Perceived Work Factors and Parental Engagement: The Mediating Role of Marital Conflict

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science
In
Human Development

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May 3, 2016
Blacksburg, VA

Keywords: Work-travel, Work, Marital Conflict, Parental Engagement, Gender
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ABSTRACT

The parenting literature predominately focuses on individual or family level factors that influence parenting behaviors. The field can benefit from focusing on factors outside the family that influence family roles and behavior. Utilizing a symbolic interactionist and gender perspective, this study examined how perceptions of work spill over into the family roles. More specifically, this study focused on how perceived work factors influence marital conflict and subsequently parental engagement. I specifically examined these perceptions in a sample of parents that frequently travel overnight for work. Traveling for work has become very common in the workplace, yet it is understudied in the research. I aimed to answer the following research questions: a) Are there differences among mothers and fathers who travel for work in their reports of work overload, effort recovery, job satisfaction, marital conflict and parental engagement? b) Do perceived work factors predict parental engagement over and above parent gender and marital conflict? c) Do perceived work factors predict marital conflict, which in turn predicts parental engagement? I used data from a larger multi-method project that examined the influence of travel on work, health, and families. Data were collected using questionnaires. I used traveler reports of their work and family roles, as I was interested in their perceptions of their roles. Results suggested that work factors predicted a significant amount of variance over and above marital conflict and parent gender. The mediation model suggested that job satisfaction, but not work overload or effort recovery, had a significant direct effect on parental engagement. Marital conflict did not mediate the relation between perceived work factors and parental engagement. The results suggest that the parenting field should look beyond the marital dyad when examining factors that influence parenting behaviors, as marital conflict did not assist
Clinicians and practitioners should also focus on factors outside the family (i.e., the work environment) and the influence these factors have on parenting. Workplaces and employers should focus on increasing their employees’ job satisfaction in order to enhance parenting behaviors. Limitations and future directions for research are also discussed.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Everyday work experiences are known to affect worker’s personal lives (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, & Crouter, 2000), yet the parenting literature is not focusing on various work experiences of parents. When examining parenting behaviors, the parenting literature and scholars predominately focus on characteristics of the parent (e.g., gender, personality) and the family (e.g., marital processes, social support) that influence the parent’s behavior with their child. Belsky (1984) proposed a model of the determinants of parenting which suggested that the marital relationship has a direct influence on parenting. He also suggested that work has an influence on parenting. However, he referred to work status (employed or unemployed), with men’s unemployment seen as a threat to parenting and women’s employment perceived as negative to parenting. This is an extremely narrow view of work. By only focusing on maternal employment, he suggested that only for mothers, not fathers, work would have an influence on their parenting. Now, 30 years later, gender roles are not as constrained, and many mothers are now working as the number of dual-earner couples has increased dramatically over the years due to the shifting economy (Roeters, van der Lippe, & Kluwer, 2009). Belsky’s (1984) model has been critiqued over time; however, those who critique his model still focus on work as a broad category (Abidin, 1992; Sherifali & Ciliska, 2006).

Within the work-family literature, there is scant support for the idea that working mothers have negative influences on their child (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). This emphasis on work status is reasonable given that the number of dual-earner couples has increased dramatically over the years due to the shifting economy (Council of Economic Advisors, 2014), requiring both parents to have multiple roles (i.e., work role, marital role, and parent role). Belsky (1984) also did not
consider the various facets of work. He discussed work as a broad category. The field needs to break apart the work category and examine the various factors of work that influence parenting. This study examined various perceived work factors that influence parenting. I specifically focused on subjective (i.e., the individual’s perception) work factors, as research suggests that it is the subjective quality of roles that is important (Barnett, 2004).

This study focused on a specific population of workers: those who travel frequently overnight for work. Traveling overnight for work has become increasingly common among workers. About one-third of workers travel for their jobs (Gustafson, 2006), yet this population receives very little attention in research, especially within the United States; therefore, this study focused on travelers from the United States. Traveling requires parents to be coming and going from the house, which may influence their parenting behaviors, as they are not always physically present to interact with their child, or their partner, which may lead to feelings of conflict between the work role and the family roles, as they may feel these roles are competing with one other (Mäkelä, Berbom, Tanskanen, & Kinnunen, 2014). In sum, this is a specific population that is very common, yet is understudied; hence, this study used frequent work travelers as the population of interest.

