during the weekdays, due to the stress experienced in the work context.

According to Merton (in Haralambos and Holborn 1991: 778), the institutions of society should be analyzed in terms of their repercussions or impact on society and on individuals and groups within society, and these repercussions can be functional, dysfunctional or non-functional. In terms of the research study, having a job is functional for individuals as it allows them to earn a living and be financially independent. However, the stress experienced at work, due to the demands of the job, is dysfunctional for the role-fulfillment in the family, as the individual could be exhausted and drained of energy to effectively fulfill his/her family functions and roles. What Merton (in Wilson 1983: 76) proposes is that the very same structure, which is work in this research study, could have both functional (work brings in an income) and dysfunctional consequences or repercussions (as a result of work stress families could neglect to fulfill important functions).

“The entire range of sociological data can be, and much of it has been, subjected to functional analysis. The basic requirement is that the object of analysis represents a *standardized* (i.e. patterned and repetitive) item, such as social roles, institutional patterns, social processes, cultural patterns, culturally patterned emotions, social norms, group organization, social structure, devices for social control, *etc.*” (Merton 1957: 50). In the research study, the roles of husband, wife, mother, father and employee have certain obligations that need to be met on a daily or regular basis, for example, in the roles of mother and father, the parents have to ensure that their children have prompt, nutritious meals, that they have clean, appropriate clothing to wear according to the season and weather patterns, that the home that houses their children is clean and physically safe and that the children’s emotional needs are satisfied, in terms of safety. With regard to the employee, he/she has to ensure that he/she performs the work for the salary or remuneration for which he/she is paid. As one is able to gauge from the above explanation, these social roles are patterned and repetitive, thus standardized.

According to Merton (in Wilson 1983: 64-65), functional analysis occurs in steps and these individual steps showing relevance to the research study will be applied as follows:

- \* Functional analysis, in step one, starts with the highlighting of a component that needs to be explained, and with regard to the research conducted, these are the dysfunctional effects that work stress has on the family role-fulfillment.

- \* The second step is to understand and make sense of this particular component, which is work stress and this is what the research aims to do by focusing on the meaning it has for husbands, wives, children and employers. Family members may not be fulfilling their various roles and



functions on a daily basis as a result of work stress. Sometimes, conflict may occur in the family unit. What meaning does this have for society? This could cause disequilibrium and instability or even dysfunctions.

\* The third step is to highlight the consequences of the component or work stress. If these consequences are assisting the system adapt to its surroundings, they are termed functions. If they decrease the adaptation of the system, they are termed dysfunctions. According to Merton (in Newman 1997: 38), if a part of social life does not add to the existence of society, that is, if it is dysfunctional, it will soon cease to exist. Whatever persists, even if it appears to be causing disorder, must add to the existence of society in some manner. With regard to the research conducted, work stress could be dysfunctional for the family, however, a need is being met (work provides an income for the family), therefore it persists. The family is able to survive financially and economically due to both spouses (in this research study) being employed. People have to work for a living; they work to meet their needs.

\* The fourth step is to indicate the greater whole (family) for which the component (work) is thought to have consequences. By being in employment, individuals are making a contribution to society, that is, contributing towards a skilled workforce and economic growth, although the stress experienced at work could be dysfunctional for the family.

\* The fifth step is to determine what the requirements of the whole are in terms of surviving and proposes that a need exists (income) which the component (work) meets. In terms of the research conducted, work provides an income (which is a need) for the financial survival of the family, therefore it persists, although work stress could be dysfunctional for the family.

\* The sixth step completes the circle by highlighting the instrument whereby the fulfillment of the need acts back upon the first component, in what is termed a feedback circuit. A comprehensive functional explanation requires that there is a consequence (work stress) shown of component A (work) for some greater whole B (family), and it also requires that the fulfillment of some need (income) of the greater whole (family) in turn sustains component A (work). In terms of the research conducted, that family members may not always be fulfilling their various functions and roles as a result of work stress; there could be the existence of family role conflict due to the conflicting demands of work and the family, work provides an income (a need) for the financial survival of the family, therefore it persists.

### **2.3 MANIFEST AND LATENT FUNCTIONS**

According to Merton (in Newman 1997: 38), there are manifest and latent functions. Manifest functions are the intentional, purposeful consequences of people's actions that help parts of the social system to exist, and with regard to the research study, work provides a source of income for the family to ensure its financial survival, which is a manifest function. Latent functions are the unintentional consequences of people's actions that also help the social system to exist. With regard to the research study, latent functions that work provides are the additional benefits of being employed, for example, personal growth, social interaction with other adults, forming close friendships, learning from one another, sharing ideas, learning more effective methods in achieving objectives, enhancement of skills and knowledge, assisting others who are experiencing difficulties and obstacles, learning to co-operate and function within a team, offering encouragement and support when needed.

## **2.4 SOCIAL ROLES AND ROLE CONFLICT**

According to Merton (1957: 368), the work of Ralph Linton proposes that the two concepts of social status and social role are significant when a social structure is described and analyzed. Linton (in Merton 1957: 368) further states that status and role link the expectations with the behavior in a social structure and each individual in society occupies many statuses for example, in this research study computer programmer, husband, father, Methodist and for each of these statuses there is a role connected to it.

Biddle (1986: 70) states that the functional approach to role theory has concentrated its focus on the characteristics and behaviors of individuals who are in positions in a social system. He goes on to explain that roles are viewed as the standard expectations that specify and explain the behaviors. Individuals that are a part of the social system have been socialized as to what is required in terms of behaviors and expectations with regards to the norms. It is expected of them to adhere to the norms in terms of their own behavior and to sanction those who do not. Functional role theory describes the different components or institutions of social systems and further explains why stability is present and how obligation to adhere to the norms is expected of individuals. With regard to this research study, employees are paid a salary and they are expected and obligated to ensure that the daily objectives of the job are fulfilled in terms of their contractual obligations. This may take up family time as a result of completing the day's work and this could in turn affect the performance of family roles on a daily basis during the weekdays.

According to Newman (1997: 28-29), with regards to family roles, in the parent-child role both parent and child are connected by rights, privileges and certain obligations. The parent is responsible for ensuring that he/she is fulfilling his/her obligations with regards to the child, otherwise he/she

could be accused of abuse/maltreatment and causing harm to the child. The child needs to receive guidance from his/her parents. With regard to this research study, the focus is on the family and the fulfillment of significant roles associated with the status of mother, father and child/children.

Merton (1957: 369) states that a certain social status involves many connected roles and not just one connected role and he proposes that this is a fundamental attribute of social structure which is called role-set, which are the different role relationships that individuals have when they are in a certain status. An example in the research study, is of the status of computer programmer and its particular role-set which relates the computer programmer to his/her subordinates, to his/her colleagues, to his/her manager, to the owners of the company and to the external clients for whom the software is being designed.

According to Merton (1957: 369), the role-set varies from the structural pattern of multiple roles. "... multiple roles refer to the complex of roles associated, not with a *single* social status, but with the *various* statuses ... in which individuals find themselves – the roles, for example, connected with the distinct statuses of teacher, wife, mother, Catholic, ..." (Merton 1957: 369) or in this research study, information technology specialist, wife, mother, Hindu. "We designate this complement of social statuses of an individual as his *status-set*, each of the statuses in turn having its distinctive role-set" (Merton 1957: 369-370). Merton (1976: 9) further states that in some instances values conflict in the person's status-set. "The more married women at work in the labor market, the more subject to competing obligations" (Merton 1976: 9) and that "... the conflicting demands of different statuses ... involve *different* people in the role-sets of the conflicting statuses (the demands of an employer, for example, and of a spouse)" (Merton 1976: 10). In terms of this research study, the demands

of work and employer could compete with that of the spouse and child. The individual could be placed in a position of conflicting statuses; the individual could thus find himself/herself between two conflicting demands or expectations.

“A conception basic to sociology holds that individuals have multiple social roles and tend to organize their behavior in terms of the structurally defined expectations assigned to each role” (Merton 1957: 116). Merton (1957: 116) further states that the less cohesive the society, the more often will people experience the strain of social roles that are in conflict with each other and an example offered by Merton is that of the professional woman divided between the demands of her family and her work, which is also a part of this research study. He further proposes that there are conflicting demands made of the individual person who possesses many roles, and that the repeated conflict between roles is not functional for society and the individual.

Bates and Harvey (in Biddle 1986: 70) state that social structures are a number of assigned social positions and there are norms which prescribe and proscribe behaviors. They further state that a portion of the norms that apply to a certain position guide general behavior, whilst others guide relationships between a central position and a particular counter position and that roles apply to the achievement of particular functions. With regard to this research study, employees are recruited for the job and there are norms that prescribe and proscribe their behavior as to the requirements and standards of the work that is to be performed; there are consequences for the individual employee if these expectations are not met. This very same employee is one who is also a part of a family and there are norms and expectations that have to be met as a spouse and as a parent as well.

According to Biddle (1986: 82) "... *role conflict* ... is normally defined as the concurrent appearance of two or more incompatible expectations for the behavior of a person". Newman (1997: 29) states that the behaviors and expectations of certain roles are so powerful that individuals experience role conflict when the individual is in two conflicting statuses at the same time and the demands of one role conflict with the demands of the other. When two demanding roles are in conflict with each other, the individual could feel very conflicted and the obligations of one role could be neglected to meet the demands of the other; with specific reference to the research study, the individual could neglect some of the demands of the family (role obligations) on a daily basis during the weekdays by meeting the demands of work (job demands).

Biddle (1986: 82) further states that when an individual experiences role conflict, he/she experiences stress and that both the individual and system may be in disorder. This is the focus of the research study as job demands could result in work stress on the individual and the work-family role conflict that he/she could experience.

Stryker and Macke, Van de Vliert, Van Sell, Brief & Schuler, Fisher and Gitelson (in Biddle 1986: 82) support the view that there is the existence of role conflict in organizations and role conflict is connected with the stress that is present in that particular context. This is the focus of the research study as work-family role conflict could be experienced by family members due to the stress experienced in the work context.

Stryker and Macke, Lopata, Skinner (in Biddle 1986: 82) propose that there is the existence of conflicts between expectations connected with traditional family roles of homemakers and those connected with careers. They further propose that this role conflict is stressful for women and that this is a recurrent experience. In terms of the research study, the focus is

on the stress that the individual could experience as a result of the possible role conflict between the demands of the job and the demands of the family.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

Parsons and Murdock have proposed that the functions of the family need to be fulfilled in order for society to exist. For Murdock this means that the sexual, reproductive, economic and educational functions are to be fulfilled by the family so that society can continue its existence. For Parsons the nuclear family serves two main functions, which are the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities. He believes that for society to continue successfully, four functional prerequisites or functions, AGIL which stand for adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency have to be met and fulfilled by different institutions, namely the economy, polity, judiciary and the fiduciary relating to the family and education.

Merton's theory serves to explain that the very same structure could be both functional and dysfunctional as in the example of work. Work serves to provide for the family from a financial perspective, although the stress experienced in the work context could become dysfunctional for the family, as vital role-fulfillment may not be met by family members.

In addition to this, the Structural-Functionalist theory focuses on the complexity of social structure with specific reference to roles and in terms of the behaviors and expectations attached to these roles, thereby serving to provide us with an understanding of the role conflict that the individual could experience when the demands of one role are in conflict with another.

Merton's theory further explains that the repeated conflict between roles is not functional for the society and the individual. This research will focus on the adaptation of the family, although the individual's family roles could be in conflict with the individual's role at work; that is why the family functions that are proposed by Murdock and Parsons as well as Merton's Structural-Functionalist theory are appropriate to serve as the theoretical foundation for this research study.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, an explanation of the methodology used in this research study will be discussed. The qualitative research procedure and techniques were selected to ensure that the researcher was able to elicit as much information as possible, whilst at the same time ensuring that research ethics were followed and empathy was displayed to the respondents at all times. The type of study utilized in the research, which is descriptive and explanatory will be discussed, as well as the unit of analysis and the ways in which the concepts of reliability and validity are used in qualitative research. The conducting of interviews, with the use of an interview schedule as a guideline to conduct in-depth interviews will then be discussed, as well as the method in which the data was analyzed. The following research procedures were utilized to obtain answers to the stated research questions to verify the hypotheses and build theory.

#### **3.2 THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE AND TECHNIQUES**

The qualitative research procedure was conducted amongst 50 working respondents living in the city of Las Vegas, Nevada, employing directive, in-depth interviews guided by an interview schedule.

With regard to the type of study, descriptive research is used by giving a description of how the family is affected when work stress, with specific reference to job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) is experienced by the employee. Descriptive research is a comprehensive

portrayal of the subject and gives a detailed account of types of individuals or of social activities like fulfilling family functions (Neuman 2000: 21-22).

Explanatory research is simultaneously applied to offer explanations as to why work stress occurs in families. Explanatory research proceeds further in terms of looking at a specific topic and offering possible explanations for why work stress and not always fulfilling family functions and roles on a daily basis during the weekdays have happened.

Thus, in descriptive research a detailed account is portrayed of how things are and then explanatory research proceeds to go on to pinpoint why something occurs.

### **3.2.1 UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

“The most common unit of analysis in social science is the individual...”(Bailey 1994: 62). With regard to this research study, the focus is on the individual worker, who is also a family member and whose work stress, with specific reference to job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) has an effect on his/her family.

### **3.2.2 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

According to Neuman (2000: 170), qualitative researchers acknowledge reliability and validity and utilize these concepts in their research studies.

Reliability means being dependable and therefore qualitative researchers employ techniques, for example, in-depth interviews to record their data in a consistent manner (Neuman 2000: 170) by way of an interview schedule

guiding the interviews. The same data would be collected in repeated interviews of the same respondents. Reliability thus refers to consistency.

“Validity means truthful. It refers to the bridge between a research construct and the data” (Neuman 2000: 171) gathered. Therefore, the research technique, the interview schedule, should measure what it is supposed to measure, eg. work stress and family functions.

With regards to validity, Neuman (2000: 171) proposes that this implies being truthful. By using a qualitative research technique, an honest description of work-family life that is true to the happenings and experiences of people being interviewed and observed, has been given in this research study. Qualitative research entails the descriptions of life stories and everyday happenings in the lives of the respondents.

“Qualitative researchers are more interested in authenticity than validity. *Authenticity* means giving a fair, honest, and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of someone who lives it everyday. Qualitative researchers are ... more concerned with giving a candid portrayal of social life that is true to the experiences of people being studied” (Neuman 2000: 171).

Neuman (2000: 171) proposes that most qualitative researchers focus on how to obtain a thorough understanding of people’s viewpoints about happenings in the social world and then give a comprehensive report of the research, as was done in the research study with respondents being asked to elaborate on their responses and probing was utilized to elicit further information as well.

Neuman (2000: 126) states that qualitative researchers highlight the individual as one with feelings and the close relationship that develops

with the accumulation of information in this type of study. Respondents felt at ease when the researcher confirmed that they will remain anonymous in the research study, that all of the information obtained is confidential, for research purposes only and that the respondents will be making a contribution to social science. Due to the nature of the topic, the researcher had to tread cautiously and patiently at times when probing was utilized.

Neuman (2000: 126) further states that the researcher shows sensitivity and is transparent about his or her being involved and interacting with respondents in the research study. Respondents were asked to share incidents and empathy was shown by the researcher when respondents became very emotional and guilt was expressed when they felt that they were unable to always perform on a daily basis what they regarded as basic parental and spousal functions and roles.

With regards to objectivity, the researcher ensured that her personal opinions, race and religious preference did not affect or influence the data. The outcome of the study is independent of her personal views therefore, the data is value-free.

### **3.2.3 CONDUCTING OF INTERVIEWS**

An Interview Schedule was used as a guideline to conduct in-depth interviews to gather information in the research study. This technique was chosen due to the sensitivity of the information and to allow a one-on-one detailed response from the interviewees.

Where relevant, when questions were posed to respondents, they were encouraged to elaborate in detail and probing was utilized. Furthermore,

the questions were structured so as to elicit as much information from the respondents as possible.

The Interview Schedule consisted of firstly, biographical information. Thereafter, questions were posed pertaining to the functions and purpose of work, the workplace, job conditions, with specific reference to job demands, workload, deadlines, overtime, conflict at work, workplace support, the family, role conflict between work and family, spillover from work to family, fulfillment or neglect of family roles and functions, conflict at home, family support and finally, any additional comments that respondents would like to make with regards to stress experienced at work and the effect that it has on their families.

The Interview Schedule was divided into sections as follows:

**Section One:** questions relating to the functions and purpose of work.

**Section Two:** questions relating to the workplace (tasks and responsibilities), the focus being on work stress, with specific reference to job demands (workload and overtime), as well as the time and energy demands of work, conflict at work and workplace support.

**Section Three:** questions relating to the family, the focus being on family members fulfillment or neglect of family functions and roles on a daily basis, as well as on spillover between work and the family, conflict at home and family support.

**Section Four:** questions relating to role conflict between work and the family.

**Section Five:** respondents were asked to make any additional comments with regard to stress experienced at work and the effect that it has on their families.

In order to interview respondents from various occupations, businesses and schools were approached, the purpose of the research study was explained and respondents who were experiencing work stress were requested to participate in the study. Consent was obtained from them and interviews were scheduled for the duration of approximately one hour, with the use of an interview schedule. It should be noted that consent was obtained from the respondents prior to conducting the interviews, by explaining to them exactly what the research entailed. In addition to this consent forms were signed and it was communicated to them that this research study was strictly confidential, that they will remain anonymous in the study and their names and identities will not be revealed. The information obtained was for research purposes only and will not be discussed with anyone. By participating in the study, the respondents were informed that they were making a contribution to social science research.

The interviews were conducted either at the workplace of the participants, or at home, usually after working hours, depending on the feasibility. The research study consisted of male and female employees of various racial and ethnic groups, living in a nuclear family structure. The respondents were in the 33 to 53 age range and to protect the identity of the respondents, they will be known as respondent 1, respondent 2 etcetera in this research study. With regards to credibility, fifty individuals from managerial, supervisory and subordinate levels were interviewed.

The target population for this research study were schoolteachers from preschool, kindergarten and elementary private and public schools, information technology specialists from a property management company

who train and provide support to clients using a property management windows system, real estate consultants from real estate companies who are involved in the sales of homes and provide customer service, administrative personnel from public schools and a medical insurance company, sales and customer service personnel from a property management company, customer service associates and managers from financial institutions and retail banks and computer programmers who are involved in the designing of computer games software.

Respondents voluntarily shared their work experiences and spoke candidly and shared insight of how work characteristics or conditions, with specific reference to job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) affect their family lives in terms of fulfilling family functions and roles on a daily basis during the weekdays.

#### **3.2.4 ANALYSES OF THE DATA**

What the researcher did, is looked for categories of responses to analyze the data, which are the respondents' common problems and solutions. This helps to focus the attention on more specific variables. Then the researcher found dependant and independent variables constituting the tentative hypotheses. This qualitative study illustrates the key, inductive principles of grounded theory, where data are collected in the absence of definite hypotheses, which develop later during analysis to eventually build new theory.

According to Neuman (2000: 125), all that a qualitative researcher commences with is a research question, and theory develops later when the data is being gathered. "A qualitative researcher begins with a research question and little else" (Neuman 2000: 146). However, the

possibility of tentative hypotheses stemming from the research questions does exist. These can act as guidelines for the research.

“Theory develops during the data collection process. This more inductive method means that theory is built from the collected data or grounded in the data. Moreover, conceptualization and operationalization occur simultaneously with data collection and preliminary data analysis ... It makes qualitative research flexible and lets data and theory interact...” (Neuman 2000: 146).

Verbatim responses from respondents have been recorded and utilized to confirm the data. Interviews were steered according to specific topics before they were qualitatively categorized into corresponding topics in order to analyze and interpret the data. Different corresponding topics became categories. The categories of responses were used to analyze the data. Thereafter the analysis on specific data was conducted to come to specific conclusions.

### **3.3 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the research procedures and techniques utilized in the research study were discussed; these procedures and techniques were appropriately selected to successfully obtain answers to the research questions and to verify the hypotheses to eventually build theory. It has been significantly noted that this has been a sensitive topic for some of the respondents and care was taken to ensure that research ethics were followed and that the respondents' confidentiality and consent were respected at all times. The type of study utilized in the research, which is descriptive and explanatory was also discussed, as well as the unit of analysis and the ways in which the concepts of reliability and validity are used in qualitative research. The conducting of interviews, with the use of



an interview schedule as a guideline to conduct in-depth interviews was then discussed, as well as the method in which the data was analyzed.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The focus of this chapter is on work conditions or characteristics, family characteristics and the spillover effect between work and the family. The following information will serve as background to and correlate with the categories for analysis: changing roles in the family, investment in work and family roles, time and energy demands of work, work stress and physical/emotional health, role conflict between work and family, workplace support and social support and family adaptation to work stress.

\*Work conditions or characteristics: The focus here are on the factors that could influence work-family stress with specific reference to heavy workload and working overtime. This review is to provide an understanding of the effect that job demands could have on the family.

\*Family characteristics: In this section the highlight is that the presence of preschool children and schoolgoers in the home could contribute to work/family conflict. What could further contribute to work/family conflict is the unavailability of reliable, quality childcare.

\*Spillover effect between work and the family: In this topic, the moods and behaviors from the workplace could be carried over to the family and in turn, have an effect on family members. According to Crouter, Kelly and Voydanoff, Lambert (in Keene and Quadagno 2004: 3), work spillover happens when emotions, attitudes and behaviors from the workplace carry over into the family or when the time spent with family is limited by work.

\*Changing roles in the family: What is discussed here is that family roles are changing and that the family has to cope with the changes in society in order to survive. Glass (2000: 129) proposes that being a successful parent and succeeding as an employee is a challenge to attain and parents have to fit in the time to take care of their families whilst they have to cope with their roles as employees.