As stated previously, much of the parenting literature focuses on marital processes and the influence these dynamics have on subsequent parenting behaviors. For example, the marital processes associated with divorce have been examined. Davies and Cummings (1994; 2002) found that it is not so much the event of divorce that is harmful for parenting and child outcomes, but the marital processes surrounding the divorce, more specifically marital conflict, that are harmful. This finding speaks to the importance of examining marital conflict in two parent families, as the child is most likely exposed to the conflict with both parents in the household,
and these negative emotions from conflict may influence how a parent interacts with their child. Marital conflict is specifically important to study in a sample of frequent work travelers as they are not physically present all the time to perform their marital role, which may lead to feelings of conflict. When the travelers are gone, their partners also have to manage more of the family demands by themselves (Gustafson, 2014), which may lead to marital conflict as well. Some travelers report feeling disconnected from their family upon their return, as their family learns to function without them while they are traveling, and the traveler may feel a loss of their family role and subsequently perform this role differently (Black & Jamieson, 2007). This line of inquiry demonstrates the importance of examining travelers’ perceptions of roles. For this study, I extended the previous parenting literature, suggesting the marital conflict leads to lower quality parenting behaviors by examining this relation in the context of work.

I focused on three different work factors: work overload, effort recovery, and job satisfaction. Work overload is the perception that there is not enough time to complete work tasks (Reilly, 1982); thus, addresses the aspect of time and expectations in the work role. Effort recovery, how much effort an individual needs to put forth to recovery from their workday, addresses the perceptions of effort and energy put into the work role. Lastly, job satisfaction addresses how satisfied individuals are with their work role. By examining these various work factors, I teased apart the various aspects of work, as Belsky (1984) had neglected to do in his model of parenting.

I also examined parental engagement because the research (e.g., Khaleque, 2013) demonstrates this is a very important parenting behavior, but the field is not examining how work influences this parenting behavior. This parenting behavior is also specifically important to examine in this population, as traveling parents may not be physically present to enact this
behavior all the time with their child. Lastly, I focused specifically on travelers with young children, as research suggests that this is the most stressful time for a parent; thus, I wanted to better understand travelers’ perceptions of their multiple roles during what may be considered a stressful time for parents (Allen & Finkelstein, 2014).

In sum, there is a lack of research examining parents’ work experiences and their connections to parenting behaviors, specifically among those with the work demand of overnight travel. My study focused on how perceived work factors (i.e., the extent to which people feel their work overloads them, how much effort it takes people to recover from the demands of their work day, and job satisfaction) influence parental engagement (i.e., expression of love and affection, emotional availability and support). Previous research also demonstrates that there is a connection between work and the marital relationship (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010), as well as a connection between the marital relationship and parenting behaviors (Fincham & Hall, 2005). Marital conflict was also examined to gain a deeper understanding of how perceived work factors influence parenting behaviors within their role (i.e., how they engage with their child). My study examined these factors in an understudied population with the specific work demand of frequent work travel. Traveling frequently overnight for work requires parents to be away from their children, and so this study attempted to document how, in the situation of work travel, work factors might affect how travelers enact their marital and parenting roles. I acknowledge the fact that these relations may be bi-directional, such as the family roles may spill over and influence the travelers’ work role. However, for the focus of this study, I was interested in parental engagement as the outcome; therefore, did not test these other effects.

To examine how work influences marital and parenting roles, this study utilized a symbolic interactionism framework and spillover perspective, while also focusing on social
structure, power, and privilege using a gender perspective. I specifically examined how men and women perceive and enact their role as a parent, in the context of various work factors, when raising a young child. My study aimed to expand the research on how factors at work influence the parental role, while also considering how marital conflict influences the relationship between work and parental engagement for traveling parents.

**Theoretical Frameworks**

I used a symbolic interactionism framework to guide my study focusing on work and family roles. LaRossa and Reitzes (1993) recommend combining symbolic interactionism with other theories to better explain questions regarding concepts such as gender and other identities; thus, I used a gender theoretical perspective as well. Combined, both of these theories discuss the meaning individuals makes of these roles, the behavior within these roles, and different experiences among individuals based on features of social stratification (i.e., power and oppression), while considering the context of those that travel often for work. In addition, I used a spillover perspective that stems from both symbolic interactionism and gender theory to examine how emotions in the work role transfer over into the emotions and subsequent behavior in the family roles.

**Symbolic Interactionism**

The symbolic interactionist framework was one of the guiding theoretical frameworks in this study. According to LaRossa and Reitzes (1993), who summarized the theory and identified themes, there are three main themes in this theoretical framework. The first theme is regarding the importance of meaning, specifically for human behavior. In other words, behavior within individuals’ roles must be understood by the meanings people give to their behavior and their roles (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993; White, Klein, & Martin, 2015). Through this perspective, I
focused on the meaning men and women make of their work, marital, and parenting roles. Stryker and Burke (2000) suggested that society provides meaning for roles, and individuals organize their role identities in a hierarchy, which are organized by an individual’s commitments (Marks, 1977). Identities that are higher in the hierarchy are more salient, and the individual will be more motivated to excel in that role and behaviors within that role, compared to those identities lower in the hierarchy. Salience refers to what identity will be most influential in a given situation. Salience reflects the importance of meanings and symbols (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993; Marks, 1977). These meanings are developed through socialization processes (i.e., interactions). Individuals are constantly interpreting symbols and shared social meanings during their interactions (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). This allows individuals to hold multiple roles throughout their course of their lives.

The second theme is self-concept. Symbolic interactionists assume that individuals have an active self and social self (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). The self is developed through social interactions and provides motives for behavior. For example, people have a sense of themselves as workers, as marital partners, and as parents. Sometimes there may be conflicting expectations between these self-images. Many roles of the self are complementary. In my study, the roles are complementary within the parent-child dyad and the marital dyad. The role of the parent becomes meaningful in relation to the role of the child. The role of the husband becomes meaningful in relation to the role of the wife. When examining the self and behavior, it is important to consider context, such as culture. As stated previously, the self is developed through social interactions, which are encompassed within a culture; therefore, it is important to consider the context in which the interactions are taking place (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). In my study, parenting was examined in the context of work-related overnight travel.
The third theme of symbolic interactionism focuses on society. Symbolic interactionists believe that larger societal processes influence individuals; thus, behavior is constrained by social norms (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). Society provides the meanings for social roles and individuals organize this in their identity hierarchy, mentioned previously. Mead believed society came before the individual (White et al., 2015). He also stated that human behavior is a process, not stable (Charon, 1995); thus, it can vary depending on the context and situation. Mead also believed that individuals have many selves and each are defined by the interaction (e.g., work or home interactions) the individual encounters (Charon, 1995). This idea also extends the assumption that individuals define and give meaning to the context and their situation. These meanings have real consequences for the individual, meaning that situations may be defined (i.e., perceived) by the individual in a number of ways, and whatever definition that individuals give the situation will influence their behavior (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993; White et al., 2015). In line with this way of thinking, I focused on how larger societal structures may influence how men and women perceive aspects of their work roles, as well as their marital and parenting roles.

**Gender Theory**

I also used a gender theoretical framework to guide this study to better understand how social structures influence marital and parenting roles in families involved in frequent overnight work-related travel. Gender theory focuses on how specific behaviors and roles are assigned gendered meanings, as well as how social structures produce gender values and power (Connell, 1987; Ferree, 1990). Similar to symbolic interactionism, this perspective focuses on the symbolic meanings and interactions. The social construction of gender produces what society views as maleness and femaleness. Individuals do gender. “Doing gender” refers to gender as a social construct that emerges through daily interactions, not an innate quality (West & Zimmerman,
Men and women claim a gender identity and find ways to convey it to others in their interactions. This construction of gender is continuous. Doing gender creates differences between men and women, and it is these differences that produce power and oppression (Risman, 1998).