\*Investment in work and family roles: What is important to note here is that individuals could invest in both their work and family roles as both of these domains could be equally important to them, hence the work/family conflict. A discussion of the utilitarian approach to role investment and the social identity approach to role investment indicates that these two approaches are dissimilar in describing the sources of work-family conflict and the ways in which work-family balance are attained.

\*Time and energy demands of work: This section provides a discussion of how work could take away from the family in terms of time and energy. Individuals could be depleted of energy and have insufficient time available due to work constraints. Hochschild (in Carlson, Derr & Wadsworth 2003: 100) proposes that there is increased competition at work and workers need to give more of their time and energy to enhance their skills and keep their jobs.

\*Work stress and physical/emotional health: What is highlighted here is that due to the demands of the job, the physical/emotional health of the individual could be affected. This could take the form of various physical and emotional ailments that are stress related as confirmed by medical practitioners, for example sciatica, neck and shoulder pain, headaches and depression.

\*Role conflict between work and family: In this section, the conflicting demands of work and family are discussed. Employees could experience role conflict when faced with the demands of the workplace and fulfilling their role obligations as parents and spouses in the home. Newman (1997: 29) states that the behaviors and expectations of certain roles are so

powerful that individuals experience role conflict when the individual is in two conflicting statuses at the same time and the demands of one role conflicts with the demands of the other.

\*Workplace support and social support: The focus here is on workplace support and broader social support that could be valuable to the individual experiencing workplace stress, as assistance and workable solutions could help to reduce the effects of the stress on the person.

\*Family adaptation to work stress: It is also significant to note that the family could have the ability to adapt to the changes in the environment in order to survive as a functional unit. The family could also utilize certain strategies to adapt to the conflict between work and the family for example, families may scale back and be the one-career, one-job family (Becker and Moen 1999: 995). This is where either spouse has the career and the remaining one has the job. It is usually the husband/male that has the career and the wife/female the job as she is the one that usually makes changes in her lifestyle when she starts a family. This could reduce the stress on the family as both may not have to put in the overtime that may be required for the career option.

The theories of Talcott Parsons, George P. Murdock and Robert K. Merton will be integrated with the literature in this chapter. With regard to this study, family dynamics refers to family relations, relationships and the ways in which interactions occur in the fulfillment of family functions and role obligations from a functionalist perspective.

According to Keene and Quadagno (2004: 2), three general groups of factors relate to whether employed men and women are able to deal with the many demands from work as well as the family. These are job characteristics, family characteristics and the spillover effect between work and the family.

## 4.2 WORK CONDITIONS OR CHARACTERISTICS

The purposes of this research study, referring specifically to job demands, entails the focus on heavy workload and working overtime. Broman (2001: 836) studies the connection between job-related stressors and family life among African Americans. He supports the view that job demands enact an important role in the lives of individuals in terms of contributing to workplace stress, which in turn affects their family life. “By *job-related stressors*, we refer to demands of a particular job” (Broman 2001: 835). This viewpoint is significant to serve as a link to the research conducted as it indicates the effect that work has on family life. In terms of the current research study, the effect that the demands of a job (heavy workload and working overtime), could have on family life is that family members may not always be fulfilling the family functions and role obligations on a daily basis during the weekdays due to the physical and mental exhaustion experienced at the end of a work day. Work stress (the disturbance) has an effect on the fulfillment of family functions and roles, but the spouses could share the chores to ensure the fulfillment of role obligations and give assistance and support to ensure the fulfillment of functions. The family could thus adapt to this work stress as being a disturbance as well as a necessity to their equilibrium and stability.

Voydanoff (1988: 758) further states that the work role characteristics that are strongly associated with work/family conflict are number of hours worked as well as pressure in terms of the workload; having too much work to complete as well as having to work hard or fast. These factors show that there are high levels of time and energy demands that are related to work. Kelly and Voydanoff (1985: 372) support the view that working overtime, with specific reference to the amount of overtime worked was positively related to job tension and Voydanoff and Kelly (1984: 889)

further reiterate that important factors that are associated with a lack of time are working long hours and overtime.

Piotrkowski (in Kelly and Voydanoff 1985: 369) proposes that there is a depletion of energy in the home because of work demands and according to Blair-Loy and Wharton (2002: 827), individuals have expressed concerns that work has a deleterious effect on their families and personal lives. Their jobs entail long days with a very heavy workload, which causes a great degree of work stress. Moen and Yu (2000: 291) support the view that women in dual-earner families are giving accounts of more stress and overload. This entails having a job that is demanding as well as the long hours that they are working (work conditions) which is affecting them negatively.

Almeida, Maggs & Galambos, Parcel and Menaghan (in Bumpus, Crouter & McHale 1999: 466) propose that evidence is growing that daily work experiences of parents are having an effect on the functioning of the family and Greenberger, O'Neil & Nagel (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 466) state that there is a connection between stressful job conditions and a reduction in time spent with children. With regard to a reduction in time spent with children, as this could be a disturbance to the stability of the family, ways to manage the individual's time and tasks could help to deal with this problem and the help of the spouse could be enlisted to spend time with the children. Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler & Wethington (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 466) propose that there is a connection between stressful job conditions and conflict occurring more often in marriages. In terms of marital conflict occurring more often in marriages as a result of the stressful job conditions, the couple could discuss ways in which this conflict may be resolved as well as ensuring that this conflict occurs less often.

Menaghan and Parcel (in Peterson and Gerson 1992: 534) reiterate that pressures at work as well as a heavy workload contribute to stress at home and this affects relationships pertaining to marriage and parenthood. With regard to the current research study, family interaction time could be very limited during the weekdays when spouses/parents are expected to work extended hours to meet deadlines and fulfill contractual obligations. The family, however has the ability to adapt to changes and the spouse could provide major assistance and support in fulfilling some of the family functions and roles. According to Crouter, MacDermid, McHale & Perry-Jenkins (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 469), obligations relating to the workplace may likely have more of an effect on family functioning on weekdays than on weekends. In terms of the current research study, employees may not be able to always fulfill all of their family functions and roles on a weekday, but may be able to do so over the weekends when there could be no obligation to be present at the workplace.

Voydanoff (1988: 750) states that the work role characteristics that may be associated with work/family conflict are the amount of work time as well as the scheduling of work time and job demands. When employees work long hours, it prevents them from being physically available for family activities, whilst evening and weekend work often prevent workers from being available for family activities that occur at specific times with specific reference to activities that are related to school and family occasions. Milkie and Peltola (in Keene and Quadagno 2004: 2) propose that work demands influence a person's role balance with specific reference to hours worked in a week.

Relevance to this research study:

\*In terms of this current research study, respondents could, in addition to their regular work hours, work overtime as well, to ensure the completion of tasks on a daily basis. It is significant to note that although an

individual experiences stress at work in terms of heavy workload and working overtime, and the family is affected by this, the family could have the ability to adapt to change in the environment and manage this workplace stress, which could be regarded as a disturbance to the stability and equilibrium of the family.

### **4.3 FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS**

According to Goode, Netemeyer, Boles & McMurrin (in Marks, Huston, Johnson & MacDermid 2001: 1083), marriage, in addition to parenthood, paid work, housework, kinship, friendship and leisure interests has been seen as causing stress, conflict as well as overload. Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 9) states that the various parts of society are interconnected and that to understand the family, this part (the family) must be understood in relation to society as a whole, with specific reference to how it contributes to maintaining the social system, therefore the family has to ensure the fulfillment of its functions.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 10) also states that functional analysis studies the way in which a structure functions and this entails a study of the relationship between the various parts of the structure and their relationship to society, and from this, the functions of institutions are realized. In terms of the family, its significant function is socializing children, who are the new members of society, and this is a vital contribution to society in terms of maintaining society, as the learned shared norms and values help to maintain order, stability as well as cooperation. This important function of socializing children has to be fulfilled by the family members.

Voydanoff and Kelly (1984: 888) state that individual, family and work characteristics contribute to the lack of time that employed parents are



experiencing. Women are very importantly more likely to comment on a lack of time than men; this indicates the demands of paid work and having many family responsibilities. Having preschool or school-age children in a family is very importantly related to a lack of time, as preschoolers as well as schoolgoers put great time demands on their parents. Preschool children need to be supervised very closely and the adults who are providing the child care need to possess a high energy level. Voydanoff and Kelly (1984: 888) further state that school and external activities of school-age children are often in conflict with parents' work schedules in respect of the timing.

Voydanoff (1988: 749) states that the relationships between work role characteristics, family structure demands and work/family conflict were studied; the findings suggest that the amount and scheduling of work time, job demands and having children in the home are associated with work/family conflict among men as well as women. Voydanoff (1988: 759) further states that the number of hours that are worked weekly, the pressure of the workload as well as having children of all ages in the home are importantly associated with work/family conflict for men and women.

Voydanoff and Kelly (1984: 891) state that the demands that are related to a lack of time focus on being a female employed parent, having preschool and school-age children in the home, the amount of work hours worked as well as the scheduling of the work hours. Greenhaus and Kopelman, Katz and Piotrkowski, Kelly and Voydanoff, Voydanoff and Kelly (in Voydanoff 1988: 751) further reiterate that the presence of preschool children in the home is consistently associated with measures of work/family conflict and according to Voydanoff and Kelly (in Voydanoff 1988: 751), the presence of school-age children in the home is also associated with a lack of time.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 132) states that the female's role in the family is the expressive one as she is the one who provides warmth, security and emotional support, and that the male's role in the family is the instrumental one as he spends his day working in a society that is achievement oriented and this role leads to stress and anxiety. With regard to dual-earner families as is the case in this research study, the family could adapt to the job demands in their environment (workload and working hours) by managing their time.

Peterson and Gerson (1992: 534) refer to dual-earner couples where pressures at work urge each spouse to lessen responsibility for arrangements pertaining to child care may be a significant source of conflict at home. Peterson and Gerson (1992: 534-535) further state that the pressures at work affect men's and women's accountability pertaining to child care arrangements and that work-family conflicts results in stress for men and women. Kossak (in Glass and Estes 1997: 295) reiterates that overtime worked or problems with arranging child care results in conflict between work and the family. In terms of this current research study, this difficulty of arranging good quality child care could have an effect on the well-being of both spouses and they could experience problems concentrating on work obligations thereby resulting in work/family conflict.

Glass and Estes (1997: 296) refer to conflict that occurs when there is a lack of assistance with child-care, is evident in the mental health of workers. In terms of the current study, employees could request assistance from family members and friends to assist with caring for their children when overtime work could be required to complete their tasks and meet their deadlines. Ross and Mirowsky (in Glass and Estes 1997: 296) state that working mothers who experienced difficulties in organizing child-care

endured greater depression. In terms of the current study, parents could ensure that there is an alternative plan for childcare arrangements if there is a delay at work or if they are obligated to attend meetings after hours. According to Galinsky (in Glass and Estes 1997: 296), in a national survey, problems with child-care arrangements had an effect on the well-being of both mothers and fathers as it decreased their well-being.

Relevance to this research study:

\*In terms of this current study, having preschool or school-age children in a family could be related to limited time available for parents, as preschoolers as well as schoolgoers place demands on their parents as they may not be independent enough to perform tasks for themselves without adult supervision. In terms of childcare, what parents could do as part of their planning and organizing their children's care is that they could make enquiries in their neighborhoods as to the facilities that are available when there is a crisis, so that they are not left stranded when their regular childcare facility is unable to operate for the day and they are unable to take paid or unpaid time off from work.

#### **4.4 THE SPILLOVER EFFECT FROM WORK TO HOME**

In terms of the literature review, work stress influences the family lives of employees as stress is transferred to the home environment and "...the transmission of stress between work and family is one observable manifestation of negative spillover" (Pleck in Grzywacz, Almeida & McDonald 2002: 29).

According to Murdock (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 12), the family has four important functions, which are the sexual, reproductive, economic and educational functions to fulfill so that society can continue its existence. In terms of this study, individuals could experience the daily effects of

spillover on their families. As a result of spillover due to job demands (the disturbance) families could neglect to fulfill important functions, with specific reference to the sexual and educational functions. People have to work for a living and families have to adapt to changes in the environment in order to survive as a functional, societal unit. The spouses could give assistance and support to fulfill family functions. The family could thus adapt to this disturbance to their equilibrium and continue to work towards achieving stability in the family.

According to Greenhaus and Parasuraman (in Schieman and Taylor 2001: 472), individuals perceive work-family spillover to be where parts of one domain intervenes or throws the other into disorder. Piotrkowski, Repetti, Rothbard (in Seery, Corrigan & Harpel 2008: 464) state that stress at work may spillover and a person may become very emotional at home, withdraw from others or have a deficit of energy.

According to Pearlin (in Schieman, Whitestone & Van Gundy 2006: 243), the stress process model proposes that the conditions in a role may influence the stressors there and then spillover into other roles. Marks, et al. (2001: 1084) comment that it is of great significance to know how the exposure to one role affects another, so that the role affected by the exposure may be understood in terms of why and how this occurs.

Repetti (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 472) states that greater work demands are related to individuals withdrawing from interactions with family members on a behavioral and emotional level. This is relevant to the current research study as respondents could temporarily withdraw from family members, but the spouse could also provide support and help in this regard where the stressed spouse could be allowed to recover from the stresses of the workplace in terms of the workload and overtime worked. Repetti (in Rothbard 2001: 660) further states that energy depletion makes one want

to be left alone and not interact with anyone. A bank teller said that after having to deal with customers and stressful incidents, when she arrived home, she did not want to talk to anyone.

Robinson and Godbey (in Moen and Yu 2000: 292) state that employees feel that they are being overworked and have to keep up with the fast pace and Repetti, Repetti and Wood (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 466) propose that short-term, work related stress has an effect on the person in that there is a withdrawal from the family when the worker returns home from work. It could be possible that after a meal and resting for a while, the individual could feel more energized and rejuvenated and then attend to the fulfillment of family functions and roles, or the spouse could provide assistance and support and attend to the fulfillment of family functions and roles. According to Bolger, et al., Burke, Small and Riley (in Bowen 1998: 30), when work stressors spillover into the family, this is assumed to have repercussions that are negative for the adaptation of families of married men and women.

Relevance to the research study:

\*With regard to the research study, individuals could experience an effect on their families when problems are experienced at work. This spillover effect is significant as it provides an understanding of how problems in the work environment is carried over to the home and affects the family. The spillover concept is invaluable in understanding work-family stress and conflict as it provides a description and an explanation of how the family is affected when the individual experiences stress at work and this is carried over to the home.

THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS WILL SERVE AS BACKGROUND TO AND CORRELATE WITH THE CATEGORIES FOR ANALYSIS:

#### **4.5 CHANGING ROLES IN THE FAMILY**

Bianchi (2000: 401) states that although participation in the labor force has risen rapidly for mothers, the time that mothers spend with children is relatively stable over time and in a marriage, fathers are spending an increasing amount of time with their children than previously. Bianchi (2000: 403) further states that there could also be the underestimation of how women's changed roles in the labor force are changing men's domestic roles and this includes men's amount of time involved in child rearing.

Bond, Galinsky and Swanberg, Hochschild, Moen (in Keene and Quadagno 2004: 1) state that in terms of the family, men's contribution to household chores has increased; it has more than doubled but, women, even those who work on a full-time basis throughout the year, are still primarily responsible for their homes as well as child care. Schor (1991: 37) proposes that the workloads of employed women have already increased and men are performing the traditional male tasks such as outdoor work and home repairs as well as the cooking, cleaning and child-care. Kelly and Voydanoff (1985: 368) state that the multiple roles of worker, parent and spouse place demands on the individual in terms of time, energy and commitment to enact the role competently.

According to Desai and Jain (in Bianchi 2000: 403) "... mothers' time spent in direct childcare in rural India did not vary greatly with the extent of mothers' involvement in economic activity. Even among the least economically active women ... mothers spent no more than 1.5 hours per day in childcare. Children received much more attention than an hour and

a half per day...but most of the time someone other than their mother cared for them”. With regard to the current research study, it could be that having an employed mother and father may not have a negative effect on the lives of children. From an economic standpoint, it could be that they may actually benefit by having two parents who are in the workforce.

Nock and Kingston (in Bianchi 2000: 405) propose that a reason why children of employed mothers suffer few negative effects is that even mothers who were not employed spend a small part of their time that involves direct interaction with their children, and this reduces the differences between mothers who are employed and those who are not. In terms of the current research study, the working mothers could organize their tasks and their time so that they are spending sufficient time interacting with their children in order for the family role obligations to be met.

According to Glass (2000: 133), individuals are more available to attend to the demands of work in what has become an economy that operates all 24 hours. With regard to this research study, individuals could be working overtime at work or they may have home offices and could carry on working at home, and could neglect the fulfillment of roles with specific reference to chores during the weekdays, for example, cleaning their homes, doing laundry and the grocery shopping, as additional time could be spent ensuring that important work tasks are completed and that they are available to deal with work emergencies that may arise. They may be able to perform the neglected chores over the weekends when their physical presence at work may not be required. Even the preparing of nutritious, home made meals could be neglected and more take-out meals, which are lacking in nourishment, could be purchased for the sake of convenience due to time and energy constraints (Glass 2000:135). This could happen during the weekdays, but over the weekends, home made

meals could be prepared by the parents for the entire work week as well. This could avoid the purchasing of unhealthy take-out meals lacking in nourishment.

Greenstein (in Presser 2000: 94) comments that in terms of time, women are not at home long enough to take on traditional home obligations and this causes marital disharmony. In terms of the current research study, the family could have the ability to adapt to changing roles as the husband and wife could share the family roles and obligations and they could discuss their marital problems and possibly seek some resolution to them. Presser (1989: 523) supports the view that parents face problems with time management and it is work that has an influence on child care and the stand that working parents take with regard to both work and child care.

Relevance to the research study:

\*Families could adapt to the changing environment and could continually seek ways in which to adapt successfully. This notion of duality serves as a contribution to this research study as it could indicate the difficulty of successfully coping with both roles as a parent and as an employee, as employers could communicate to employees that they are expected to spend whatever time is necessary at work to ensure that their tasks are completed. This could leave the employee with insufficient time to spend with his/her family members on a daily basis and could neglect to fulfill important family roles during the weekdays.

#### **4.6 INVESTMENT IN WORK AND FAMILY ROLES**

According to Lobel (1991: 507), the utilitarian approach to role investment and the social identity approach to role investment are dissimilar in describing the sources of work-family conflict and the ways in which work-family balance are attained. "...*work investment*...refers to



specific attitudes and behaviors associated with people's devotion to work roles...*family investment* refers to specific attitudes and behaviors associated with people's devotion to family roles...the more a person expresses attitudes and behaviors in support of a role, the greater that person's degree of *role investment*" (Lobel 1991: 508).

In terms of this current research study, individuals could experience both work and family to be equally pleasing, and could feel the same pressure to invest in both work and family. Greenhaus and Beutell (in Lobel 1991: 509) propose that if the pressure to take part in both work and family are equal, the greatest level of work-family conflict may be experienced. Goode, Greenhaus and Beutell, Holahan and Gilbert, Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek & Rosenthal (in Lobel 1991: 510) state that there is competition between the work and family roles, therefore the link between the utilitarian approach and the role conflict models of the effects of work on the family (Lobel 1991: 510).

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985: 77) further state that the focus on sources of conflict between work and family does not mean that work and family cannot support each other; in this current research study, individuals could experience support from both work and family. For instance, work could allow parents to stay home with their sick child or alternatively, family members could assist with the completion of work tasks. Emmons, Biernat, Tiedje, Lang and Wortman (in Milkie and Peltola 1999: 477) state that time spent at work may show an individual's commitment to it and time spent with one's family may show commitment or love, and it may be hard to hand over one's obligations and responsibilities for others to fulfill. According to Goode (in Hecht 2001: 111), trying to manage both roles at the same time could affect one's psychological health. In terms of this current research study, what individuals could do is to focus on the completion of tasks in one role for example, work, and request assistance

from their spouse to assist with tasks in the role of parent, so that they are not trying to manage both roles simultaneously.

Lobel (1991: 508) states that the utilitarian approach highlights the significance of role rewards and costs to determine an individual's level of investment in a role; individual's will invest in roles that give them a promising/favorable balance of rewards to costs. Lobel (1991: 508-509) further states that the process of exchange happens between the individual and the environment. The individual's investment in a role increases as the net rewards increase, but these rewards have to satisfy significant needs of the individual concerned. To relate this to the research study, the respondents could identify with their work as Thoits (in Broman 2001: 835) states that work gives individuals a sense of identity and this becomes important to them. This could be one of the reasons why they invest in their jobs and remain in a particular occupation even though work stress is present, and the second reason could be that they enjoy and value their jobs, as well as what it allows them to provide for their families in terms of resources, income and the basic necessities.

According to Lobel (1991: 509), the utilitarian approach to work-family conflict and work-family balance, may be explained as follows: Homans (in Lobel 1991: 509) states that when net family rewards are lesser in value than net work rewards, the individual will invest more in work than family; when net family rewards are equal to net work rewards, the individual may invest in either role, and the individual who experiences both work and family life equally satisfying, feels equal pressure to invest in both work and family. Lobel (1991: 509) states that according to the utilitarian approach, work-family balance of work and family roles would happen only when an individual's investments in roles are unequal and conform to unequal net role rewards.

Tajfel and Turner (in Lobel 1991: 510) state that in the social identity approach, individuals see themselves as members of social groups. James (in Lobel 1991: 510) states that individuals have many identities that they get from interacting with others and with specific reference to the current research study, an example would be programmer, mother.

Lobel (1991: 511-512) further states that the social identity approach to work-family conflict and work-family balance, may be explained as follows: According to Allen, Wilder & Atkinson (in Lobel 1991: 512), conflict between many identities happens when the values that are related to the identities are so different that the identities can only be enacted in situations that are separated by time and place. Lobel (1991: 512) gives an example as follows: if a value such as ambition is given priority and shown in the role of manager which differs from the values that are shown in the role of parent, for example, nurturance, then the individual will have to give up the manager identity in order to be a father or a mother as these values are in conflict.

According to Allen, et al. (in Lobel 1991: 512), an individual may have work-family balance firstly, by making sure that the identities that are in conflict are separated physically and psychologically as well as separated in terms of time; secondly, by having values that are compatible between both of the identities (employee and parent). Stryker (in Lobel 1991: 512) states that if both the roles happened to be concurrent, conflict would not follow because of the consistency in values. Lobel (1991: 512) gives an example as follows: an employee may have to meet an important deadline at work when his or her child falls ill. If in both work and the family, assisting others is more important than following the stipulated rules, then the employee will be able to attend to the ill child and expect that the deadline at work could be changed; the values are consistent here. But, Lobel (1991: 512) further states that if caring for others in the role of

parent is predominant and conforming to rules in the role of employee is predominant, then these incompatible values will create conflict between the role of parent and the role of employee when they are equally salient (central and important). Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 10) also states that society is a system and a system has interrelated parts; that each part affects every other part and the entire system. If this system is to survive, the different parts must be compatible. The functional prerequisite of society requires that the parts be integrated, and that this integration is based on members of society agreeing on values (value consensus).

Relevance to the research study:

\*There is competition between the work and family roles, therefore the link between the utilitarian approach and the role conflict models of the effects of work on the family Lobel (1991: 510). In terms of the current research study, individuals could invest in both their work and family roles; both of these domains could be equally important to them, hence the work/family conflict.

#### **4.7 TIME AND ENERGY DEMANDS OF WORK**

According to Voydanoff (2004a: 10-11), time in paid work contributes to resources as well as demands. Some of the resources are: economic well-being, self-esteem and support. But, paid work is also related to the shortage of time and energy for other activities, as the hours that are spent working are not available for other activities. Furthermore, working longer hours puts limitations on workers' availability (physically and psychologically) for interacting and participating in family life. In terms of the research study, this could be what working individuals have to be able to deal with. On the one hand, they are able to provide for their families and on the other, they are left with a time and energy deficit to spend with

them. They could focus on managing their time and tasks more effectively as people need to work for a living.

According to Voydanoff (2004b: 283) work demands are more significant than resources with regard to work-to-family conflict and Voydanoff (2004b: 275) states that the findings show that work demands are strongly associated with work-to-family conflict, whilst work resources are more significant with regard to work-to-family facilitation, therefore in terms of the current research study, the availability of resources to the family is vital as the family could utilize these resources to adapt to changes in the environment in order to survive.

According to Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13), the nuclear family serves two main functions, which are the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities. In terms of this study, individuals could experience the effects of the time and energy demands of work (the disturbance) on their families and personal lives as families could neglect to fulfill important functions, with specific reference to the sexual and socialization functions, but the spouses could be requested to give assistance to ensure the fulfillment of functions. The family could thus adapt to this disturbance to their equilibrium.

Presser (in Bianchi 2000: 402) proposes that changes in the workforce on a structural level affect the time parents spend with their children as it is becoming hard to balance work and family. Schor (1991: 36) states that the more time a woman puts into her work, the less time she spends with her children and the less time is left for household chores in that she cooks and cleans less.

Frone, Russell & Cooper, Greenhaus and Parasuraman, Pleck (in Parasuraman and Simmers 2001: 555) state that research on work and the family shows that the work demands and family demands strive for the person's time and energy and this is very relevant to the focus of the research study as the greater the number of hours spent at work, the less the time and energy left to spend with the family and to attend to family problems that could arise and may need immediate attention on a daily basis during the weekdays. The family could adapt by enlisting the help of a family member or trusted family caregiver to attend to urgent problems. Pleck (1977: 423-424) states that many husbands take their work home with them or utilize family time to unwind from the stress experienced at work. Furthermore, they are to ensure that family obligations do not impose on work obligations. Moen and Yu (2000: 300) state that when individuals work long hours, over 45 hours a week, both men and women experience high work/life conflict, stress and overload.

Voydanoff and Kelly (1984: 889) further state that there may be a shortage of time due to long hours spent at work and working overtime. Crouter, Bumpus, Head & McHale (2001: 415) support the view that when overtime is compulsory, families are at risk and more so when the parents work in stressful environments. In terms of this current research study, work fatigue could result in unforeseen incidents, therefore individuals could need to focus on how to manage their time and tasks during the day, and furthermore, they could delegate tasks to subordinates that one is able to delegate, as the delegation of tasks could help to lessen their heavy workload. Eckenrode and Gore, Greenhaus and Beutell (in Edwards and Rothbard 2000: 180) support the view that work exhaustion prevents the individual from fulfilling the role demands and functions of the family. Edwards and Rothbard (2000: 180) state that when role demands and functions are not fulfilled there is a link between work and the family. In terms of this research study, job demands could be very stressful and this

could leave the person with an energy deficit and he/she may not be able to fulfill all of the family functions and roles at certain times.

Jacobs and Gerson (in Blair-Loy and Wharton 2002: 815) refer to an increase in the working hours for managers and professional workers in the USA; they work fifty hours a week or more and this is over and above their commute time. Clarkberg and Moen, Maume and Bellas, Moen and Yu (in Schieman, et al. 2006: 244) propose that employees in a professional capacity usually have more job demands and their work hours are longer.

Becker and Moen (1999: 1004) state that individuals feel that family time and their private lives are being very affected by the long work hours. Schor (in Kiecolt 2003: 26) supports the view that the weekly working hours are dependant on the demands of the employer and economic need. In terms of this current research study, employees could feel as if work is dictating to them, but people have to work for a living.

Relevance to the research study:

\*In terms of this current research study, individuals could also be physically and mentally exhausted to spend much time with their families and certain functions for example, (the education/socialization function) and certain roles for example, (preparing healthy meals) as a parent and spouse could very often be neglected on a daily basis during the weekdays. Workers could also experience the negative effects of work stress during the weekdays as individual workers could be obligated to stay to complete their workload, but their spouses could assist to ensure that the family is functional in terms of the important and urgent family roles and functions to be fulfilled.

#### **4.8 WORK STRESS AND PHYSICAL/EMOTIONAL HEALTH**

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 1038) states that when there is an interrelationship between systems, with specific reference to the adaptation, goal attainment, integration and pattern maintenance systems in society, changes that take place in one will have an influence on the others. With regard to this study, poor physical and emotional health, due to job demands (the disturbance) could have an effect on the fulfillment of family functions. This is what Merton (in Wilson 1983: 76) proposes that the very same structure, (work) in this research study, could have both functional (work brings in an income) and dysfunctional repercussions (as a result of poor physical and emotional health due to job demands, families could neglect to fulfill significant functions). In terms of this study, individuals could experience the effects of poor physical and emotional health due to job demands, but they could be able to adapt by following the advice of their medical practitioners.

Bakker and Geurts (in Schieman, et al. 2006: 242) propose that job demands and lengthy hours at the workplace could have an effect on one's health and with regard to the current research study, employees could suffer with chest pains, neck and back pains, headaches, sciatica, fibromyalgia and dizziness. Bellavia and Frone (in Schieman, et al. 2006: 243) state that the focus is on conflict between work and home roles because as a core stressor, it can affect one's well-being.

According to Allen, Herst, Bruck & Sutton, Frone, Grzywacz and Bass, Hill, Huang, Hammer, Neal & Perrin, Kossek and Ozeki, Perry-Jenkins, Repetti & Crouter (in Seery, et al. 2008: 462), conflict between work and the family has been associated with negative consequences, some of which include job burnout, family and work stress, physical symptoms, depression, alcohol abuse and problems with parent-child relationships.



Hochschild (in Seery, et al. 2008: 465) proposes that some of the negative repercussions for employees included burnout, dissatisfaction with one's work, feeling inauthentic and substance abuse. Brief, Schuler & Van Sell, Ivancevich and Matteson (in Greenhaus and Beutell 1985: 80) state that work stressors can result in physical or emotional conditions or symptoms such as tension, anxiety, fatigue, depression, apathy and irritability.

Galinsky, Kim & Bond (in Reynolds and Aletraris 2006: 619) state that employees who feel overworked account for more stress, have greater conflict between work and the family, have more problems sleeping and their health is poorer. Hibbard and Pope (in Menaghan and Parcel 1990: 1090) propose that when an employee feels that work is offering support, this is related to an improvement in his/her physical and mental health.

Relevance to the research study:

\*In terms of the current research study, the respondents could enlist the help of their medical practitioners to help them deal with the effects of job demands on their physical and emotional health. The family could adapt to the negative consequences of work-family conflict by enlisting the support and assistance of their spouse and family members. Individuals could also manage their work stress by utilizing the resources that could be made available to them.

#### **4.9           ROLE CONFLICT BETWEEN WORK AND FAMILY**

Reitzes and Mutran (in Carlson, et al. 2003: 101) support the view that roles are a significant component of the social structure and define who and what we are. Walls, Capella & Greene (2001: 87) state that roles and role conflict need to be examined when studying work-family conflict as this ensures an understanding of why this conflict occurs in the lives of individuals. Work-family conflict is defined as “interrole conflict in which

the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role” (Greenhaus and Beutell in Seery, et al. 2008: 462-463).

The two significant forms of work-family conflict that will be focused on in this research study are the time-based conflict and the strain-based conflict as proposed by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985: 77). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985: 76) propose that work-family conflict is present when time that is utilized for the requirements of one role makes it hard to fulfill the requirements of another and, in addition to this, the strain from participating in one role makes it hard to fulfill the requirements of another, as family members could find that they are spending more time completing work tasks which leaves them with insufficient time to fulfill the roles of the family on a daily basis during the weekdays. They then could be expected to perform the neglected family roles over the weekends, or alternatively their spouses could assist with the performance of family roles on a daily basis.

“Demands from role senders on the job for overtime or take-home work may conflict with pressures from one’s wife to give attention to family affairs during evening hours. The conflict arises between the role of the focal person as worker and his role as husband and father” (Kahn, et al. in Greenhaus and Beutell 1985: 77). This particular example of interrole conflict could prevent the individual worker from performing significant family roles, for example, the performance of household chores such as the laundry so that the family has clean and freshly laundered clothes in readiness for school and the work days ahead; family problems may arise as well and could require urgent attention. The spouse could help with the seeking of workable solutions to the problems and could help the family to

adapt to the work-family role conflict and also ensure that the family's stability is maintained.

Merton (1976: 9) states that in some instances values conflict in the person's status-set. "The more married women at work in the labor market, the more subject to competing obligations" (Merton 1976: 9) and that "... the conflicting demands of different statuses ... involve *different* people in the role-sets of the conflicting statuses (the demands of an employer, for example, and of a spouse)" (Merton 1976: 10). Merton (1957: 116) further states that the less cohesive the society, the more often will people experience the strain of social roles that are in conflict with each other. He proposes that there are conflicting demands made of the individual person who possesses many roles, and that the repeated conflict between roles is not functional for society and the individual. This is what will be researched in this study as the demands of work could prevent the fulfillment of significant family roles on a daily basis during the weekdays and could leave the family members with feelings of guilt.

Greenhaus and Beutell (in Estes 2005: 294) state that there is a confirmation that certain roles can be extremely demanding with specific reference to the roles of parent and employee. These roles can oppose one another and the result is that the individual could be drained of his/her energy, which causes anxiety and discomfort. In the article by Gerson (2000: 185), what is proposed is the unity of work and family, for employers to understand that the work lives of employees affects the lives of their families and that work lives and family lives cannot be separated from one another as a family member is an employee and an employee is also a family member.

Gerson (2002: 17) states that parents face a dilemma in trying to balance the need to provide economically with the need to spend time with their families and give them sufficient attention. Glass and Estes (1997: 289) further state that there is a conflict between work and family obligations and that this conflict has been linked to a decrease in employee productivity as well as family functioning. This could result in family roles not being fulfilled on a daily basis.

According to Voydanoff (in White 1999: 165), the role conflict perspective proposes that participation in the roles of mother as well as worker are more than likely for the individual to experience strain and conflict. In terms of this research study, individuals could feel a sense of frustration and helplessness on a daily basis during the work week, but when they are able to reduce the demands in one role, by delegating tasks to family members, they could feel less pressured.

Burr, Leigh, Day & Constantine, Voydanoff (in Paden and Buehler 1995: 101) reiterate that role conflict refers to the conflict between the expectations of two different roles that a person belongs to. Perry-Jenkins, et al. (2000: 982) state that the literature on multiple roles concentrates on how individuals balance the roles of parent, spouse and worker and the repercussions of this for health and family relationships. What is significant to note is that according to Barling and Macintyre, MacEwen and Barling, MacEwen, Barling & Kelloway (in Perry-Jenkins, et al. 2000: 988), there is evidence that when role overload and role conflict are present, the individual becomes distressed and this leads to anger and the individual withdraws in the marital relationship. With regard to this research study, this could entail less interactions and communication with the spouse during the weekdays.

In their article Walls, et al. (2001: 87) propose that work and family roles possess definite norms and requirements that may not be compatible with one another, therefore work-family conflict occurs. Role pressures (and therefore work-family conflict) are greater when the work and family roles form the core of a person's self-concept, and when sanctions are imposed for not conforming to the demands of that particular role.

Pearlin and Schooler (in Pearlin 1989: 245) propose that individuals are only able to meet the demands of one role at a time and not both, and this is true for the demands of work and family. Thus the conflict between roles and Pleck, Staines & Lang (in Warren and Johnson 1995: 164) state that those who have long work weeks are likely to experience a greater degree of work-family role conflict, as insufficient time and energy remains for the fulfillment of family roles on a daily basis during the work week.

Hecht (2001: 113-114) states that it is hard to deal with role conflict because the demands arise and have to be met at the same time. This is especially true for work and family roles and "...paid work hours reduce the time available for family activities while bringing needed income into the home" Voydanoff (in Seery, et al. 2008: 466). Voydanoff (in Marks, et al. 2001: 1084) supports the view that work demands and demands of the family both add to work-family conflict.

Blair-Loy, Fried, Kanter, Schor (in Blair-Loy and Wharton 2002: 815) refer to managers and professional workers having to show their commitment by working long hours and showing that work is their central focus; this places them in work-family conflict. The long days may make them want to utilize work-family policies, but they may not make use of these policies because of their commitment to the organization. In terms of the relevance to the current research study, respondents could be obliged

to put in “face time” to indicate their commitment to the organization and could deal with their heavy workloads by working overtime and to ensure that deadlines are met to avoid repercussions.

Relevance to this research study:

\*In terms of this research study, the demands of work and employer could compete with that of the spouse and child. The individual could be placed in a position of conflicting statuses, where the individual could find himself/herself between two conflicting demands or expectations. Family members are not always fulfilling their various roles on a daily basis as a result of work stress. There could be stringent deadlines to meet and sanctions could be imposed on employees if work deadlines are not timeously met. There could be requests from management that employees are to provide progress updates and feedback to indicate their progress on the tasks or queries that they are currently working on completing. People have to work, but families could enlist the help of family members to fulfill vital role obligations that need to be fulfilled on a daily basis within the family unit.

#### **4.10 WORKPLACE SUPPORT AND SOCIAL SUPPORT**

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 509) states that families provide warmth, security and mutual support which is required for primary socialization, and once the personality has been developed, it needs to be kept stable, which is the second function of the family, the stabilization of adult personalities. He further states that the focus here is on the marital relationship and the emotional security and support that the husband and wife give to each other; this in turn is a protection from the stress and strain of everyday life which affects the personality and makes it unstable.

Warren and Johnson (1995: 163) propose that the workplace is being given more attention as to the role it can enact in coming up with solutions to work-family problems. With regard to the growing literature on workplace support, according to Bowen, Kamerman and Kahn, McCroskey, Voydanoff (in Warren and Johnson 1995: 163), workplaces can enact a significant role in helping employees to coordinate their work and family roles. In terms of the relevance to this research study, employees could feel a reduction in their stress levels when adequate help and support is offered by managers, supervisors and coworkers. Hibbard and Pope (in Menaghan and Parcel 1990: 1090) state that knowing that work is offering support is related to better physical and mental wellbeing, as employees could feel that the workplace cares about them and their families.

Fernandez, Galinsky and Stein (in Warren and Johnson 1995: 164) state that knowing that one's supervisor is supportive, is linked to reduced levels of stress for working parents. Greenglass, Pantony & Burke (in Warren and Johnson 1995: 164) propose that knowing that one's supervisor is supportive is linked to a reduction in role conflict for working parents. In terms of the research study, individuals could cope more effectively with the stressful workplace and role conflict than those who do not have the support.

Voydanoff (2004b: 279) proposes that when one receives support from friends, it is a type of social support that is not formal; this may be emotional support or support that could take the form of suggestions. Furthermore, individuals could feel that they are being listened to and as the problem is being viewed from a different perspective, valuable advice could be offered and implemented.

Bowen (1998: 28) states that there are various potential variables that measure the quality of informal social support at work and these could

have an effect on the relationship between work spillover and family adaptation. His study examines the direct role and buffering role of leader support. He further states that this has received much focus in research studies done by Kobasa and Puccetti (in Bowen 1998: 28-29), which examine the relationship between work support, occupational stress and health.

Billings and Moos, Geller and Hobfoll, Kobasa and Puccetti, LaRocco, House & French, Repetti, Warren and Johnson (in Bowen 1998: 29) propose that the support given by senior leaders in the organization and supervisors in the workplace has been related to a reduction in work stress and beneficial results in terms of health for employees. With regard to this research study, individuals could comment on the benefits of support from managers, supervisors and colleagues in terms of the alleviation of stress experienced at work, which in turn has an effect on their health.

Burke and Weir (in Bowen 1998: 30) propose that leader support may have a direct effect on work spillover, as support implies an understanding, being sensitive to and respecting the needs and demands of the employee in both work and family roles. It is hypothesized that leader support for families reduces the level of work spillover. With regard to the relevance in terms of this research study, when support could be offered by the workplace in the form of being understanding and respecting the needs of the employee in both work and family roles, the effects of the stress in terms of work spillover could be reduced.

Bowen, Lavee, McCubbin & Patterson, McCubbin and Lavee, O'Neil and Greenberger (in Bowen 1998: 30) state that social support has been shown to decrease strains that occur from the demands at work. This is relevant to the research study as assistance could be given with regard to problem-solving, help could be provided with regard to the timeous completion of



tasks and deadlines, as well as the provision of workable solutions to the prioritization of tasks.

Repetti (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 472) states that support from spouses results in employees' greater withdrawal after having a difficult day at work, and Repetti (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 467) further states that supportive wives of air traffic controllers with heavy workloads, managed the duties of both parents and this allowed their husbands not to interact with family members after difficult work days; it also allowed these overworked husbands to recover emotionally. In terms of this current research study, spousal support could be invaluable in assisting the employee experiencing work stress to recover on an emotional level from the stressful conditions of the workplace.

According to Greenhaus and Beutell, Singh, Greenhaus, Parasuraman & Collins (in Martins, Eddleston & Veiga 2002: 401) "sources of support provide a "buffering effect" that helps individuals deal with work-family conflict". Singh, et al. (in Martins, et al. 2002: 401) further state that "support may be socioemotional to the extent that it helps individuals emotionally cope with work-family conflict". George and Brief (in Martins, et al. 2002: 401) propose that support may be resource-based in that resources may be made available to assist individuals cope or deal with the conflict between work and the family.

Stephens and Sommer (in Martins, et al. 2002: 401) state that the work group is a significant social group for the individual and relationships with people in the work group may be a source of socioemotional support that could assist him/her manage or deal with the conflict between work and family. Martins, et al. (2002: 401) state that links with the community can be significant sources of socioemotional and resource support for the individual. Blau, Ferber & Winkler (in Martins, et al. 2002: 401) support

the view that links with the community are significant as they assist individuals by making available a network to help with decisions pertaining to schools, obtaining jobs as well as problems that may be experienced.

Blau, et al., George and Brief, Gordon and Whelan (in Martins, et al. 2002: 401) propose that those with better financial resources are able to pay for childcare that may assist them to deal with or cope with possible conflicts between work/family that otherwise could have an influence in that it could take them away from investing their time and energy into their work. In terms of this current research study, the family could be able to have financial resources as a support to assist in coping with the conflict between work and the family.

Relevance to this research study:

\*In terms of this study, the facets of work and family need to work together so that any problems that could be experienced may be discussed and solutions could be sought to alleviate them for the benefits of both work and the family. Employees could feel that the workplace cares about them and their family's wellbeing by being supportive and this could lessen the effects of work stress on them, their health and in turn their families.

#### **4.11 FAMILY ADAPTATION TO WORK STRESS**

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 1038) states that a change in one system will affect the others as systems are interrelated; this is with specific reference to the adaptation, goal attainment, integration and pattern maintenance systems (AGIL). In terms of this study, job demands (the disturbance) could have an effect on the fulfillment of family

functions and roles, but the family could thus adapt to this disturbance to their equilibrium and stability by working together as a team.

“As a process, family adaptation refers to the efforts by families to effect needed changes in themselves and their environments in order to meet their needs and to confront life demands. As an outcome, family adaptation refers to the results of these efforts” (Bowen 1998: 26-27). “...family adaptation as the ability of the family to meet external demands and to achieve internal goals. It is hypothesized that families adapt at two levels, which are seen as reciprocal with changes in adaptation at one level having consequences for change at the other. First, internal adaptation focuses on the functioning and interdependency of family members as a unit. In internal adaptation, family members adapt in their relationships with one another and to demands generated within the family system itself. Second, external adaptation focuses on the level of mutuality or fit between the family unit and its environment” (Bowen 1998: 27). According to Bowen (1998: 27), in external adaptation family members adapt in their relationships with the workplace and the respective demands of the workplace.