Risman (2004) has recently added to the “doing gender” approach by viewing gender through a social structural lens to better understand how and why individuals choose certain alternatives compared to other alternatives, with specific attention to gender at multiple levels of analysis. Structure makes certain actions possible but also constrains certain actions (Risman, 2004). Gender as a structure has three levels of analysis. First is the individual level, where individuals are socialized and develop their gendered selves. Second is the interactional level of analysis focusing on cultural expectations for behavior. Third is the institutional level of analysis, consisting of the explicit regulations or laws regarding resource distribution (i.e., access to opportunities or tangible goods) (Risman, 2004). Risman, similar to a symbolic interactionist perspective, suggested focusing on the construction of identities during interactions. Martin (2006) challenges the concept of “doing gender” and suggested that sometimes individuals practice gender unintentionally, focusing on how work organizations tolerate and perpetuate gender inequalities. Both Risman and Martin focused on agency, that is, the capacity to be in or take action, by doing (or refusing to do), and suggested that agency is involved in doing gender or possibly “undoing gender” (Risman, 2009).

A central theme in gender theory is that of power and privilege (Ferree, 1990; Risman, 2004). This framework discusses social structures and how these structures influences gender values and advantages (Connell, 1987; Ferree, 1990; Risman, 2004). As an institution, gender constructs and maintains the subordination of women as a group compared to men (Shields,
This power and privilege may be covert or overt; however, many times is it referred to as invisible privilege, which is primarily associated with men (Fox & Murry, 2000). For example, gender theory points out the symbolism of gender behind how household labor is divided (Ferree, 1990), with women participating in a ‘second shift’ after their workday (Hochschild, 1989; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). Other views regarding the division of labor include men in the provider role and women not working, for pay, but rather staying in the home to care for the children and complete all the housework (Ferree, 1990). Household tasks and household acts, such as parenting the children, become gendered and therefore the same circumstances may affect men and women differently.

A gender perspective does not just consider gender, but also other social locations such as age, race, ethnicity, and social class. More specifically, a gender perspective focuses on how these social locations intersect. It is through this convergence of identities that produces different outcomes of power and privilege. These intersections are part of a hierarchical structure of opportunity and oppression (Ferree, 1990). In other words, power is created by the intersection of identities and the intersections of these identities produce different social, health, economic and political outcomes for individuals and families (Few-Demo, 2014). An intersectional approach allows for a better understanding of the fluidity of identities (Shields, 2008). It is not enough to understand gender differences to understand the result of social stratifications (White et al., 2015). For example, women who are an ethnic minority are in two subordinate groups and experience both racialized and gendered experiences of oppression in both close relationships and at the societal level. However, these experiences may be different for women in a higher social class than for women in a lower social class, as those in a higher social class have more resources (Few-Demo). These intersections of relative privilege and disadvantage are important
to acknowledge as the sample used for this study was economically privileged. In addition, the sample was predominately White, which is also a privileged group. This sample may therefore have more resources and also have more room to negotiate their work and family roles. It is important to consider this privilege throughout my study as my sample may have different experiences than other families.

**Spillover Perspective**

It is not only important to understand how individuals engage in their work and family roles, but it is also important to understand how individuals perceive their emotions and stress within these roles (Zvonkovic, Notters, & Peters, 2006). Emotions and stress are associated with both negative and positive work and family interactions (Grzywacz, Almeida, & McDonald, 2002). These perceptions of emotions and stress can be understood through examining work-family spillover. Spillover can be defined as the extent to which involvement in one domain (e.g., work) impacts involvement in another domain (e.g., family) within the same individual (Grzywacz et al., 2002). Spillover has been extensively studied throughout the literature within the past two decades (Zvonkovic et al., 2006). There are four distinct forms of spillover in the work-family experience: (a) negative spillover from work to family, (b) negative spillover from family to work, (c) positive spillover from work to family, and (d) positive spillover from family to work (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Job related factors are the primary sources of work to family spillover and home, and relationship factors are the primary sources of family to work spillover (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). For the purposes of my study, the focus was on the spillover from work to family. Negative spillover from work to family is the transference of negative moods, emotions, or stress from the work role into family roles (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). It is important that researchers acknowledge what factors in the workplace cause this
spillover and how negative work to family spillover influences those within the family, such as children or partners, in order to attempt to intervene and assist in lowering levels of negative work to family spillover. Positive spillover from work to family, often less examined within research, is the transference of positive moods or emotions from the work role to family roles (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). The government, policymakers, and employers should be aware of these spillover effects and develop ways in which the workplace can promote positive spillover into the family. For this study, I focused on how moods or emotions from various facets of work may spill over and influence the marital and parenting role.