Becker and Moen (1999: 995) state that couples are utilizing certain strategies that decrease and reorganize the spouse’s commitment to the workplace over time; what this does is helps to alleviate the stress from the workplace on the family. They further state that they have identified three work-family strategies of scaling back, and these include “...placing limits; having a one-job, one-career marriage; and trading off” (Becker and Moen 1999: 995). They state that their findings support research by recording how gender and life-course factors affect work-family strategies and that wives do the scaling-back, although in some instances husbands and wives trade career and family responsibilities. They further state that those couples with young children are the ones to scale back, although

those in other life stages do so as well. In terms of the current research study, the wives could place their careers on hold, especially when young children are present in the household, and allow the husbands to forge ahead with their careers. Husbands and wives could also trade career and family responsibilities, for example if the wife is offered a well paid position with generous benefits and company profit sharing. In terms of placing limits, an example could be not to work overtime, in terms of having a one-job, one-career marriage, it could be the male with the career and the female, the one with the job and in terms of trading off, it could be job versus career and this could be due to raising children as well as responsibilities connected to the household.

Becker and Moen (1999: 998) state that their findings indicate that there were many couples with preschool age children who had two careers, but relied on full-time paid childcare and household services. Becker and Moen (1999: 1003) further state that the respondents in their study have remarked that the ideal family life consists of teamwork; both partners working together as well as being fair so that both the spouses can be challenged and fulfilled. A respondent in their study decided to make the weekly grocery shopping into fun time as there is the realization that there is limited time in the week to go to work, do the household chores and spend time with the children. In terms of the current research study, this could be some of the ways in which the family could adapt to the job demands (heavy workload and working overtime).

Relevance to this research study:

\*In terms of the current research study, individuals with preschool age children could place the children in daycare centers that offer before and after hours care; they could also rely on housecleaning and landscaping services to cope with the chores that need to be performed. Respondents could initiate an element of fun when doing chores and could encourage

teamwork by enlisting the help and support of their families. What is also very relevant here is where either spouse could have the career and the remaining one could have the job (Becker and Moen 1999: 995). This may help to reduce the effects of workplace stress on the family as both may not have to work overtime which could be the requirement for the career option. It is usually the husband/male that has the career and the wife/female the job as she is the one that usually makes changes in her lifestyle when she starts a family. These changes continue until the preschoolers and school goers in the family have grown up and have become more independent.

#### **4.12 CONCLUSION**

The focus of this chapter was on work conditions or characteristics, family characteristics and the spillover effect between work and the family. The following information serves as background to and correlates with the categories for analysis: changing roles in the family, investment in work and family roles, time and energy demands of work, work stress and physical/emotional health, role conflict between work and family, workplace support and social support and family adaptation to work stress.

\*Work conditions or characteristics: The focus here is on job characteristics and this serves to indicate the possible effects of workplace demands, with specific reference to heavy workload and working overtime on family members.

\*Family characteristics: What is significant to the discussion in this section, is that having children in the home (preschoolers and schoolgoers), as well as problems experienced with reliable childcare could contribute to work/family conflict in the lives of working parents.

\*Spillover effect between work and the family: It is important to note that the stress experienced at work could spillover to the family. The family

could be affected by the behavior and emotions of the employee who is also a family member, interacting with the spouse and child/children on a daily basis after experiencing the demands of the workplace.

\*Changing roles in the family: It has been reviewed that the roles of parent/worker could be very challenging, with both husbands and wives trying to cope with daily chores and childcare. What is also important to note is that family roles are changing and the family has to adapt to these changes in order to exist so that significant family roles may be fulfilled.

\*Investment in work and family roles: It is shown that when both work and family roles are important to the individual, this could cause work/family conflict. A discussion of the utilitarian and social identity approaches to role investment indicate the dissimilarity in describing the sources of work/family conflict and how work-family balance is attained.

\*Time and energy demands of work: What is important to note here is that the individual employee could have to ensure completion of urgent/important tasks at work which could take up the time and energy that should be utilized for the fulfillment of family functions and roles.

\*Work stress and physical/emotional health: It has been shown that work stress could have an effect on the physical and emotional health of employees, as confirmed by medical physicians. This could take the form of various stress-related ailments that could affect the performance of the individual's daily functioning in both the workplace and the family.

\*Role conflict between work and family: It has been discussed that when two demanding roles are in conflict with each other, the individual could feel very conflicted and the obligations of one role could be neglected to meet the demands of the other. The individual could neglect some of the demands of the family on a daily basis during the weekdays by meeting the demands of work. Employees could experience role conflict when faced with the demands of the workplace and fulfilling their role obligations as parents and spouses in the home.

\*Workplace support and social support: What is significant to note is that with workplace support and social support being provided to individuals, they could be able to manage the effects of work stress on their lives and that of their families in an efficient manner.

\*Family adaptation to work stress: By making use of possible strategies to cope with the work/family conflict, for example, teamwork and utilizing innovative methods to making the accomplishment of chores into a fun event, employees could be able to assist their families to adapt to work stress. What is also discussed here is the one-career, one-job family, where either spouse could have the career and the remaining one could have the job (Becker and Moen 1999: 995). This may reduce the stress on the family as both spouses may not have to put in the overtime that could be required for the career option.

## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the qualitative interpretation of the data gathered in the in-depth interviews and the analyses thereof. Verbatim quotes are given to substantiate the data. Different corresponding topics have been categorized in an effort to answer the research questions of the study. There are ten categories of responses used to analyze the research data. The analyses are based on the theoretical foundation of the study, which is on Parsons's and Merton's functionalist theory, as well as on Murdock's family functions.

#### 5.2 CATEGORIES OF RESPONSES USED TO ANALYZE THE DATA

The following categories describe, analyze and interpret the data gathered from 50 respondents:

- \***Category 1:** The relationship between manifest and latent functions and being fully employed.
- \***Category 2:** The relationship between work stress and conflict at work.
- \***Category 3:** The relationship between support at work and work stress.
- \***Category 4:** The effects of work stress on individual time and energy.



**\*Category 5:** The effects of work stress on physical and emotional health.

**\*Category 6:** The spillover effect of work stress on the family.

**\*Category 7:** The relationship between work stress and family roles and functions.

**\*Category 8:** The relationship between work stress and conflict in the home.

**\*Category 9:** The relationship between work stress and role conflict between work and family.

**\*Category 10:** The relationship between support at home and work stress.

### **5.2.1 CATEGORY 1: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANIFEST AND LATENT FUNCTIONS AND BEING FULLY EMPLOYED.**

**\*Question: What is the main reason for you being fully employed?**

#### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

According to Merton (in Newman 1997: 38), there are manifest and latent functions. Manifest functions are the intentional, purposeful consequences of people's actions that help parts of the social system to exist. In this study, work provides a source of income for the family to ensure its economical, financial survival which is a manifest, intended function. Respondents have indicated that they are in employment for financial reasons, to earn an income so that they are financially independent.

**The following responses were received:**

“To provide for myself and my family...be able to provide them a home and a comfortable living”. (Respondent 3, Bank Manager)

“Income and the joy of teaching”.  
(Respondent 26, Elementary Music Teacher)

“Financial independence...I come from a family of very independent women”. (Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

“Income”. (Respondent 15, Kindergarten Teacher)

“I have to work...we have gotten ourselves into a lot of debt and this has to be sorted out”. (Respondent 23, Kindergarten Teacher)

**These are the manifest, intended functions.**

**\*Question: What are the additional benefits of being fully employed?**

**Theoretical foundation of the question**

According to Merton (in Newman 1997: 38), latent functions are the unintentional consequences of people’s actions that also help the social system to exist. In this study, a latent function that work provides are the additional, unintended benefits of being employed, for example, interaction with others, self-fulfillment, engaged in a meaningful way, making a contribution, sharing knowledge and skills, personal growth, forming close friendships, learning from one another, sharing ideas, learning more effective methods in achieving objectives, enhancement of skills and knowledge, assisting others who are experiencing difficulties and obstacles, learning to co-operate and function within a team, offering encouragement and support when needed.

**The following responses were received:**

“I enjoy my job...enjoy the challenges that my job provides...enjoy the relationships that I’ve made. I have been with my employer for 23 years, so there are very long-term friendships that I have made. It makes me feel good about myself, that I am making a difference where I am, it is challenging, it gives me an opportunity to grow as a person...dealing with the challenges”. (Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

“The benefits...and the self pride, I feel good about the kind of teacher I am and how I work with the children”.

(Respondent 26, Elementary Music Teacher)

“The knowledge that you are doing good for others, seeing your own successes...projects that you have worked on have come to fruition, clients that you have helped brings gratitude”.

(Respondent 3, Bank Manager)

“I love to work with children. A calling. Walking in my destiny. To help children in their growth process. To teach them the human values. To teach them how to respect each other”.

(Respondent 15, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Medical insurance, a retirement program and a teacher union. The job as a teacher is physically challenging, but also very rewarding”.

(Respondent 23, Kindergarten Teacher)

“I need to be challenged intellectually, friends, being able to work with children, contributing to society, helping others who are less fortunate”.

(Respondent 25, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)

“Utilizing my skills, networking and meeting new people”.  
(Respondent 49, Assistant Branch Manager)

“Health care, pension 401K...socializing with others”.  
(Respondent 41, Customer Relations Manager)

“I am fortunate enough to do what I like...there’s a sense of fulfillment and pride in what I’m doing”. (Respondent 39, Real Estate Financing)

“Medical benefits, to establish a retirement pension for later in life, life security, ...and the ability to contribute to society”.  
(Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

“I enjoy the parents and some staff members. I love the children...you learn from them every day...they make you laugh...they are so funny”.  
(Respondent 19, Toddler Teacher)

**These are the unintended, latent functions.**

#### **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 1**

It is significant to note that although the respondents experienced a heavy workload and working overtime, two of them said that they really loved their jobs, the salary was very good and that they would not know what else to do. They were good at their jobs and although stressful, at times it was very rewarding. A teacher and a senior account manager especially were the respondents to make these comments: (Respondents 23 and 4).

With regard to manifest functions, people have to work for a living and work provides this valuable source of income for the family, which is a manifest, intended function. Respondents have indicated that they are

employed for financial reasons, to earn an income to be financially independent. An important latent function was interacting with others and learning from them, making a contribution, sharing knowledge and skills, obtaining suggestions and advice pertaining to work and their personal lives, for example, if a work colleague also has a preschooler, they are able to discuss exactly how does one deal with the tantrums, difficulties experienced at mealtimes or getting ready for school in the mornings?

Murdock (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 12) states that the economic function needs to be fulfilled by the family as this entails working to earn a living. Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13) believes that for society to continue successfully, four functions, AGIL which stand for adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency have to be met. Adaptation entails adapting to the environment in order to obtain necessities to support one self and this is fulfilled by the economic institution. Working parents provide the basic necessities for their families. People work for a living. This refers to Murdock's economic family function and Parsons's adaptation of the family to the environment, referring to the economic institution.

## **5.2.2 CATEGORY 2: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK STRESS AND CONFLICT AT WORK.**

**\*Question: Do you experience any conflict at work as a result of work stress?**

### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

Merton (in Wilson 1983: 76) proposes that the very same structure, which is work in this research study, has both functional (work brings in an income) and dysfunctional consequences or repercussions (as a result of work stress there is conflict amongst coworkers and supervisors),

especially if the individual is dependant on him/her for information and there is a deadline.

Individuals are able to adapt to the conflict in their environment as people have to work in order to provide for their families and themselves; they may also identify with their work as Thoits (in Broman 2001: 835) states that work gives individuals a sense of identity and this becomes important to them. In addition, individuals invest in both their work and family roles and both of these domains are important to them.

In this category, there were incidents of conflict and at other times, there were disagreements due to the stressful work environment. These circumstances left those respondents who experienced the conflict, with unease and discomfort. Some of them would directly confront their supervisors and others will respond in a manner to try and diffuse the situation, as they are non-confrontational and therefore uncomfortable with dealing with any conflict: (Respondents 4 and 32). Conflict also occurred amongst coworkers especially if the individual is dependant on him/her for information and there is a deadline.

**The following responses were received:**

“At times...I vent with other specialists and sometimes, confront my boss. At other times there are plenty of tears at home...I walk my dogs a lot to de-stress”. (Respondent 26, Elementary Music Teacher)

“Yes, with supervisors and employees but in different circumstances. With project deadlines, not much time to complete it...very frustrating...run into the same issues over and over again, my attitude changes toward my supervisors...the same goes for my employees that I have underneath me, sometimes I like to see things done a little differently...they may give me some feedback...I wasn't aware of that I did not give them enough time to

complete the task or change things, so it kind of goes full circle. The attitudes of employees...each looks at it differently”.

(Respondent 3, Bank Manager)

“Yes at times the atmosphere is very stressful and uncomfortable...try to be calm but it’s not always possible. I try to deal with the problem, otherwise it just slows me down and makes me emotional”.

(Respondent 18, Office Manager)

“At times because of the nature of the job and because each one has his or her own way of doing things...I try to work together otherwise the children suffer”.

(Respondent 31, Specialized Programs Teacher Assistant)

“Yes the dynamics at work is tense and I am expected to multi-task so I am doing many things at once...everybody wants things to be done immediately”. (Respondent 5, Accountant and Consultant)

“A highly pressurized job...and conflict is inevitable...especially when the deadlines are getting closer”. (Respondent 44, Programmer)

“Try not to...if we as teachers have conflict it becomes very unpleasant to work in a room with the same individual...it makes me unhappy, just try to do my best and work harder”. (Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

“Sometimes there is conflict. It makes me very anxious...I am passive and non-confrontational, I try to diffuse the situation as much as I can because I don’t like conflicts...it is inevitable because of the stress”.

(Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

“Yes there is conflict at times. As a student of accounting I am taught to adhere to GAP, which is the generally accepted accounting principles...there is conflict because of this. I am told to roll back the date on a report and this is against the law and goes against my personal ethics”. (Respondent 21, Lease Administrator)

“Yes there is conflict due to stress...just have to deal with it and move on. Everyone is trying to meet the company’s goals and we work in a team so if one person is slacking it affects the other team members and their goals. This ultimately affects our bonus payout”.

(Respondent 6, Sales and Service)

“Yes I try to diffuse it...try to get along with others and be polite”.

(Respondent 10, Executive Assistant)

“Yes there is conflict due to the stress at work and when people are waiting, they get stressed out too...so there is stressed out coworkers and stressed out clients. Try to get on with my work...if there is a distraction it means that I am delayed with my work and it means me getting out of work late”. (Respondent 11, Administrative Assistant)

## **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 2**

Respondents also commented that the atmosphere was tense at times and it felt uncomfortable to be working under those circumstances. Some respondents chose not to get into conflict as it affects their work, but witnessed coworkers who did because of their highly pressurized jobs and at times dependant on others for information, for example, there is a person who is employed to do administrative tasks as well as credit checks on clients, and he/she could be doing the less important tasks and postponing doing the credit checks, thus delaying a coworker from getting



his/her work completed timeously.

### **5.2.3 CATEGORY 3: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPPORT AT WORK AND WORK STRESS.**

**\*Question: Do you receive any support from work (supervisors, managers, directors, CEO'S, etc.) with regard to:**

**\*assigned tasks and responsibilities? Is there appreciation for the work done?**

**\*job-related problems?**

**\*work stress?**

#### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

Fernandez, Galinsky and Stein (in Warren and Johnson 1995: 164) state that knowing that one's supervisor is supportive, is linked to reduced levels of stress for working parents, while Greenglass, et al. (in Warren and Johnson 1995: 164) state that when one's supervisor is supportive it relates to a reduction in role conflict for working parents. In this study, individuals who have the support cope more effectively with the stressful workplace and role conflict than those who do not have the support.

In this category, some respondents received help from their supervisors and managers, whereas others did not. In certain instances, the support was inconsistent, when the supervisor was under stress and did not offer support to her/his subordinates. At times, support was also received from coworkers.

#### **The following responses were received:**

“Yes it's called the Employee Assistance Program...we also accrue sick time and vacation time as part of our benefits program. My manager is very helpful at finding solutions to help streamline the process. She listens

to problems and is very good at keeping it discreet and not let the other employees know if it does not concern them. My manager is very responsive as far as allowing me to go to training classes if they are available. She is also involved in making sure that projects and deadlines are met and she takes her time to explain how things should be done". (Respondent 24, Benefits Account Analyst)

"Yes the principal provides assistance and support psychologically and tangibly. She is very supportive of special education and provided me with an additional aid. She sets up appointments to discuss problems and help problem-solve. She has also shown appreciation for my work...I've received awards, certificates and personal notes of appreciation". (Respondent 25, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)

The support provided by the school principal was only for certain employees, not everyone. The responses given by some of the teachers is that the principal was very unsupportive (see respondent 36) and they steered clear of her, and yet others like this teacher (see respondent 25) was full of praise for her.

"No...this is just not done. You need to deal with your own problems and sort them out. I find this hard to deal with because of the pressure". (Respondent 36, Kindergarten Teacher)

This respondent is referring to the unfairness that the school principal displays. Some teachers are given the support, whereas other teachers are not; they are ignored when they request assistance from the school principal.

"Sometimes. When I have told the owner that I feel under pressure, she tries to work with me. When she is under a lot of pressure, the support is not provided. I also let her know what is going on between the parents and

the teachers. This is a covering for me. She has encouraged me a lot and wants me to move ahead for a promotion. She shows appreciation in terms of praise and recognition. She has encouraged me to teach the sign language class. But when she is stressed out, she takes it out on the staff and me...she has really gotten angry with me at times”.

(Respondent 15, Kindergarten Teacher)

“The support is probably not always there. A lot is asked of us as managers to come up with solutions. They sometimes do step in. They want you to come up with a solution. They understand if you do have a family emergency. But you do get the look like we really need you here. You feel conflicted because you know that your loyalties are with your family but also with your work. Work is what ultimately pays your bills and puts food on your table. Work kind of has you in a catch 22, where work typically wins out over family”. (Respondent 3, Bank Manager)

“Some support at work. My supervisor has been in this position before so he knows exactly what the pressure is like. I try to achieve a good working relationship with him...it is a family-oriented company but the stress is a major part of the job”. (Respondent 2, Customer Relations Manager)

“There is support and appreciation from management for my work, they will give me time off for family emergencies”.

(Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

“Yes the company does take good care of its employees, but they expect the job done on time as it affects the company’s sales figures...they do encourage you to try and have a balance between work and family”.

(Respondent 6, Sales and Service)

“Yes appreciation is shown for the work that I do and I can always check with the owner if I am unsure of anything especially the legal terms. She also helps out when there is a difficult client and she can see that I am having a hard time negotiating”. (Respondent 8, Realtor)

“Yes they appreciate my hard work especially since I am doing the work of 2 people”. (Respondent 10, Executive Assistant)

“Yes support from the manager...the letters that we write are legal documents...she is always helpful if I need to run something by her...the documentation is the stressful part of the job...they are legal documents that have to be correct”. (Respondent 14, Realtor)

“Yes if I do need to find out about something that I do not know, the manager is there to explain in detail, but he also expects me to be updated with the changes as well”. (Respondent 18, Office Manager)

“Yes there is support from work with regards to problems experienced on a daily basis, but they do expect me to deliver as and when necessary”. (Respondent 21, Lease Administrator)

“Yes I am able to express any problems with my immediate manager. The company also encourages employees to do further training and go back to school...and we have an appreciation award or star performer of the month”. (Respondent 22, Executive Secretary)

“Yes she tries to help with ongoing projects and we conference at least once a week. She also gives me small tokens of appreciation for my hard work and I get great reviews”. (Respondent 28, Administrative Clerk)

“Yes we all work as a team and if I need the help I usually get it...I suppose I am appreciated for my work...I make more money now than when I first started”.

(Respondent 31, Specialized Programs Teacher Assistant)

“Yes there is support...available to help with problems and give suggestions...and encouragement to pursue other employment if it allows personal growth”. (Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

“Yes hard work is always appreciated and you get verbal and written thank you’s. The company provides free food when we are working late...they do take good care of their employees”.

(Respondent 48, Programmer)

### **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 3**

In this category, the respondents that received help from their supervisors and managers commented that this definitely made a difference in helping to manage the workplace stress. They felt that someone understood what they were going through and showed compassion and caring in helping them reach solutions to problems. Appreciation was also shown in the form of verbal and written communication to the employees. The support received from coworkers was regarded as being invaluable in helping them cope with the stressful environment.

### **5.2.4 CATEGORY 4: THE EFFECTS OF WORK STRESS ON INDIVIDUAL TIME AND ENERGY.**

**\*Question: Can you describe how work utilizes:**

**\*your time?**

**\*your energy?**

### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

Frone, et al. (in Parasuraman and Simmers 2001: 555) state that research on work and the family shows that the work demands and family demands strive for the person's time and energy. In this study, the greater the number of hours spent at work the less the time and energy left to spend with the family and to attend to family problems that arise and need immediate attention on a daily basis during the weekdays. The time and energy demands of work (the disturbance) has an effect on the fulfillment of family functions and roles, but the spouses share the chores to ensure that role obligations are met and give assistance and support so that the functions are fulfilled as well. The family thus adapts to this disturbance and to the changes in their environment.

### **The following responses were received:**

“I start my day at 4am and stop at 6pm so I am worn out by the end of the day. I am also on call so I have to be prepared for an emergency and I have to go out and deal with it”. (Respondent 7, Network Manager)

“Work uses a lot of my time and energy as there are extra meetings, late meetings that I have to attend which takes up so much of my personal time. There is also the recommended and required socializing afterwards which one is obligated to stay for”.

(Respondent 2, Customer Relations Manager)

“Work uses up a large part of my time and energy...the 12 to 14 hour days at month-end are very exhausting. I am left with so little time and energy for my family”. (Respondent 21, Lease Administrator)

“When there is a huge project to do there is always a time crunch, you are not given sufficient time in which to finish it, so I end up taking a lot of the work home. At work I am putting out burning fires in terms of the

urgent problems so that others can perform their tasks. With projects that require a lot of thought, I work on them at home. This takes up my family time and is very draining physically and mentally”.

(Respondent 5, Accountant and Consultant)

“Work definitely takes up a lot of my time and energy and traveling. I go out of town a week at a time...10 days at a time. This is very time-consuming for me ...very emotionally draining”.

(Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

There was one respondent who felt that work was using his time and energy inappropriately. He responded as follows:

“Work uses my time and energy...inappropriately, a 50 hour work week is not necessary. The work environment that I am in and the industry that I am in requires that I be here for 10 hours a day and that is why it is frustrating because I know that I probably can work from home and get a lot of the same stuff done and be able to spend more time with my family and still be very productive at work at the same time. They need me here, a physical body here, that is why it is a little conflicting. This job requires face-time, a physical body to be present here”.

(Respondent 3, Bank Manager)

“I come in 6 or 7 hours in my own time to prepare my classroom, the length of time for the preparation is a lot. I have to make sure that everything is correct and this takes long. The little children are tiring, they utilize too much of my energy and strength...I feel whipped”.

(Respondent 15, Kindergarten Teacher)

“My job involves a lot of brain work so it is taxing for me mentally and physically...I take work home to finish so this affects my family life”.

(Respondent 6, Sales and Service)

“This type of job is very time consuming and requires a lot of physical and mental energy. From searching the database to signing the final deal requires great mental effort as these are legal documents. If anything goes wrong people are so ready to sue for damages”. (Respondent 8, Realtor)

“Work does consume a great part of my time as well as energy...I leave home 45 minutes early and leave late at night...I do the preparation for the next day...put stuff away, a very long day”.

(Respondent 9, Sales And Service Associate)

“Each input of data is very time-consuming...have to put in the information as quickly as I can but also have to be accurate...if there is a mistake the supervisor questions you about it...at busy times I find it very draining...just don’t have energy left”.

(Respondent 11, Administrative Assistant)

“I work a lot in overtime...I leave home early and arrive late...my work involves a lot of mental energy in addition to the physical energy...I am working with skilled professionals who challenge the way things are done”. (Respondent 13, Project Manager Information Technology)

“A time-consuming job...I work overtime...I am away from my family...don’t get to spend much time with them. This job requires a lot of physical energy...driving out to the properties...getting out and walking around to inspect the property...sometimes the client wants to see the property for a second time before buying it...I have to drive out there again for a second time with him or her”. (Respondent 14, Realtor)

“This job entails mental and physical energy. It is very emotional work as well. This saps you of energy. Involves lots of time...each case and circumstance is very different and when funding is applied for, each



document has to be accurately filled in to ensure a positive response from the state”. (Respondent 16, Workshop Coordinator Special Education)

“Yes, this work is very labor intensive. It involves lots of mental input, which is physically draining. When I need answers immediately I usually research it myself rather than ask someone else...they are not always available to help...they get busy and leave your query or request to attend to later”. (Respondent 18, Office Manager)

“Yes this is because of the children’s behavior problems...it is very tiring and stressful. I have to schedule lots of meetings with the parents to give them feedback on their children...this takes up a lot of my time...this is physical and mental effort”.

(Respondent 25, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)

“Working with children, although enjoyable is also very tiring and stressful. This type of work entails a lot of preparation and organization...this is not possible to do when the children are present, therefore working after hours is necessary. I don’t like to work overtime but this is part of the job”. (Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

“This type of work takes a lot of energy, physically and mentally. Overtime is a part of the job”.

(Respondent 34, Sales And Customer Service)

“Yes this is a very physical job which tires you. You are constantly using up your energy to deal with issues that the children have. There is a lot of after-hours work as well...the take-home work uses up personal time and time that should be set aside for the family”.

(Respondent 36, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Preparation for the daily lessons take up my time and the classroom preparation for the daily activities take up my physical and mental energy”. (Respondent 37, Kindergarten Teacher)

“At times I have stayed up all night to prepare for a new course...and went in the next morning and trained for the entire day...I take lots of vitamins to give me the added energy as this type of work is physically tiring”.  
(Respondent 42, Training And Development Specialist)

“This type of work is very analytical and stressful...therefore it is very time-consuming and tiring”. (Respondent 44, Programmer)

“This job entails very detailed work and this can be stressful and sap your energy...the lengthy hours worked strain the body and mind”.  
(Respondent 46, Programmer)

“The hours are long and I work overtime every day...this is brain work as well so you get tired physically and mentally”.  
(Respondent 48, Programmer)

“My work entails long hours and expending a lot of mental, emotional and physical strength and energy”. (Respondent 50, Curriculum Developer)

Work places demands on individuals and they are meeting these demands to ensure that they receive remuneration every two weeks. There was not a single respondent who was paid for the overtime worked, as the reason is because they are salaried, they are not entitled to receive overtime pay. All of the respondents work overtime and are not paid for the overtime worked.

“...I work overtime every day...I am salaried so this is unpaid...”.  
(Respondent 17, Administrative Assistant)

#### **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 4**

In this category, respondents felt that during the weekdays, at the end of the work day, they did not have much time and energy left to spend with their families, yet they made a concerted effort to try to fulfill all of their family roles and functions on a daily basis. If this was not feasible, they utilized the weekends to fulfill what they were not able to or requested assistance from their spouses, family members and friends.

Respondents felt that work utilized a great degree of their time and they felt depleted of their energy and were exhausted at the end of the work day. Time and energy are limited resources, there is only a certain amount of time in the day and individuals have only a certain amount of energy to use as well; some commented that they felt completely drained of energy after a long day.

#### **5.2.5 CATEGORY 5: THE EFFECTS OF WORK STRESS ON PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH.**

**\*Question: Does work stress carry over and affect your family life?**

The following questions are also applicable here:

**\*Question: Are there any additional comments that you would like to make with regard to stress experienced at work and the effect that it has on the family?**

**\*Question: Do you experience any conflict at home as a result of work stress?**

**\*Question: Are you able to fulfill all of your family functions as a parent/spouse on a daily basis or are they neglected?**

**\*Question: Are you able to fulfill all of your family roles as a parent/spouse on a daily basis or are they neglected?**

### **Theoretical foundation of the questions**

According to Allen, et al. (in Seery, et al. 2008: 462), conflict between work and the family has been associated with negative consequences, some of which include job burnout, family and work stress, physical symptoms, depression, alcohol abuse and problems with parent-child relationships. In this study, the family adapts to the negative consequences of work-family conflict by enlisting the support and assistance from the spouse and by heeding the advice of medical practitioners.

As a result of poor physical and emotional health due to job demands (the disturbance), families neglect to fulfill important functions and roles on a daily basis. In terms of this study, individuals experience the effects of poor physical and emotional health due to the demands of the job, but they are able to adapt by following the advice of their medical practitioners. People work for a living in order to provide for their families and themselves (Parsons's functional prerequisite of adaptation in society that has to be met).

It is significant to note that respondents of their own accord, volunteered information on how stress affects their physical and emotional health and what the symptoms are. These symptoms ranged from headaches, neck and shoulder spasms, chest pains, sciatica, migraine headaches, neck pain,

depression, high blood pressure, fibromyalgia and anxiety to a high cholesterol level.

**The following responses were received:**

“...I had to go to the doctor for a check up, I wasn’t feeling well...my cholesterol level was very high...it was due to the stress at work”.

(Respondent 19, Toddler Teacher)

“...The stress has a huge impact on me...I get headaches, chest pains, neck and shoulder spasms and sciatica...my doctor says that all of these symptoms are stress related”. (Respondent 50, Curriculum Developer)

“...I am constantly tired and am not always attentive as I should be. I also suffer from severe migraine headaches due to stress and the doctor has suggested botox injections every couple of months to alleviate the pain and discomfort...”. (Respondent 38, Middle School Teacher)

“...I did not realize that work stress can affect one so much physically, I feel anxious all the time at work, I get severe headaches and feel very depressed...the shoulder spasms and neck pain is getting worse”.

(Respondent 12, Pre-School Teacher)

“...I am seeing a doctor right now for high blood pressure and fibromyalgia, both stress related. My high blood pressure was at stroke level a few months ago and my doctor insisted that I remain in bed for 4 to 5 days...”. (Respondent 23, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Work stress can be really harmful to the individual. I do get migraine headaches and back pain with the pain going down my leg. This is all stress related according to my physician. I also have difficulty

sleeping...my mind is so overly tired, so is my body...".  
(Respondent 17, Administrative Assistant)

"I need to prioritize and delegate more...I get discouraged when I am not listened to. My health also suffers...headaches, sciatica, neck and shoulder pains, all because of my work...".  
(Respondent 28, Administrative Clerk)

"...I try to do what I can...I do get headaches and this dampens my mood". (Respondent 33, Administrative Clerk)

"...sometimes after a difficult day I am not very nice to be around...I get severe tension headaches and feel dizzy and nauseous at times".  
(Respondent 35, Office Clerk)

"Time management is the big issue...work that I bring home has to get done...I do get neck and back spasms...my doctor says this is stress related and this affects my mood and energy level which in turn affects my family". (Respondent 37, Kindergarten Teacher)

"Yes I experience a lot of pain due to stress and this is really a problem for me". (Respondent 41, Customer Relations Manager)

"Yes I leave work exhausted on a daily basis and am in pain at times...working in a banking environment requires so much tact and compromise that it is very draining".  
(Respondent 45, Customer Service Associate)

The stress experienced by the respondents in the workplace manifested as physical symptoms, because they are stress related as confirmed by

medical practitioners: (Respondent 50, Respondent 17, Respondent 19, Respondent 37, Respondent 38, Respondent 23).

#### **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 5**

It is significant to note that respondents were being proactive and taking steps to improve their physical and emotional health by taking advice from their medical practitioners. They are taking medication to alleviate the physical symptoms, as well as making changes in the way in which they are able to either reduce or deal with the stressful work environment, all with the help of trained medical personnel.

#### **5.2.6 CATEGORY 6: THE SPILLOVER EFFECT OF WORK STRESS ON THE FAMILY.**

**\*Question: Does work stress carry over and affect your family life?**

##### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

According to Greenhaus and Parasuraman (in Schieman and Taylor 2001: 472), individuals perceive work stress spillover into the family to be where parts of one domain intervenes or throws the other into disorder and Piotrkowski, Repetti, Rothbard (in Seery, et al. 2008: 464) state that stress at work may spillover and a person may become very emotional at home, withdraw from others or have a deficit of energy.

The spillover concept is invaluable in understanding work-family stress and conflict as it provides a description and an explanation of how the family is affected when the individual experiences stress at the workplace and this is carried over into the home environment. Respondents have said that the carrying over of stress from work to home is inevitable. In this study, it was reported that when individuals rest for a while, they become

rejuvenated and then attend to family roles and functions that need to be fulfilled. In addition, they also enlist the help of the spouse to help them cope as they need time to unwind from the stressful work day.

**The following responses have been received:**

Respondents have indicated that when they leave work, they do not leave the stress and problems behind, they take them home with them. They need to have some quiet time to recover from the demanding and stressful day, like being able to relax and read the newspaper: (Respondent 4) or they might prefer to watch television: (Respondents 12, 36, 48).

“Work stress is taken home with me...which is a big one. The mental aspect carries over...work is always on my mind. Did I remember to do this...did I remember to do that...do I need to call my supervisor?...”

(Respondent 3, Bank Manager)

This bank manager (respondent 3) is a junior manager, therefore he has a supervisor to make the major decisions, for example, involving large amounts of cash withdrawals by clients on a daily or weekly basis. The supervisor is also there to make decisions regarding major foreign exchange transactions.

“...This is the industry that I work in...you cannot leave work until the job is done...the job causes me lots of anxiety and it is very stressful, unfortunately when you leave work and get home, the anxiety and stress does not leave you, it stays with you”.

(Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

“Very definitely...and the problems and conflict that goes on at work really bothers me. It really stresses me out in addition to the work demands and stress”. (Respondent 12, Pre-School Teacher)



“Yes, at times I come home too tired or stressed to spend more one on one time with my family or even with my pets...”.

(Respondent 26, Elementary Music Teacher)

“...Also mentally I cannot leave the work problems at work...”.

(Respondent 7, Network Manager)

“...When I have had a stressful day I find it difficult to leave the stressful incident at work...usually take it home with me”. (Respondent 8, Realtor)

“Yes the stress does not leave you...I keep thinking about the problems or the tasks that need to be done for the next day especially the inventories”.

(Respondent 9, Sales And Service Associate)

“...when I have a stressful day the stress does affect me at home...it is not something that can just be forgotten”.

(Respondent 11, Administrative Assistant)

“Yes in this type of work you cannot leave your work behind once you get home...you are always thinking of better and more effective ways in which you can achieve your goals...the stress affects you physically and mentally...it just doesn't disappear when you get home”.

(Respondent 13, Project Manager Information Technology)

“...When I have problems at school, this continues to bother me even when I get home. I always think to myself how could I have done this better?...”. (Respondent 15, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Yes the work stress is carried home with me...difficult to just leave behind and forget about it...”. (Respondent 17, Administrative Assistant)

“Yes sometimes I am emotional because of certain things that happen at work. I am also constantly thinking of ways in which I can help the students and make a real difference in their lives”.

(Respondent 29, School Counselor)

“Yes there are times when I have gone home and just wanted to be left alone to unwind... the stress is taken home with you...”.

(Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

“...when I come home I want alone time...I don't want to talk to anyone...”. (Respondent 41, Customer Relations Manager)

“Yes you take the stress and the problems home and this affects your mood...”. (Respondent 44, Programmer)

“I am really tired when I get home and my mood is not the greatest. I need to be left alone to gather my thoughts and replenish my energy”.

(Respondent 46, Programmer)

“Yes I am mentally and physically wiped out...at times I collapse in front of the TV. I need to relax and I know that my children need me...I am not in the right frame of mind to play with them”.

(Respondent 48, Programmer)

“Very definitely...it is very hard to shake off the stresses of the day and this is taken to the family although I try not to”.

(Respondent 49, Assistant Branch Manager)

## **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 6**

Some respondents have indicated that their moods are affected and they go home in this emotional state, and that it is not fair on their families who want to interact with them after being away from one another. The stress that affects the individual, for example moods and irritability is carried over to the home environment to the family members as well. Individuals are very distracted and at times not able to fully concentrate on the fulfillment of family functions and roles on a daily basis.

### **5.2.7 CATEGORY 7: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK STRESS AND FAMILY ROLES AND FUNCTIONS.**

**\*Question: Are you able to fulfill all of your family functions as a parent/spouse on a daily basis or are they neglected? This refers to: (a) the sexual, reproductive, economic and educational functions and (b) the socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities.**

The following related question was asked as well.

**\*Question: Are you able to fulfill all of your family roles as a parent/spouse on a daily basis or are they neglected?**

#### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

According to Murdock (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 12), the nuclear family is universal as it fulfills certain functions for society; these are the sexual, reproductive, economic (this entails working to earn money) and educational functions. The family has these four important functions to fulfill so that society can continue its existence. According to Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13), the nuclear family serves two main functions,

which are the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities. In terms of this study, individuals experience the effects of job demands on their families and personal lives on a daily basis, but they are able to adapt to the changes in their environment as people have to work for a living in order to provide for their families and themselves.

The job demands set by employers, with specific reference to heavy workload and working overtime, create stress in the individual, for example, anxiety. It has repercussions on the family in terms of family members not fulfilling their various functions and roles on a daily basis. This creates a degree of guilt experienced by family members as some family roles and functions are not being met daily. They are left to the weekends to be fulfilled by family members or the spouse is requested to help.

**The following responses were received:**

“There are disagreements...my husband thinks that work is too demanding. We have had family problems because of my work. My husband helps with the problems that I have at work. I try to prioritize as to what is important. I am not always there for my children...I am usually exhausted after work”.

“...I have insufficient time to carry out family roles, very often bogged down by my work schedule. There are the children’s sporting events, school events and family obligations that are very often neglected. The children feel very disappointed when I am not there, but I have to do what I have to do. My husband has had to take on the extra chores and family roles. He is not always happy about doing this. He likes me to cook but I cannot always do it”. (Respondent 2, Customer Relations Manager)

“My husband would like us to have more time together...but I am always bringing work home and taking telephone calls that are work related after hours and on weekends...there are disagreements...we try and talk it through”.

“Not all of the roles are fulfilled. I have a 6 year old daughter and I have to get her bathed...prepare a quick meal for her, help her with her homework and reading. It feels very rushed when we get home...I wish I could cook more nutritious meals but my time in the evenings are so limited...I have to finish the work that I brought home. If I did not work my house will be cleaner, I will do more cooking...those tasks that don't have to be done immediately are left for later...my husband and I share the tasks as much as we can”. (Respondent 10, Executive Assistant)

Here the respondent mentioned that there was a neglect of the sexual function and the respondent indicated that her husband would like them to have more time together as a couple. But they adapt to the situation/environment as they try and talk it through. Certain roles are also neglected, for example, cleaning of the home and cooking.

“There is...conflict at home due to my frequent travel...We try and work through the conflict and talk it through. I apologize and bring home lots of presents”.

“Some roles are neglected...I can't do it all. I cannot attend certain events and this is bothersome. With my travel, I am not there for 7 to 10 days at a time, and this is time away from my child, it places stress on my family when I am traveling and away from home. As a parent, I try to stay involved in school functions but this is not always possible, as I work overtime and sometimes over week-ends. This makes me feel anxious and guilty but this is the type of work that I do. My work takes up a lot of my time and energy. When I am not traveling, I chat with my daughter, ask her how her day has been. My husband teaches high school, so he gets home before I do and he has dinner ready. I help with the dishes if I am

not too tired. Other chores have to wait until I can get to them...I have to prioritize. I try to do the laundry over weekends when I am not working...I mop the floors. Yes, there are some roles and responsibilities that are neglected. I need quiet time to decompress when I get home. I just need some time to read the newspaper. My husband likes me to cook for him, but I am home late so often that it is not always possible". (Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

There is the neglect of the sexual function, as there is insufficient time spent together as a couple and this leads to conflict in the home due to the frequent travel. But they do adapt to the situation/environment as they try and work through the conflict and talk it through. The respondent apologizes and brings home lots of presents as a peace offering and to keep her family happy; also to say thank you for understanding. There is also the neglect of family roles in terms of chores, not possible on a week day, which is done over the weekends.

"Neglected because I am not there. Time is taken away from the family due to work. Would like to be home more. With my family values and my faith, the family unit is core to one's happiness and the more time that you can spend with your family the better good you can do. My greatest regret is just not being able to spend more time with my family".

"If I could work less that would be great, but I am grateful that I have a job...My wife takes on a lot of the chores...I wish I could be there to support her more... we communicate well regarding our schedules. We sit down, discuss and plan which is very helpful... I talk with my wife about work and what is going on". (Respondent 3, Bank Manager)

"My husband and I are going for counseling right now and therapy is indicating that my problems are due to my work stress...I am having a very negative relationship with my family right now...therefore the counseling...I am caught with work always being first priority and my

family is being neglected. This creates a lot of stress and tension in the household as well as a lot of guilt on my part”.

“Not able to do it all...there are always things to do. I try and do the most necessary and the most important and the rest is left. I find myself buying take-outs for dinner every night because I don't have the time to cook. Household roles and responsibilities are neglected because of the time available to me. I try and do whatever chores are absolutely necessary...the rest is left on the back-burner...my husband's business is very busy...I am expected to perform 100% of the family duties and chores”. (Respondent 5, Accountant and Consultant)

“No there are some functions...roles and duties that are neglected...I try and make sure that my daughter eats dinner...give her a bath and then put her to bed...my house is messy and I have laundry to do, I get stressed out more with my husband...with the chores not being done...he would rather do something else than help with the chores...frustration as I am trying to finish up my work and still cope with what has to be done at home...for my daughter...When you have a young one there is always the feelings of guilt that you should be doing more...spending more time with her...”. (Respondent 6, Sales And Service)

“Not always am I able to fulfill my functions and obligations as a spouse”.

“Not always am I able to accomplish all of my roles and duties as a parent. I have 4 children and I try to fit in duties where possible. When I am busy with activities with the children, I am pulled away from this to attend to work. Even in the midst of their hockey games and coaching I am called in to attend to the network”.

“My wife does most or sometimes all of the chores...I feel terrible to do this to her...she understands the stresses of my job”.

(Respondent 7, Network Manager)

“The time that I spend with my children is short...I am constantly working overtime. I have low energy...I wake up early and am on the go throughout the day and I still bring work home. Time spent with my spouse is short as well...my husband is supportive but he also wants me to spend more time with him and the children...”.

“The chores are not always done...I have to do the most urgent and important. The other chores are just left”. (Respondent 8, Realtor)

“Have a son...I’m not always available to be there when he needs my help...it is disappointing...I try and not let it happen too often...I try and be available to him when he needs my help”.

“The chores have to be done by someone...my husband helps where he can, I am diabetic so I have to take care of myself...I get someone to come in to help out and pay her, otherwise the chores just get left undone”.