Summary

Work to family spillover was the focus of this study. Spillover stems from constructs of both symbolic interactionism and gender theory. Spillover theory acknowledges that individuals have multiple roles and at times individuals may feel that these roles conflict. In other words, they may perceive that they do not have enough resources or time to devote to all their roles. Individuals may place effort in the roles that are higher in their hierarchy, that is, those roles that are more salient to them. In addition, spillover theory discusses the agency and the ability for individuals to construct their own work and family roles, both aspects of symbolic interactionism and gender theory. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, individuals have agency by invoking different role identities based on their perceived salience of that identity based on the situation (White et al., 2015). For this study, I focused on the multiple roles travelers have, and how they make meaning of these multiples roles. From a work to family spillover perspective, I focused on how moods and emotions in their work role may influence the behavior within their marital and parenting roles. Gender theory also guides the spillover perspective as a gender perspective would reject the dichotomy between work and family, and argue to look for the
connections between the two domains, which is one of the aims of spillover. Gender theory also focuses on the social construction of roles and the intersection of identities. A spillover perspective would suggest that there are individual differences in how an individual experiences spillover based on race, class, and gender for example. Those who are more privileged may have the resources to intervene and not let negative aspects of their work role spill into their family role, but instead enhance the positive spillover. Individuals who experience oppression may lack those benefits and deal with additional stress that enhances negative spillover or interferes with positive spillover. Thus, the field must consider how individuals enact and making meaning of their roles when examining spillover, but also how context (i.e., work travel, identities, presence of young children) influences these spillover dynamics as well.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following section, I discussed the literature related to work and family, specifically marital relationships and parenting. I focused specifically on various aspects of identities (e.g., gender, class), with a particular emphasis on gender as most of the parenting literature focuses on mothers only; therefore, I wanted to provide a detailed review of how both men and women experience their work, marital and parenting roles. I organized the topics from the larger work context, to the specific perceived work factors (i.e., work overload, effort recovery, job satisfaction), to parental engagement, and marital conflict, reflecting the theoretical perspectives throughout.

Job demands and work conditions contribute to both men and women’s perceptions of balance between their work and family roles, as well as perceptions of conflict between the work and family domains (Beham, Prag, & Drobnič, 2011; Byron, 2005). Balance between work and family roles is defined in the literature as: the satisfaction in performance in multiple roles, equity across multiple roles, a fulfillment of role salience between multiple roles, and perceived control between multiple roles (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Work and family conflict is a source of stress that individuals may experience. Work-family conflict can be defined as, “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). A common theme exists within these definitions: an individual’s perceptions and meaning of their roles are an integral part to feelings of balance or feelings of conflict between the work and family domain. Schütte and colleagues (2014) collected data from 34 European countries and suggested that women are exposed to more emotional demands, demands for hiding emotions, low degree of freedom, and low job promotion, while men are exposed to more quantitative demands, demands for responsibility,
low social support, and long hours, suggesting the behaviors and roles within the workplace are gendered. In addition to gendered meanings amongst job demands and work conditions, Allen and Finkelstein (2014) suggest that family stage matters. Using the National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW) data, Allen and Finkelstein (2014) suggested that parents whose children have moved out of the house and parents who were 55 years or older reported the least amount of conflict between work and family roles compared to parents in other family stages, demonstrating the context where the interactions take place, specifically family stage and age, are important for families. The greatest amount of conflict appeared when the youngest child in the house was less than five years of age (Allen & Finkelstein). McNamara and colleagues (2013) also suggested that employees who were older had more satisfaction with the balance between work and family from their study that sampled employees in nine different organizations spanning 12 departments. This research suggests that younger individuals with young children in the household faced with greater perceived job demands may be at greater risk for conflict between the work and family domains and subsequently may find it more difficult to balance their work and family roles.