(Respondent 9, Sales And Service)

“As a working parent...no I cannot fulfill all the functions...roles and obligations...it is just not possible. I try and do my best...but there are guilty feelings that I should be doing more...I should be teaching them...helping more with homework and activities. My husband and I try and do things together...he likes to cook so this is a big help. We work together as a team...this helps us”.

(Respondent 11, Administrative Assistant)

“No I am not able to do it all...the amount of energy I have at the end of the day is very low...I buy a lot of take-out food for my family. I do not have the energy to do household chores...that is the main reason my house is so dirty. The laundry gets done when I can get to it...sometimes I cook but most times I buy take-outs. (Respondent 12, Pre-School Teacher)



“I try to but some roles and duties are neglected. I make the dinner, lunch for school...I try and help with homework when I can. When I get late I usually buy a take-out which is not healthy but at least it is a hot meal. The most urgent chores I try to get done...my home is not always tidy and neat. Laundry gets done when I really have to do it...have at least one meal with them so that I can find out how their day has been...are there any problems? I try my best to be a good mother...”.  
(Respondent 14, Realtor)

“My children are very needy and I find myself neglecting their requests at times...My husband requires a lot of attention, he is high maintenance, very unpredictable...needs a lot of mental energy. I try to get my house cleaned on the weekends, this involves a lot of my physical energy...get so tired, especially after the hysterectomy. My husband has tried to help with the laundry, but he mixed the whites with the colors and the colors ran and ruined good clothing. He refuses to let me get a cleaner to do the housecleaning”. (Respondent 15, Kindergarten Teacher)

“I get the children to help...cannot manage all of it. I try to help with their needs, but it is difficult. I would like more home cooked meals...just don't have the energy at times. I try to be fair and divide the chores...I end up doing the lion's share most times. What can be done gets done...some are left undone”. (Respondent 17, Administrative Assistant)

“There is always something that is not done. I wish I could cook healthy meals...quicker to get a take-out and less stress for me. I have health problems due to poor eating habits...have to make lifestyle changes. The chores are always a challenge. My husband is good, he helps out...but I find myself running out of time...little family time together on a week night...insufficient quality time with my family”.  
(Respondent 18, Office Manager)

“Not everything is done...I take work home so this is not possible. The time is not enough in the evenings. I have to work so other roles and duties are not done, like always having a home cooked meal and supervision with homework...the chores are very time-consuming and I do what I think is urgent, like the laundry and the dishes. I clean the floors only when I can see it grubby...the overtime takes up my family time. I should be giving my family more of my attention, but this is not possible...I feel guilty that so much of my time is taken up doing my work”.

(Respondent 20, Sales And Customer Service)

“No I am not always available even though I am there physically. Our time spent together is very limited...and this affects discipline issues and expectations. My husband is very supportive and he tries to do the cooking and laundry most times. When I am available to do chores, I try and get them done, but this is only occasionally...he keeps saying to me that my responsibilities outside of work are important too. My family is very supportive...they know how hard I work. They help with the cooking and laundry”. (Respondent 22, Executive Secretary)

“Yes I sometimes have to come in to work on the week-ends...this takes time away from my daughter and husband...I don't really like this. I hardly have time to spend with family members...I'm rarely home due to work and drive time. My husband helps out as much as he can...he helps with taking care of our daughter and he helps with chores around the house...the family time that work takes away from me...”.

(Respondent 24, Benefits Account Analyst)

“I am not able to get everything and every role done...the work I take home takes up a vast amount of my time, and I am not always available to my family when they need my help. My husband helps around the house with chores and errands and our new puppy. He does whatever he can to

make my life a little easier. I try to prioritize...not so successful with this...Depending on the week we're having...some weeks are a lot more stressful than others. It is not easy managing the behaviors of children with special needs...this work is very challenging, physically, mentally and emotionally”.

(Respondent 25, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)

“No, I cannot do it all...something has to give and it usually is my family. I do what I can...I wish I could cook more often and spend quality time with my husband and children, but I can't. My husband helps out with the chores and the cooking and laundry. He understands my stresses and tiredness and helps out where he can...”.

(Respondent 26, Elementary Music Teacher)

“No I am not able to do everything...my work affects the amount of time to carry out my family roles and responsibilities. I feel that my family is neglected at times, but my work has to get done so that I can provide for them. I don't cook often...get take-outs. My husband does very little of the household chores, the cleaning and the laundry. My children help me. I have to make sure that everything is up and running. I try and do the best that I can and I am happy with this. The bills and the gardening take up a lot of time and my husband sees to this so this is off my hands...”.

(Respondent 27, Realtor)

“I cannot do everything...my husband works 12 to 16 hours a day and I am left to cope with everything from meal preparation to supervision of homework. I also have to make sure that their clothes are out for the next day...as we have an early start every morning. I do what I can...I am saddled with the chores as my husband is hardly home...I try to get the children to help me, but they want to do their own thing...go out with their friends and socialize...”.

(Respondent 28, Administrative Clerk)

“I always try to do my best as a spouse and parent, but the problem is that I don’t have enough time to do all that I want to do. The time is the major problem. I don’t have enough play time with my children...and they miss out. Only the most important tasks get sorted out. Very basic cleaning of our home is done. The more thorough cleaning is not possible. Meal preparation is always rushed...”

(Respondent 30, Sales Manager)

“I am able to get to most of the functions and duties...maybe I could spend more time reading to my child or playing with her, but there is always something else to do”.

“My home is not as clean as I would like it to be, but I do my best. I would also like to have healthier meals, but there is always a rush and I prepare what is quick. Our garden is very neglected, but we try to keep up with the bill payments...We are able to talk to each other and can cry on each other’s shoulders if need be”.

(Respondent 31, Specialized Programs Teacher Assistant)

“Most times...as a working parent it is not possible to do everything. Reading to my children and...teaching them is sometimes neglected”.

“My wife helps out with the laundry...I try to do the cleaning and outside work in the yard...the paying of bills I do and we both do the grocery shopping together...”.

(Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

“I love my kids...they are my first priority, so when I have to attend to my work obligations, I feel guilty that I’m not doing things with them. My wife helps out...I take care of the yard and the bills...my wife cleans the house and does the laundry...I am hardly home and my wife has to take care of the kids and their hobbies...their friends birthday parties and the buying of outfits for the children and gifts for the host...my wife gets the

kids ready for school to help out and because I lack sleep...2 to 3 hours a day, she lets me sleep in whenever I can. I make very good money at my job and our goal is to give our kids a jumpstart on their education, pay off our house early and plan our retirement...but when I am working overtime and I can't be there when the kids have an activity it can be very upsetting". (Respondent 34, Sales And Customer Service)

"Yes there are certain functions neglected...education...and roles that are unfinished...I have fewer home cooked healthy meals...I feel terrible about this...there are things that are not done...my house is not as clean as if I were home. I have no time to relax. My husband takes care of the yard and the trimming of the lawn...and the bills...I feel guilty taking away my family time to do work responsibilities...".  
(Respondent 35, Office Clerk)

"I don't have the time to teach my own child...neglected...I would like to just spend time with her and relax...my energy levels are low at times that I just want to sit in front of the TV and vegetate...I am too tired to talk. The chores are time-consuming...there is the cleaning, shopping and preparation of meals to do...my time and energy are low. There are family responsibilities, the in-laws, the running of a house and I am trying to do it all...I have to shoulder most of the roles and responsibilities...".  
(Respondent 36, Kindergarten Teacher)

"No I don't get every function and role accomplished...I try to prioritize tasks and always aim for better time management on my part...I have dropped the auto pilot mode. My husband helps with the cooking and cleaning...it is a two-way road. We do the same for each other. He also pays the bills...I find conflict difficult to deal with and just try to deal with the issue and move on...my husband is willing to listen to any problems and he asks me what did the Queen do today? We both have a good laugh

and move on. He is just there for me...I have so many tasks to do that my husband sacrifices his personal relaxation time to help me cope with all that I have to do. He is ready to build things, he is willing to attend meetings that mean nothing to him and helps me to grade papers”.

(Respondent 37, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Every parent has a universal responsibility and I try to be diligent. My mom helps out a lot with the cooking and taking care of my daughter...she is invaluable as a resource...she goes out of her way to help me. I have help with the laundry and vacuuming and the yard...the chores are overwhelming for me. My husband pays the bills and attends to the maintenance in our home...he gives me advice and suggestions...he has helped me to network. I always have to be diligent...a client can call so I make sure that my daughter is settled and doing her homework whilst I try to sort out the client’s request and supervise her homework. This is not the ideal situation...I continually find myself multi-tasking and writing up checklists to cope with the rat-race. I wish that life could be easier...I make use of verbal and mental affirmations to help me cope with my stressful lifestyle...I know that changes have to be made, and I am continually looking for ways to make this happen”.

(Respondent 39, Real Estate Financing)

“This is very neglected and I find it hard to accept this. My child has to follow the quick pace and children do not like to be rushed. Mentally I am thinking about my work and I sometimes am very distracted. I hope to make a positive change in this area and need to reevaluate my life and priorities. I have help coming in once a week to do the cleaning chores...the meals that I prepare are done with minimal effort due to time constraints. Laundry chores pile up, but I am up to date with my bill payments”.

(Respondent 42, Training And Development Specialist)

“Not all of them...some are neglected...like spending alone time as a couple and...with my children...just spending time with them in general...”.

“...the rest of the roles and obligations I try to fulfill or ask my wife for help. I try to pay the bills on time. My wife and I share the chores...the yard and the cleaning and laundry take up most of the time needed for relaxation...I wish that I could just rest a little...I do miss out on a lot of the family functions...I want to be present with my family at these gatherings but it is not always possible”. (Respondent 44, Programmer)

“...and spend time relaxing as a couple and reading to my children...my children need my attention and I can’t always give it to them...”.

“No but I get to most of the roles...I am an individual that is doing her best at all times. I wish I could cook more...life is just so rushed and unpredictable. I share the chores with my husband...but we don’t get to clean our house as often as it should be cleaned. The yard also gets very neglected...we try to be prompt with the bills as this affects our interest rate...we are charged a higher rate if we are late with the payments...”. (Respondent 45, Customer Service Associate)

“Time is the factor...I am very aware of this. I wish that I could have more flexibility in my work...but this is not possible. I feel guilty that I am not always there for my children. We have help with the chores...it is not feasible to do everything without any help...I provide for them and I am skilled in this field and it is difficult for me to find a more flexible job. I hope to raise respectful children with my wife’s help and support and let them know that I have tried my very best under the circumstances”. (Respondent 46, Programmer)

“Yes in terms of time spent together as a couple...alone...and we don’t always have healthy home cooked meals. My children...I would love to

teach them and just have fun at times, but work deadlines have to be met and this takes up family time. I try to share the chores with my husband...but we have a housecleaner to come in once a month to do the cleaning. The laundry and cooking I share with my husband".  
(Respondent 48, Programmer)

"Activities with my children are neglected...I would like to do more...with them to make sure that they have a head start...but this has not been happening and I get frustrated because it gets postponed".

"My wife and I decide which chores need to be done immediately, we discuss it and then make a decision as to who is available to get it done...we try to prioritize...my wife is very understanding and takes the time to communicate openly".

(Respondent 49, Assistant Branch Manager)

"Yes I neglect some of my functions and duties unfortunately...I am not always available in terms of time and energy to educate my daughter...".

"My cooking and laundry is done by my mom...she is invaluable as a helper and takes care of my daughter as well...gives her meals, plays with her, gives her a bath. The housecleaners...a husband and wife team come once a month to clean the house and the landscapers also come once a month to trim the trees and the grass".

(Respondent 50, Curriculum Developer)

#### **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 7**

The job demands experienced at work is dysfunctional for the family as vital family functions, for example, the sexual function is not always being fulfilled. Respondents 4, 7, 10, 44 and 48 indicated that they do not spend enough time together with their spouses. The socialization or education function is also neglected at times on a weekday, but over the weekends,



these functions are fulfilled: (Respondents 35, 50). In terms of Parsons's instrumental-expressive task roles not being fulfilled, respondents have indicated that there are not always healthy, nutritious meals available to their families on a daily basis during the weekdays, referring to the expressive housewife role not being fulfilled completely. Chores are also neglected, for example the laundry and cleaning of their homes. There are less home cooked meals, the homes are not always clean and sanitized and this could lead to health issues.

The demands set by employers, with specific reference to heavy workload and working overtime has repercussions on the family in terms of family members not fulfilling their various functions and roles on a daily basis during the weekdays. This creates a degree of guilt experienced by family members as important family roles and functions are fulfilled on the weekends as they are not always fulfilled during the weekdays. But the family also adapts to change in the environment and enlists the help of individuals, for example, family and friends to assist in the fulfillment of family functions and roles.

#### **5.2.8 CATEGORY 8: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK STRESS AND CONFLICT IN THE HOME.**

**\*Question: Do you experience any conflict at home as a result of work stress?**

##### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

According to Greenberger, et al. (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 466), there is a connection between stressful job conditions and a reduction in time spent with children. Bolger, et al. (in Bumpus, et al. 1999: 466) state that there is a connection between stressful job conditions and conflict occurring more often in marriages. In this study, with regard to a reduction in time spent

with children, the help of the spouse is enlisted to spend time with the children; in terms of marital conflict occurring more often in marriages as a result of the stressful job conditions, the couples discuss ways in which this conflict may be resolved as well as ensuring that this conflict occurs less often.

Experiencing job demands at the workplace has an effect on family dynamics. It is a challenge to have a demanding job and then still perform one's roles and functions at home on a daily basis. Individuals need to recover from the stressful workplace and unwind, but family functions need to be fulfilled and role obligations need to be met daily.

**The following responses were received:**

“Yes my husband and I decided to set aside some time for discussing family issues...but this has not happened because of work responsibilities and my health problems. He gets really angry when I don't keep my word and family problems get worse”. (Respondent 23, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Disagreements yes...my husband feels that I am taken advantage of...feels that I should speak up, stand up for myself”.  
(Respondent 9, Sales And Service Associate)

“Disagreements...when I bring home the reports he does not like it...unhappy with this...he says leave work at work...they are legal documents and have to be done by a certain time”.  
(Respondent 11, Administrative Assistant)

“When I am home late and tired, I expect my family to be understanding and this does not always happen. I am bombarded with questions and requests the moment I enter”. (Respondent 17, Administrative Assistant)

“We have our differences...my husband does not like me bringing work home so often. I feel severe exhaustion and am usually in bed after dinner to get up later to finish up my work...little family time together on a week night”. (Respondent 18, Office Manager)

“Yes the pressure of work is at times unbearable and I get irritated with the slightest mistake at home...this causes my family to be upset”.  
(Respondent 20, Sales And Customer Service)

“Disagreements, my husband does not like to see me being taken advantage of and he keeps saying to me that my responsibilities outside of work are important too”. (Respondent 22, Executive Secretary)

“Disagreements...he gets upset when he feels that my employer is working me too hard”. (Respondent 24, Benefits Account Analyst)

“Disagreements yes mainly because of my moods and tiredness”.  
(Respondent 26, Elementary Music Teacher)

“Yes because I have so much to do...I try to delegate but at times I am ignored and this upsets me...I try to talk to my husband and children about it”. (Respondent 28, Administrative Clerk)

“Disagreements yes if I continue to talk about the same problem my husband will start to get frustrated”. (Respondent 29, School Counselor)

“Disagreements yes I do go home very tired and very stressed out”.  
(Respondent 31, Specialized Programs Teacher Assistant)

“I am not good when it comes to conflict...I am hard on myself and suffer inside than to have any bickering”. (Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

“We have our differences...I feel guilty taking away my family time to do work responsibilities”. (Respondent 35, Office Clerk)

“Yes I have to shoulder most of the responsibilities...and something has to give, something has to be dropped and some commitment not fulfilled”.  
(Respondent 36, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Not really...I find conflict difficult to deal with and just try to deal with the issue and move on”. (Respondent 37, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Sometimes yes I can feel so out of it that any little thing irritates me”.  
(Respondent 39, Real Estate Financing)

“Yes I feel very irritable and the little things bother me...I try to be as calm as I can. I regret saying things that are unpleasant...it is not me”.  
(Respondent 42, Training And Development Specialist)

“Yes I need to unwind and my wife wants me to do things...I have told her many times to just let me relax, have something to eat and I will feel a lot better”. (Respondent 44, Programmer)

“At times yes...the stress is unmanageable and takes its toll on you. I try to be fair and reasonable...but at times this is not possible”.  
(Respondent 45, Customer Service Associate)

“Yes I am irritable and restless and I let off steam”.  
(Respondent 46, Programmer)

“I try to control my emotions and temper...because of the children although this is not always an easy thing to do”.  
(Respondent 49, Assistant Branch Manager)

## **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 8**

Experiencing job demands at the workplace has an effect on family relations. It is a challenge to have a demanding job and then still perform one's functions and roles at home. Individuals need to recover from the stressful workplace and unwind, but family functions need to be fulfilled and role obligations need to be met. Individuals have said that they cannot do it all on a daily basis, it is not possible to cope with all of the work and family pressures, and this makes them irritable and tend to cause conflict: (Respondents 20, 42, 36, 23).

### **5.2.9 CATEGORY 9: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK STRESS AND ROLE CONFLICT BETWEEN WORK AND FAMILY.**

**\*Question: Do you experience any conflict between work responsibilities and family responsibilities, where work demands conflict with family demands?**

#### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

Individuals have commented that they feel stressed with the competing demands of work and the family. The job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) compete with the family for the individual's time and energy, although individuals try to achieve most of their family roles on a daily basis after resting for a while and recovering some of their energy. They also did enlist the help of family members and friends to cope with childcare and preparation of meals.

Merton (1976: 9) states that in some instances values conflict in the person's status-set. "The more married women at work in the labor market, the more subject to competing obligations" (Merton 1976: 9) and

that "... the conflicting demands of different statuses ... involve *different* people in the role-sets of the conflicting statuses (the demands of an employer, for example, and of a spouse)" (Merton 1976: 10). In terms of this research study, the demands of work and employer compete with that of the spouse and child and the individual is placed in a position of conflicting statuses. The individual thus finds himself/herself between two conflicting demands or expectations. The family has to find ways to cope with these demands; the spouse, family members, close friends and child care services are resources that the family utilizes to assist with role obligations and responsibilities.

**The following responses were received:**

"When I am with my family I am called away when the system network is down and this could take a good couple of hours to sort out. I am also worn out from working so much and not taking many vacations...it is stressful. I try to do my best in terms of providing for my family, but a stressful job does wear you down. I just take one day at a time and one problem at a time...I let my family know that they are very important to me".  
(Respondent 7, Network Manager)

"Yes...a definite conflict between work and family. I try to prioritize as to what is important. I am not always there for my children. Time with my children is affected and I am usually exhausted after work".  
(Respondent 2, Customer Relations Manager)

"Yes in terms of time and energy...work takes me away from spending time with my husband and daughter and uses up my energy...I am so tired at the end of the day...and still bring work home that I couldn't finish at the office". (Respondent 10, Executive Assistant)

“I try and be accommodating with family members because of work responsibilities. I work very hard and try to be organized but the tasks are just too much...there is no end, I am always on the go. I do not get to bed until late at night. I try and think of new ways of doing things but the pressure and stress still is there. I try to cope and manage the problems but it is all so overwhelming. Yes the time being away from my family to prepare my classroom and do the lesson planning and record-keeping. The preparation is very taxing and the long hours are a real strain on my family life. I feel very stressed, very spent”.

(Respondent 15, Kindergarten Teacher)

“There is a real internal struggle between my work demands and my family. At times I want to do something else and not work so hard. I don’t know what else I would do. It is so overwhelming. I am not there for my family at times due to work obligations”.

(Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

“When I work overtime my children are alone with my sick, elderly father. I am also usually exhausted when I get home...on the days when I have to do the reports I am not available for my family...this upsets me”.

(Respondent 11, Administrative Assistant)

“Work and the stress and conflict exhausts me...all I want to do is lie in front of the television and not be bothered...that is my way of de-stressing and unwinding from the day”. (Respondent 12, Pre-School Teacher)

“Yes in terms of time and energy...I work overtime so it shortens my time with my family...this type of work is physically and mentally exhausting...so I just want to relax and get my strength and energy back...I put off activities with my family”.

(Respondent 13, Project Manager Information Technology)

“Yes demanding clients who take up a lot of my time...sometimes they delay signing the paperwork and I have to make several trips just to get it signed. This is time taken away from the family. With my job stress the effect that it has on my family is not good at all...I try and make up for this by spoiling them on their birthdays or at Christmas. I also try and have at least one meal with them so that I can find out how their day has been...are there any problems? I try my best to be a good mother but my job is very overwhelming”. (Respondent 14, Realtor)

“Yes the time and energy conflict...there is not enough and there is only so much that I can do in a given time period. I keep pushing myself...stresses me out further... I am very organized and I prioritize as to what is important and what is urgent but it just seems to be so rushed”. (Respondent 16, Workshop Coordinator Special Education)

“Yes work demands interfere with the time available that I get to spend with my family and what I am able to get done in terms of chores accomplished. It can be really frustrating at times. I depend on my family as well to help with the chores but they don’t always do them. It takes more of my strength to ask them why it was not done so I end up doing it myself or not doing it at all sometimes”. (Respondent 17, Administrative Assistant)

“Yes with the amount of work that I take home...the overtime takes up my family time. I should be giving my family more of my attention, but this is not possible. There is only so much time in the day...and the work has to be done for me to keep my job. The job pressure is too much...I feel guilty that so much of my time is taken up doing my work. I need to work and do the best I can”. (Respondent 20, Sales And Customer Service)



“Yes I am hardly home during the work week...we don't have our meals together. This affects the routine and discipline when there is a child present. There is only the surface cleaning of my home...I'm not pleased with this...In addition to my work, I have to make sure that everyone has clean clothes...I do what I can do”.

(Respondent 21, Lease Administrator)

“Yes in terms of the family time that work takes away from me...my daughter is still young and she needs a mother-figure around. I work overtime...this involves late nights and some week-end work. I am not always available for family gatherings and this upsets my daughter”.

(Respondent 24, Benefits Account Analyst)

“Yes with the amount of paperwork that has to be filled out...this is done in my own family time at home. My husband does most of the work in terms of the chores...he is very supportive. He helps with the laundry, dishes, vacuuming...I feel bad about this as I feel that I am not doing my share”. (Respondent 25, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)

“Yes at times I feel like I should be at school on a week-end or stay even later after school to catch up or work ahead and yet my home schedule says no or the needed time with my family says no. I still have to prepare my lessons at home, so this is frustrating for me...I'm working when everyone else is not...I try and draw the line when I feel that the boss is pushing me too hard. I pressure myself in to having to get things done at home and always feel that I am not doing enough. I always feel pressured to move on to the next thing on my list and feel that there's no time to sit and enjoy. I have had to let go at times and tell myself it can wait, it is not worth arguing about something that can be dealt with later. To keep up with what is happening with my family I make calls when I am working

overtime at school or else I'm constantly thinking about the situation at home". (Respondent 26, Elementary Music Teacher)

"Yes when I have to work overtime...this directly affects my children and the time that we get home...everything is so rushed...dinner, homework, bath time, preparation for bed...I have to see that everything is ready for the morning...clothes, sack lunches and school bags so that we are not delayed as we are in rush-hour traffic. I need to prioritize and delegate more...". (Respondent 28, Administrative Clerk)

"In terms of the reports that I have to write up and submit and the nature of my job, there is a conflict. The documents that I have to fill out are legal documents and I have to ensure accuracy. The reports that I have to write up are lengthy and I bring them home to complete so that I can hand them in according to the deadline. These reports are also part of the legal documentation so careful thought is required when writing them up...this takes up considerable family time...Some jobs are inherently stressful and I don't know the ways that the family can be shielded from the effects of work stress except by providing them with coping skills, explaining the situation first and then teaching them the skills to cope with it".

(Respondent 29, School Counselor)

"Yes because of the time taken up by work and I am not always available for family gatherings and outings...I have 2 young children and they miss me. Work pays your salary and you are able to afford things and provide for your family, but the family is getting the short end of the stick when it comes to time availability". (Respondent 30, Sales Manager)

"At times I don't have the energy to deal with family issues and feel bad about this. I am also not always there for my child in terms of time spent with her and have to put her in daycare. I sometimes have to stay late at

work to help out and this affects my daughter's schedule and she gets tired and irritable". (Respondent 31, Specialized Programs Teacher Assistant)

"Just the time...Sometimes there are family problems and I am not always available to deal with these. When I take work home, this time should be spent with my family. Every job has its requirements and in accepting the job you accept these responsibilities, but it sometimes sure is tough on the family". (Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

"The long hours that I work do affect our family routine and schedule...sometimes my daughter is asleep when I get home so I don't get to see her awake the whole day. If my children are sick, my husband usually takes the time off or my family assists because I will be really behind with my work...my work is left for me when I return unless it is an urgent package that needs to be compiled immediately. My salary helps to pay for our mortgage and car payments so I have to work. I try and prioritize...it is tense at times when work and family both place demands on you. (Respondent 33, Administrative Clerk)

"My children have to wait for me until I finish my work...I try to get them to do their homework whilst they are waiting...I am trying to supervise homework and finish up my tasks. They get hungry and restless and become uncooperative. It is not at all easy to juggle two roles...there is always the pull in opposite directions. Work seems to always dictate the time spent in a particular sphere of one's life. I try to make to-do lists where I can and this helps me to stay organized...".

(Respondent 35, Office Clerk)

"I try and give 100% to work and 100% to family and feel guilty because of this. I am always thinking of the work that I have to do that it exhausts me. Dinner preparation is done as quickly as I can and it is not always the

best, healthy meal. I am trying to make everyone happy...my husband, child, employer, students and parents. My husband encourages me to do well and improve my standard of work. I try to do it all...but at the end of the day I cannot manage everything”.

(Respondent 36, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Yes most of my time is spent at work and I am hardly at home to enjoy my family. I don’t get to attend family functions and celebrations as often as I would like to. My children are closer to their mother because she is always available for them. Work stress has to be dealt with in some way...I make sure that I go running to try and reduce the stress. This helps to clear my mind and relaxes my body. I am constantly trying to improve my work ethics and family values in the hope that I can eventually find a reasonable balance between the two”.

(Respondent 38, Middle School Teacher)

“Time yes and I do bring work home to complete...and this is my family’s time that I am taking up...it is not the ideal situation but it is what it is for now”. (Respondent 41, Customer Relations Manager)

“The all-nighters that I do has an effect on me physically and I am not always available for my family...I have to make a change here because it really hurts me. For me, God and family come first at all times and I am not following my values. Work always seems to win when it comes to taking up an individual’s time and energy. It also dictates where you are in your career and you are frowned upon if you choose to put your family ahead of work. Those who are heard are given career advancements and promotions...those who really deserve it are overlooked”.

(Respondent 42, Training And Development Specialist)

“The time taken up by work is the real problem for me...I feel that I am not being fair with my family...I do miss out on a lot of the family functions...I want to be present with my family at these gatherings but it is not always possible. People do need time to get away more than just the two or three weeks of vacation that they get. They need to be able to have a day off here or there... just to be able to get away from things. I'd like to see change happen like that...what it would take I don't know...we live in such a society that is 24 hour driven. I hope that a solution will be found where our families can be better taken care of, not just financially but emotionally as well. I see the hurt on my children's faces when I can't go with them to their friends' birthday parties and barbecues”.

(Respondent 44, Programmer)

“I usually take work home and get dinner ready whilst trying to think about how to complete my work to the best of my ability...my children need my attention and I can't always give it to them...I know that I need to make drastic changes to cope with the pressure-filled situation that I am in”. (Respondent 45, Customer Service Associate)

“In terms of time definitely...I feel that I am hardly at home to enjoy my family...I am not always together with them when they go to the movies or the park...I have to work”. (Respondent 46, Programmer)

“Yes in terms of the time and the physical strength that I have at the end of each day. I feel bad for my children...they don't understand that I am tired and need to rest...they are delighted to see me after a long day and act out because they want my attention.... I am fortunate that I have help taking care of my children...”. (Respondent 48, Programmer)

“The long days is family time taken away...and the work I do take home makes me very distracted...I try to stay updated on new products and changes in policies”. (Respondent 49, Assistant Branch Manager)

“In terms of the time spent on work and in addition to this, bringing work home to complete really takes its toll on my family and me personally...I am continually stressed and I know that I have to evaluate the situation and make a decision. I am not spending enjoyable quality time that I deserve to with my family and work seems to always take precedence in our lives”. (Respondent 50, Curriculum Developer)

#### **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 9**

Individuals have commented that they feel very stressed and conflicting about the competing demands of work and the family. The job demands compete with the family for the individual’s time and energy. But the family is able to adapt to the change in the environment, and although there is the presence of role conflict between work and family, the family is able to fulfill most of the roles during the weekdays. The rest of the roles are performed during the weekends when there is not so much of a competing demand for the individual’s time and energy. The individual is thus able to concentrate more on fulfilling family role obligations and not have the role obligations and responsibilities of work to attend to as well. Their physical presence at work may not be required, although they may take work home to complete and still have role conflict about doing work at home instead of giving attention to the family. Their spouses offered assistance and support in this regard.

## **5.2.10 CATEGORY 10: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPPORT AT HOME AND WORK STRESS.**

**\*Question: Do you receive any support from your family (spouse, parents, siblings, children, etc.) with regard to:**

**\*your job?**

**\*job-related problems?**

**\*work stress?**

### **Theoretical foundation of the question**

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 509) states that families provide warmth, security and mutual support which is required for primary socialization, and once the personality has been developed, it needs to be kept stable, which is the second function of the family, the stabilization of adult personalities. He further states that the focus here is on the marital relationship and the emotional security and support that the husband and wife give to each other. This in turn is a protection from the stress and strain of everyday life, which affects the personality and makes it unstable.

### **The following responses were received:**

“Yes I receive a lot of support from my wife and children...they know that I enjoy being a provider...encourage me to do my best”.

(Respondent 7, Network Manager)

“Yes my husband can be supportive, he talks things out with me and provides solutions to think about. He says to me that I need to leave things at work, make boundaries. He is very intelligent...provides ideas, awesome ideas and suggestions on how to deal with special needs children. He is willing for me to spend extra time at work...donates money to the school”. (Respondent 15, Kindergarten Teacher)

“From wife and mom, yes. My Mom has worked in this field for many years so she understands. We work for different institutions but the same type of things come up, the same type of business. I talk with my wife about work and what is going on”. (Respondent 3, Bank Manager)

“No my husband does not want to listen to my work problems. I am having a very negative relationship with my family...”.  
(Respondent 5, Accountant and Consultant)

“At times...sometimes my husband can be very sarcastic and hurtful with his words. At other times he will offer workable suggestions and beneficial advice...I have to make a change...For me, God and family come first...”.  
(Respondent 42, Training and Development Specialist)

“My husband helps with the problems that I have at work. On weekends, when I’m inspecting homes my husband accompanies me”.  
(Respondent 2, Customer Relations Manager)

“Lots of support from my husband, children and my family...very encouraging”. (Respondent 4, Senior Account Manager)

“From my husband yes...I am able to discuss work problems...issues with him and it is sometimes nice to get another perspective on the problem”.  
(Respondent 6, Sales And Service)

“Yes my husband and son are very supportive...they listen and offer advice”. (Respondent 9, Sales And Service Associate)



“Yes my husband is very supportive...he helps me with filing, faxing and working through problems”. (Respondent 10, Executive Assistant)

“Yes my family is very supportive...they enjoy what my salary is able to do for them. Help me if I need help with the reports”.

(Respondent 11, Administrative Assistant)

“Yes my husband is supportive of what I do...encourages me to be independent and utilize my skills”.

(Respondent 13, Project Manager Information Technology)

“Yes he tries to help me out when I have a problem or if I need to run something by him”. (Respondent 18, Office Manager)

“Yes I do receive adequate support...they give me a listening ear and offer advice”. (Respondent 21, Lease Administrator)

“My family is very supportive...they know how hard I work. They help with the cooking and laundry”. (Respondent 22, Executive Secretary)

“Yes my family is great with their support...they help with the bulletin boards and classroom preparation”.

(Respondent 23, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Yes my husband listens and asks questions and offers help...if I need to stay later or come in on the week-ends he does not give me a hard time... I am thankful that I have an understanding husband who is prepared to do chores, take care of our daughter and still be able to listen to my work problems and offer appropriate and workable solutions”.

(Respondent 24, Benefits Account Analyst)

“Yes my husband listens to my work problems and helps me to problem-solve. He brain-storms with me and gives me advice. He also types for me...My husband does most of the work in terms of the chores...he is very supportive. He helps with the laundry, dishes, vacuuming...I feel bad about this as I feel that I am not doing my share”.

(Respondent 25, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher)

“Yes he listens and at times provides another perspective. He is accepting of the times when I have to be at school in the evenings or on week-ends. He is proud to say I teach and says I do it well...My husband helps me by typing up things for me on his computer and formats performance programs for me as well. He helps me to move equipment and attends the performances and gives me feedback. I don't know how I would cope without all of the assistance that he gives me...”.

(Respondent 26, Elementary Music Teacher)

“Yes from my husband and children...they try to help with any photocopying and faxing, stapling of the documents, writing out reminders for me and offering advice”. (Respondent 27, Realtor)

“Yes from my husband...he listens to me rant and tries to find ways to help. He will support me in anything...and comes in to help when I need him to”. (Respondent 28, Administrative Clerk)

“Yes from my husband...he is willing to listen to me and give me ideas to solve problems. He also appreciates my job and likes what I do”.

(Respondent 29, School Counselor)

“Yes my wife offers to help me in whatever way she can...she also offers advice”. (Respondent 30, Sales Manager)

“Yes my wife is very supportive...she helps prepare my food for the next work day. She listens to the problems that I have at work and is helpful with suggestions”. (Respondent 32, Teacher Assistant)

“Yes my husband listens and gives me his input...he likes me to do what I think is suitable for my skills”. (Respondent 33, Administrative Clerk)

“Yes my husband is understanding if I need to work late...he does not like to think that I am taken advantage of. My husband also communicates appreciation for my work...he appreciates the things that my salary can pay for like our annual vacation and treats for the children”.  
(Respondent 35, Office Clerk)

“Yes my husband listens to my problems and offers suggestions...sometimes he helps me to grade papers and go shopping for school goodies. He likes the second income for us to be able to afford a home and 2 cars...My husband encourages me to do well and improve my standard of work...”. (Respondent 36, Kindergarten Teacher)

“Yes my wife listens...she gives suggestions, but most of all she listens...she is always willing to help in any way”.  
(Respondent 38, Middle School Teacher)

“Yes he gives me advice and suggestions...he has helped me to network”.  
(Respondent 39, Real Estate Financing)

“Yes they are kind and caring and offer advice...I love and appreciate them so much”. (Respondent 41, Customer Relations Manager)

“Yes they are supportive and offer advice when I need it...they are always listening to my work problems”. (Respondent 44, Programmer)

“Yes they love and support me...they listen to me complain and try to offer workable solutions which I appreciate’.

(Respondent 45, Customer Service Associate)

“Yes they do support me and offer a listening ear to my work problems...they also offer advice from a different perspective”.

(Respondent 48, Programmer)

“Yes my wife is very understanding and takes the time to communicate openly”. (Respondent 49, Assistant Branch Manager)

“Yes lots of support...and encouragement to progress in my work”.

(Respondent 50, Curriculum Developer)

#### **\*SUMMARY OF RESPONSES IN CATEGORY 10**

In this category, the majority of the respondents who have the support of their families commented that this support plays an important role in helping the individual manage some of the job demands, as some spouses helped with the work brought home to complete, as well as helped to perform the family functions and roles. This helped to alleviate the stress on the individual and allowed for him/her to recover from the stress experienced at work.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

The data analyses of the interviews, which are reflected in the categories of responses indicate the evidence that work stress, with specific reference to job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) has an effect on the family lives of employees, however, the findings of the research also confirms that respondents and their families are able to adapt to changes in

the environment. Trying to balance family responsibilities with a demanding job is a challenge, but the family is able to adapt to change in order to survive.

**\*Category 1: The relationship between manifest and latent functions and being fully employed.**

With regard to manifest functions, people have to work for a living and work provides this valuable source of income for the family, which is a manifest, intended function. Respondents have indicated that they are employed for financial reasons, to earn an income to be financially independent. An important latent function was interacting with others and learning from them, making a contribution, sharing knowledge and skills.

**\*Category 2: The relationship between work stress and conflict at work.**

Respondents also commented that the atmosphere was tense at times and it felt uncomfortable to be working under those circumstances. Some respondents chose not to get into conflict as it affects their work, but witnessed coworkers who did.

**\*Category 3: The relationship between support at work and work stress.**

In this category, the respondents who received help from their supervisors and managers commented that this definitely made a difference in helping to manage the job demands. They felt that someone understood what they were going through and showed compassion and caring in helping them reach solutions to problems. The support received from coworkers was

regarded as being invaluable in helping them cope with the stressful work environment as well.

**\*Category 4: The effects of work stress on individual time and energy.**

In this category, respondents felt that during the weekdays, at the end of the work day, they did not have much time and energy left to spend with their families, yet they made a concerted effort to try to fulfill their family roles and functions on a daily basis. If this was not feasible, they utilized the weekends to do so or enlisted the help of their spouse, family members and friends.

**\*Category 5: The effects of work stress on physical and emotional health.**

It is significant to note that respondents were being proactive and taking steps to improve their physical and emotional health by taking advice from their medical practitioners. They are taking medication to alleviate the physical symptoms, as well as making changes in the way in which they are able to either reduce or deal with the stressful work environment, all with the help of trained medical personnel.

**\*Category 6: The spillover effect of work stress on the family.**

The stress that affects the individual at work is carried over to the home environment to the family members as well. Some respondents have also indicated that their moods are affected and they go home in this emotional state; it is not fair on their families who want to interact with them after being away from one another. Individuals are distracted and at times not able to fully concentrate on the fulfillment of family functions and roles on a daily basis during the weekdays.

**\*Category 7: The relationship between work stress and family roles and functions.**

The job demands set by employers, with specific reference to heavy workload and working overtime, creates stress in the individual, for example, anxiety and has repercussions on the family in terms of family members not fulfilling their various functions on a daily basis during the weekdays. This creates a degree of guilt experienced by family members as important family roles and functions are performed on the weekends as they cannot always be fulfilled during the weekdays. But the family also adapts to change in the environment and enlists the help of individuals, for example, family and friends to assist in the fulfillment of family functions and roles that need to be performed, for example, education of their children, childcare and meal preparation as well as clean up.

**\*Category 8: The relationship between work stress and conflict in the home.**

Experiencing stress at the workplace has an effect on family dynamics. It is a challenge to have a demanding job and then still perform one's roles and functions at home. Individuals need to recover from the stressful workplace and unwind, but family functions need to be fulfilled and role obligations need to be met. Individuals have commented that job demands have left them feeling irritable and that their families are on the receiving end of their irritability and frustrations.

**\*Category 9: The relationship between work stress and role conflict between work and family.**

Individuals have commented that they feel stressed with the competing demands of work and the family. The job demands compete with the

family for the individual's time and energy. But the family is able to adapt to the change in the environment, and although there is the presence of role conflict, the family is able to fulfill most of the roles during the weekdays. The rest of the roles are performed during the weekends when there is not so much of a competing demand for the individual's time and energy from work. The individual is thus able to concentrate more on family roles and not have the roles, such as instrumental-expressive roles, obligations and responsibilities of work to attend to as well.

**\*Category 10: The relationship between support at home and work stress.**

In this category, the majority of the respondents who have the support of their families commented that this support plays an important role in helping the individual manage some of the work stress, as some spouses helped with the work brought home to complete, as well as helped to perform the family functions according to Parsons and Murdock and the instrumental-expressive task roles. This helped to alleviate the stress on the individual and allowed for them to recover from the job demands of the workplace.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the final conclusions and recommendations for the findings as well as further research to be conducted. By answering three key research questions and confirming relevant tentative hypotheses, i.e. what are the factors contributing to work stress and what influence do these factors have on family members, why does work stress contribute to work-family role conflict and how is workplace support and social support beneficial to the individual experiencing work stress, this study has confirmed that the repercussions of work stress on family dynamics prevented the family members from fulfilling some of their functions and roles on a daily basis during the weekdays. There was role conflict between work and the family due to the demands of the job in terms of heavy workload and working overtime. However, the family had the ability to adapt to changes in the environment, with the availability of resources which was the support that was provided by the workplace, family members and the network of friends.

The theoretical perspective that was utilized in this research study is the Functionalist perspective of Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton as well as the family functions of George P. Murdock, which provided a foundation for the description of the unfulfilled functions and roles, as well as the role conflict that employees experienced during the weekdays when faced with the demands of the workplace and their role obligations as parents and spouses. The findings of the research are consistent with what is highlighted in the literature, that work stress has an effect on

family dynamics, but that families are also more geared towards accepting role changes and adapt to their environment, in order for them to continue to survive as a functional unit in society.

Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13-14) believes that for society to continue successfully, the four functional prerequisites or functions, AGIL, which stands for adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency have to be met. Adaptation entails adapting to the environment in order to obtain necessities to support one self and this is fulfilled by the economic institution. According to Murdock (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 508), the economic function is where people work for a living for their basic needs, for example, providing food. Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13-14), states that goal attainment involves the setting of societal goals and the ways in which they can be attained are fulfilled by the political institution. Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 10) states that the political institution is partly responsible for improving the standard of living and increasing productivity. Therefore the interaction between family and work reflected on the family, which provided the economy with workers, while consuming the goods produced by the workers. Workers, on the other hand, provided the family with resources, income, food and shelter. Family was functional as it provided for the physical needs of the child in terms of food, clothing and shelter, as well as socialization for the integration of the human being into the society. According to Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13), the nuclear family serves two main functions, which are the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities. In terms of functions of the family, children were provided with the required socialization as the family is the primary socialization agent in the life of the child. Work was functional as well, in that it provided an income for the financial survival of the family. The family was able to exist financially in society because of the income that was provided by the employer.

In this study all three research questions, stemming from the research problem, have been answered and the tentative hypotheses are confirmed whereby new theory is built in a qualitative research study. The research reviewed existing literature, relevant assumptions and current approaches. They were applied to the findings at the field level in Las Vegas, Nevada. The research, based on a functionalist perspective, has confirmed existing approaches in the field of work stress and the repercussions on family dynamics. From the findings of this research study on work-family stress, work stress has been identified as a significant factor in affecting family dynamics, but the ability of the family to adapt to changing roles and change in the environment was also a significant factor in dealing with and managing the stress.

There was also the awareness in the United States that although there was the effect of work stress on family relationships, there was also the availability of resources. Support was provided from the workplace, the family and a network of friends, which was beneficial to the individual and family members, as work stress had to be dealt with in an effective manner for the benefit of employees, families, organizations and society as a whole.

**The three research questions, which have been answered now refer to hypotheses of this study will be discussed and explained:**

## **6.2 WHAT ARE THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO WORK STRESS AND WHAT INFLUENCE DO THESE FACTORS HAVE ON FAMILY MEMBERS?**

The research has confirmed this tentative hypothesis. The higher the work stress (the independent causal variable) experienced by the individual, the higher the incidence of family members not fulfilling all of their various

functions and roles (the dependant variable) on a daily basis in the research.

The findings of the research indicate that the demands of the job, with specific reference to heavy workload and working overtime were causing the stressful environment. The demands of the job was the individual's stressor that was present at the workplace; job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) were the factors contributing to work stress and this had an influence on family members by their inability to always fulfill their family functions and role obligations on the weekdays.

According to Merton (in Haralambos and Holborn 1991: 778), functional analysis should begin with the assumption that any institution or component of society may be functional, dysfunctional or non-functional. The unit of analysis in this study was the individual worker who was also part of a family. Work was functional for the family as the economic function of providing for the family was fulfilled, however work stress was dysfunctional for the family as individuals have reported that family functions and roles were neglected on a daily basis during the weekdays, due to the stress experienced in the work context. Respondents have reported that there was the neglect of significant family functions during the weekdays, for example, the sexual function and the socialization or educational function as well as the neglect of family roles on a daily basis during the weekdays, for example, a nutritious home cooked meal, clean, ironed clothes and a clean, sanitized home. Individuals have also reported feelings of guilt due to the functions and roles that were neglected during the weekdays.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 1038) states that the functional prerequisites (adaptation, goal attainment, integration, pattern maintenance and tension control) fulfilled by societal institutions are

interrelated and that a change in one institution affects the others. In this study, individuals have reported that the time and energy demands of work, poor physical and emotional health as well as the spillover due to job demands (the disturbance) had an effect on the fulfillment of family functions on a daily basis, but it was also reported that the spouses offered assistance to ensure the fulfillment of the functions for example, the education or socialization of the children. The family thus adapted to this disturbance of their stability and equilibrium. In this study, respondents have also reported that when they have rested for a while, they felt more energized and were then able to attend to the fulfillment of functions.

“The entire range of sociological data can be, and much of it has been, subjected to functional analysis. The basic requirement is that the object of analysis represents a *standardized* (i.e. patterned and repetitive) item, such as social roles, institutional patterns, social processes, cultural patterns, culturally patterned emotions, social norms, group organization, social structure, devices for social control, *etc.*” (Merton 1957: 50). In this research study, the roles of husband, wife, mother, father and employee had certain obligations that needed to be met on a daily or regular basis, for example, in the roles of mother and father, the parents had to ensure that their children had prompt, nutritious meals, that they had clean, appropriate clothing to wear according to the season and weather patterns, that the home that housed their children was clean and physically safe and that the children’s emotional needs were satisfied, in terms of safety. Respondents have reported that it was a challenge to have a demanding job and then still fulfill the role responsibilities at home. They needed to recover from the stress of the workplace, but family role obligations had to be met. They have reported that they could not do it all on a daily basis, it was not possible to cope with all of the work and family pressures, and this made them irritable and tended to cause conflict. But they had family

discussions and delegated daily chores, thus resolving the conflict and thereby working towards resuming the family's stability.

According to Merton (in Wilson 1983: 64-65), functional analysis occurs in steps and these individual steps in this study were applied as follows:

1. Functional analysis, in step one, started with the highlighting of a component that needed to be explained, and with regard to the research conducted, these were the dysfunctional effects that work stress has on the family.

2. The second step was to understand and make sense of this particular component, and this was what the research aimed to do by focusing on the meaning it had for husbands, wives, children and employers. Family members were not fulfilling their various roles and functions on a daily basis as a result of work stress. Sometimes, conflict occurred in the family unit. What meaning did this have for society? This caused disequilibrium and instability or even dysfunctions.

3. The third step was to highlight the consequences of the component. If these consequences were assisting the system adjust to its surroundings, they were termed functions. If they decreased the adaptation of the system, they were termed dysfunctions. According to Merton (in Newman 1997: 38), if a part of social life does not add to the existence of society, that is, if it is dysfunctional, it will soon cease to exist. Whatever persists, even if it appears to be causing disorder, must add to the existence of society in some manner. With regard to the research conducted, work stress was dysfunctional for the family, however, a need was being met (work provided an income for the family), therefore it persisted. The family was able to survive financially and economically due to both spouses (in this research study) being employed. People need to work in order to provide

the basic necessities for their family members and themselves (Parsons's functional prerequisite of adaptation has to be met). In terms of this study, it was reported that the respondents had themselves and their families to support and to take care of in terms of food, clothing and shelter. Individuals have reported that they worked to earn an income and be financially independent.

4. The fourth step was to indicate the greater whole (family) for which the component (work) was thought to have consequences. By being in employment, individuals were making a contribution to society, that is, contributing towards a skilled workforce and economic growth, although the stress experienced at work was dysfunctional for the family.

5. The fifth step was to determine what the requirements of the whole were in terms of surviving and proposed that a need existed (income) which the component (work) met. In terms of the research conducted, work provided an income (which was a need) for the financial survival of the family, therefore it persisted, although work stress was dysfunctional for the family.

6. The sixth step completed the circle by highlighting the instrument whereby the fulfillment of the need acted back upon the first component, in what is termed a feedback circuit. A comprehensive functional explanation required that there was a consequence (work stress) shown of component A (work) for some greater whole B (family), and it also required that the fulfillment of some need (income) of the greater whole (family) in turn sustained component A (work). In terms of the research conducted, family members were not always fulfilling their various functions and roles as a result of work stress. There was the existence of role conflict due to the conflicting demands of work and the family, but

work provided an income (a need) for the financial survival of the family, therefore it persisted.

According to Parsons (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 13), the nuclear family serves two main functions, which are the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities. Murdock (in Ferreira, et al. 2007: 12) proposes that the nuclear family has four important functions to fulfill so that society can continue its existence; these are the sexual function which refers to limiting the sexual conduct to husband and wife only, the economic function which entails working for a living for basic needs, the reproductive function which entails biological reproduction to continue the species and the educational function which refers to the socialization of new members of society into its culture for the maintenance of order and stability in terms of value consensus. The job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) experienced at work was dysfunctional for the family as vital family functions, for example, the sexual function was not always being fulfilled on the weekdays. In terms of this study, respondents have reported that they did not spend enough time together with their spouses on the weekdays. It was also reported that the socialization or education function was also neglected at times on a weekday, but over the weekends, these functions were fulfilled. In terms of the socialization/educational function, the spouse was enlisted to help to fulfill this function on the weekdays. The family had to adapt to the environmental and work changes in order to survive in a modern society.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 1038) states that when a disturbance is introduced to a system that is in equilibrium, there will be a reaction to this disturbance to restore the system to equilibrium, but he also states that social systems do not attain complete equilibrium; they move towards this state. He further states that a reaction to the disturbance will involve some change in the system as a whole. In this study, work



stress had an effect on the fulfillment of family functions, but individuals have reported that there was teamwork among family members and their spouses. They received assistance as well as suggestions from them as to how to manage their daily functioning in terms of fulfilling fundamental family functions and the family thus adapted to this work stress as being a disturbance to their order. The spouse and family members also offered valuable support and encouragement. What individuals also did was to hold regular family meetings at home to discuss ways to ensure orderly family functioning. Individuals have reported that they worked extremely hard to provide a secure and stable environment for their families and continued to work towards what Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 1038) calls a moving equilibrium.

### **6.3 WHY DOES WORK STRESS CONTRIBUTE TO WORK-FAMILY ROLE CONFLICT?**

The research has confirmed this tentative hypothesis. The higher the work stress (the independent causal variable) experienced by the individual, the higher the work-family role conflict (the dependant variable) experienced.

The findings indicate that job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) had repercussions on the family in terms of the role conflict experienced by family members. The two demanding roles (work and family) were in conflict with each other, and the role obligations of the family were neglected to meet the demands of work. Individuals experienced role conflict when faced with the demands of the workplace and fulfilling their role obligations as parents and spouses in the home.

Newman (1997: 29) proposes that the behaviors and expectations of certain roles are so powerful; individuals experience role conflict when the

individual is in two conflicting statuses at the same time and the demands of one role conflict with the demands of the other. In terms of this study, when the two demanding roles of work and the family were in conflict with each other, individuals reported that they felt very conflicted and the obligations of one role was neglected to meet the demands of the other. Individuals neglected some of the demands of the family on a daily basis during the weekdays by meeting the demands of work. Heavy workload and working overtime was a major cause of work stress, with individuals reporting that they had to ensure the completion of urgent and important tasks before leaving the workplace. Individuals have also reported that it was expected of them to work overtime as the job demanded it, with no overtime pay as they were salaried. This took up family time and therefore the conflict with work and family roles. In addition to working overtime at the workplace, many individuals have reported that they took work home to complete, and they have reported that they felt conflicted, not knowing whether to deal with family issues or work issues during family time. Individuals have also reported that they experienced guilt and anxiety when important family role obligations were not met and important family events were missed due to work responsibilities. The individual's family roles were in conflict with the individual's work roles as the employee took up family time to complete the day's work and this affected the fulfillment of family role obligations and responsibilities as a spouse and a parent.

Merton (1976: 9) states that in some instances values conflict in the person's status-set. "The more married women at work in the labor market, the more subject to competing obligations" (Merton 1976: 9) and that "... the conflicting demands of different statuses ... involve *different* people in the role-sets of the conflicting statuses (the demands of an employer, for example, and of a spouse)" (Merton 1976: 10). In this study, individuals reported that they felt very stressed with the competing

demands of work and family. The family was able to adapt to the changes in their environment and although there was the presence of role conflict, individuals have reported that they were able to fulfill most of the roles during the weekdays, with the assistance of the spouse and family members. In terms of this study, it was reported that the remaining roles were performed during the weekends when there was not so much of a competing demand for the individual's time and energy from the workplace. The individual was thus able to concentrate more on fulfilling family roles and not have the roles, obligations and responsibilities of work to attend to as well. Their physical presence at work was not always required, although they took work home to complete. Their spouses offered assistance and support in this regard.

Merton (1957: 116) further states that the less cohesive the society, the more often will people experience the strain of social roles that are in conflict with each other. He further proposes that there are conflicting demands made of the individual person who possesses many roles, and that the repeated conflict between roles is not functional for society and the individual. The job demands competed with the family for the individual's time and energy, although individuals have reported that they tried to fulfill most of their family roles on a daily basis after resting for a while and recovering some of their energy. They also did enlist the help of family members and friends to help them cope with childcare, household chores and the preparation of nutritious meals.

#### **6.4 HOW IS WORKPLACE SUPPORT AND SOCIAL SUPPORT BENEFICIAL TO THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCING WORK STRESS?**

The research has confirmed this tentative hypothesis. The greater the workplace support and social support (the independent causal variable)

available to the individual, the lesser the effects of work stress (the dependant variable) on the individual.

The findings indicate that although job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) created stress in the individual, when workplace support and social support were available to the individual, the effects of this stress on the individual was lessened. The family was able to adapt to workplace stress by the availability of resources in the form of support and assistance from the spouse as well as support and assistance from the workplace.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 132) states that the female's role in the family is the expressive one as she is the one who provides warmth, security and emotional support, and that the male's role in the family is the instrumental one as he spends his day working in a society that is achievement oriented and this role leads to stress and anxiety. In this study, individuals have reported that their main concern was the safety and stability of their children's lives, being able to provide the basic necessities for them, as well as ensuring that the family functions and roles were efficiently fulfilled.

Parsons (in Haralambos and Holborn 2000: 509) states that families provide warmth, security and mutual support which is required for primary socialization, and once the personality has been developed, it needs to be kept stable, which is the second function of the family, the stabilization of adult personalities. He further states that the focus here is on the marital relationship and the emotional security and support that the husband and wife give to each other. This in turn is a protection from the stress and strain of everyday life, which affects the personality and makes it unstable. The job demands, which referred to the stressor at the workplace, had an effect on the physical and emotional health of

individuals, but individuals have reported that the mutual support of the spouses helped to reduce the effects of this. In this study, the majority of the respondents who had the support of their families, especially their spouses and children, reported that this support played an important role in helping them manage some of the job demands. Some of the spouses physically helped with the work brought home to complete, as well as helped to perform some of the family functions and roles. This helped to alleviate the stress on the individual and allowed for him/her to recover from the stress experienced at work.

Fernandez, Galinsky and Stein (in Warren and Johnson 1995: 164) state that knowing that one's supervisor is supportive, is linked to reduced levels of stress for working parents, and according to Greenglass, et al. (in Warren and Johnson 1995: 164), knowing that one's supervisor is supportive is linked to a reduction in role conflict for working parents. In terms of this study, individuals who had the support of their supervisors reported that they coped more effectively with the stressful workplace, being working parents and role conflict than those who did not have the support. Some respondents have reported that they had received help from their supervisors and managers, whereas others have reported that their requests for assistance had been ignored. At times, it was reported that there was unfairness as to who was given the support and assistance in the work context. In certain instances, respondents have reported that the support received was inconsistent, when the supervisor was under stress and did not offer support to her/his subordinates. Respondents have also reported that support was received from co-workers, which was invaluable and helped to alleviate the stressful work experience. The respondents who received help from their supervisors and managers reported that this made a significant difference in helping to manage the stressful workplace.

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the conclusions, it is evident that the very same structure, which is work, had both functional and dysfunctional consequences or repercussions, although the family had the ability to adapt to change in the environment. Work was functional but work stress had dysfunctional repercussions on family dynamics. By acquiring specific skills to plan and organize their tasks, individuals will be fulfilling important family functions as well as fulfilling the economic function. This is with specific reference to the economic function of working to earn a living as proposed by Murdock and adapting to the environment in order to obtain necessities to support oneself which is fulfilled by the economic institution as proposed by Parsons. In addition to this, they will be fulfilling the educational, reproductive and sexual functions according to the theory of Murdock and the primary socialization of children as well as the stabilization of adult personalities according to the theory of Parsons. By learning specific skills to manage their stress as well as manage their time, the role obligations of parent and spouse will be fulfilled as well. They will be able to be present for their children in terms of preparing nutritious meals for them, keeping their homes clean and sanitized, spending time interacting with them and offering them love, support and guidance in their daily activities.

The following techniques are recommended in the work place to reduce the effects of work stress, with specific reference to job demands (heavy workload and working overtime) on employees and their families by accepting role changes and adapting to their environment:

\*The skills acquired by the workers in stress management workshops will assist them in a positive manner by motivating them to focus on ways to manage their daily stressful experiences.

\*Stress management workshops are recommended as they are designed to assist the individual to identify the stressor, which were the job demands in this study. When this has been determined, a plan of action includes steps to be taken to either reduce or eliminate the stress. Techniques to cope with the job demands as well as making significant lifestyle changes can be empowering for the individual as he or she is participating in the process of making changes that directly affect him or her.

\*Organizational techniques are recommended as well, as these techniques provide the individual with skills related to planning and organizing the daily activities that form a part of their job description in order to perform their jobs in a more effective manner. These techniques may also be adapted for use in the home environment so that there is a degree of consistency in the life of the individual. These skills that are utilized at work are transferred and adapted for use in the home and the individual will be able to perform his/her roles and functions as a parent and spouse in a more efficient manner.

\*Time management techniques are recommended as the specific skills provided assist with the more productive use of the individual's time and energy at work and this may be adapted for use at home as well. This is with special reference to the prioritization of tasks into urgent and important ones, the effective management of paperwork and the appropriate filing of this when done. This is to ensure easy access as well as to reduce the clutter on one's desk or workstation. In terms of adapting these techniques at home, this is with specific reference to chores, for example meal preparation, laundry and housecleaning.

\*Working parents could enlist the help of family, a network of friends, the community centers, childcare facilities that also operate after hours to accommodate parents who work overtime, as well as reliable babysitters to assist with childcare and activities for the children when they have to work overtime. They could also enlist the help of older siblings, through the use of incentives, to assist with chores and babysitting as well.

\*Internal vacancies are also made available by companies and working parents can transfer to a less stressful position (in terms of job demands), whilst still being employed by the same employer. Employees on the accelerated program, where promotions are dependant on intensive on-the-job training and which may require after-hours commitment to the position, may opt for a slower paced position, when they have young families and later revert to the faster paced, climb up the corporate ladder.

\*Families may also scale back and be the one-career, one-job family (Becker and Moen 1999: 995). This is where either spouse has the career and the remaining one has the job. This reduces the stress on the family as both do not have to put in the overtime that may be required. It is usually the husband/male that has the career and the wife/female the job as she is the one that usually makes changes in her lifestyle when she starts a family. These changes continue until the preschoolers and school goers in the family have grown up and have become more independent: completing tasks for themselves.



## **6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

With the abovementioned in mind, it is necessary to look at possible further research to be conducted in the same field:

\*A study could be conducted where the working spouse of the employee experiencing the work stress is interviewed as well, as the spouse could provide valuable insight that may not otherwise be obtained, and the unit of analysis would be couples.

\*A bi-directional study could be conducted to examine the effects of work stress on the family and the effects of family stress on work.

\*An in-depth study could be conducted to investigate the repercussions on the family when both spouses are in stressful jobs.

\*An in-depth study could be conducted to investigate the repercussions on the single-parent family when the parent is in a stressful job.

\*A longitudinal study could be conducted with the respondents to establish whether the stress management, time management and organizational techniques were functional.

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## **CONFIDENTIALITY GUIDELINES FOR STUDY**

\*THE INTERVIEWS WERE CONDUCTED FACE-TO-FACE IN A SAFE, ENCLOSED ENVIRONMENT WITH NO THIRD PARTY PRESENT.

\*IT WAS COMMUNICATED TO THE RESPONDENTS THAT THE RESEARCH STUDY IS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL, THAT THEY WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS IN THE STUDY AND THEIR NAMES AND IDENTITIES WILL NOT BE REVEALED. THE RESPONDENTS WERE ASSURED THAT ANONYMITY WAS GUARANTEED AND THAT THE INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY. IT WILL NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH ANY THIRD PARTY.

\*TO PROTECT THE IDENTITY OF THE RESPONDENTS, THEY ARE KNOWN AS RESPONDENT 1, RESPONDENT 2 ETCETERA IN THIS STUDY.

\*THE BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF THE RESPONDENTS AS WELL AS THE CONTENT OF THE INTERVIEWS REMAIN EXCLUSIVELY WITH THE RESEARCHER.

\*THE CONTENTS OF THE INTERVIEWS ARE IN A SECURE LOCATION WITH NO UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS.

**CONSENT FORM**

I HEREBY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY, "WORK STRESS: THE REPERCUSSIONS ON FAMILY DYNAMICS".

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT I AM PARTICIPATING OF MY OWN FREE WILL AND THAT I AM FREE TO STOP THIS INTERVIEW AT ANY TIME.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS AND THAT THE INFORMATION OBTAINED IS CONFIDENTIAL AND FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY.

-----  
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

-----  
DATE

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

NAME:

OCCUPATION:

LEVEL OF JOB: SUBORDINATE/SUPERVISOR/MANAGER

AGE:

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

## **FUNCTIONS OF WORK**

1. WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON FOR YOU BEING FULLY EMPLOYED?
2. WHAT ARE THE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF BEING FULLY EMPLOYED?

## **WORKPLACE**

3. CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PRESENT JOB IN TERMS OF:
  - \*ASSIGNED TASKS AND DUTIES
  - \*RESPONSIBILITIES
4. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR WORK IN TERMS OF:
  - \*DEMANDS.
  - \*WORKLOAD.
  - \*DEADLINES.
  - \*TASKS TO COMPLETE IN AN ALLOTTED TIME FRAME.
  - \*WORKING OVERTIME.
  - \*STRESS
5. ARE THERE CONSEQUENCES IF YOU DO NOT COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNED TASKS ON TIME?  
RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.
6. DO YOU EXPERIENCE ANY CONFLICT AT WORK AS A RESULT OF WORK STRESS?  
RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.

7. CAN YOU DESCRIBE HOW WORK UTILIZES:
- \*YOUR TIME
  - \*YOUR ENERGY
8. DO YOU RECEIVE ANY SUPPORT FROM WORK  
(SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS, DIRECTORS, CEO'S, ETC.)  
WITH REGARDS TO:
- \*ASSIGNED TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES? IS THERE APPRECIATION FOR THE WORK DONE?
  - \*JOB-RELATED PROBLEMS?
  - \*WORK STRESS?
- RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.

### **FAMILY**

9. DOES WORK STRESS CARRY OVER AND AFFECT YOUR  
FAMILY LIFE?  
RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.
10. ARE YOU ABLE TO FULFILL ALL OF YOUR FAMILY  
FUNCTIONS AS A PARENT/SPOUSE ON A DAILY BASIS  
OR ARE THEY NEGLECTED? THIS REFERS TO:
- (A)THE SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE, ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONS AND
  - (B)THE SOCIALIZATION OF CHILDREN AND THE STABILIZATION OF ADULT PERSONALITIES.
- RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.

11. ARE YOU ABLE TO FULFILL ALL OF YOUR FAMILY ROLES AS A PARENT/SPOUSE ON A DAILY BASIS OR ARE THEY NEGLECTED?

RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.

12. DO YOU EXPERIENCE ANY CONFLICT AT HOME AS A RESULT OF WORK STRESS?

RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.

13. DO YOU RECEIVE ANY SUPPORT FROM YOUR FAMILY (SPOUSE, PARENTS, SIBLINGS, CHILDREN, ETC.) WITH REGARD TO:

\*YOUR JOB?

\*JOB-RELATED PROBLEMS?

\*WORK STRESS?

RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.

### **ROLE CONFLICT**

14. DO YOU EXPERIENCE ANY CONFLICT BETWEEN WORK RESPONSIBILITIES AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES, WHERE WORK DEMANDS CONFLICT WITH FAMILY DEMANDS?

RESPONDENT TO ELABORATE.

### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

15. ARE THERE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE WITH REGARDS TO STRESS EXPERIENCED AT WORK AND THE EFFECT THAT IT HAS ON THE FAMILY?