**Overnight Work Travel Population**

As travel, specifically overnight travel, becomes more common for work, there is increasingly more research, from various countries, about the consequences and outcomes of the job demand of work travel (Swenson, Zvonkovic, Rojas-McWhinney, & Gerst, 2015; Westman, Etzion, & Gattenio, 2008). At the individual level, traveling is associated with poorer physical and mental health. In an exploratory analysis of 11 business travelers’ experiences, many travelers reported feeling drained and tired when traveling in their interviews (Nicholas & McDowall, 2012). These business travelers had at least five overnights stays away from their
family in a one-month period. Their results supported previous findings that international business travelers from oil and gas companies described their jobs as psychologically demanding, which was measured via a health questionnaire (Rogers & Reilly, 2002), perhaps leading to these feelings of fatigue. However, certain aspects of travel, such as a respite from work activities, can be useful in having a positive effect on the traveler’s well-being (Sonnentag & Natter, 2004). Sonnentag and Natter (2004) examined respite in flight attendants employed by a German airline at two different locations (home and hotel). Their results suggested that off-job time activities and recovery experiences did not differ between the home and hotel environment. Westman and her colleagues (2009) also reported, among Israeli business travelers who traveled abroad on average 9.1 times per year, that feelings of trip control and trip satisfaction were related to well-being, more specifically higher levels of vigor in the traveler. The traveler’s vigor crossed over, in other words the transmission of vigor from one individual to another within the same environment (Westman & Etzion, 1995), from the traveler to their spouses.

As the findings from Westman et al. (2009) demonstrated, overnight work travel not only influences the individual but also their partners, if they were involved in a romantic relationship. When children were present in the home, many travelers felt their partner paid the biggest price according to Fisher and Stoneman (1998), perhaps because of the family work placed on the homebound partner while the partner travels. Other effects on the partners due to work related travel included sleeping problems, decline in positive affect reported in daily dairies reports in heterosexual couples experiencing 4 to 7 days physical separations from their partner (Diamond, Hicks, & Otter-Henderson, 2008), greater reports of stress in spouses of operational staff that traveled an average of 86 nights a year (Espino, Sundstrom, Frick, Jacobs, & Peters 2002), and changes in marital satisfaction in a sample of heterosexual dual-earner couples in New York who
were away for an average of five nights every three months (Roehling & Bultman, 2002). Individuals were asked to rate their marital satisfaction on a scale of 0-100, with higher scores indicating higher levels of marital satisfaction. In regards to marital satisfaction, when women traveled, there was a decline in marital satisfaction, which was larger for women who held traditional gender role attitudes. Traditional gender roles in their study referred to beliefs that men should be the primary breadwinner in the family, the importance of the wife helping her husband’s career before her own, and children suffering if the mother works for pay, and were measured with four items on a questionnaire (Roehling & Bultman). Perhaps these women felt they are not conforming to what they perceived women’s roles to be and therefore these negative feelings negatively spilled over into the marital dyad, which in turn, led to a decline in marital satisfaction. For men, work-related travel was not directly related to marital satisfaction. These men have male privilege, which may negate the effects of negative spillover into the marital dyad, as these men may not had perceived an incongruence between their work and family roles. However, when children were present, fathers reported lower levels of marital satisfaction compared to fathers who did not travel for work (Roehling & Bultman). These fathers may have perceived conflict between their two roles, as they now have the expectation to be involved in the child’s life and by traveling they may feel guilty about missing events (DeFrank et al., 2000). These findings demonstrate how work-related travel influences partnerships, but other family factors, such as children or family work, are also important to consider.

This job demand often leads to other family and other work demands (Westman et al., 2008). Travelers often face more job demands when they return from a trip as other work may have accumulated while they were away. In a review of work related travel stress, DeFrank and colleagues (2000) discussed post-trip job stressors, such as work missed while out of the office,
completing expense accounts, dealing with co-workers who perceive travel as glamorous, and expecting to be in the office a day or two after returning from the trip. In regards to family demands, returning into the home was perceived stressful (DeFrank et al., 2000), perhaps due to the rearranging of tasks and roles within the family. In addition, for travelers, a common post-trip stressor was chores waiting for them when they got home from a trip (DeFrank et al.). In line with those results, Israeli international business travelers, more specifically women, returned to family demands that had piled up in the household while away on a trip, which increased their feelings of conflict between work and family roles. Men did not feel like they returned to many family demands and felt less conflict between work and family roles (Westman et al.). As demonstrated, roles are assigned gendered meanings and the same work demand may influence men and women differently. Men may have more privilege that allows them to avoid family work, which, in turn, leave women to participate in the second shift, who subsequently do not have time for respite after returning from a trip. In line with these findings, regarding a study of international business travelers in European countries, women felt a lack of societal understanding if they had children (Kollinger-Santer & Fischlmayr, 2013). These women may have felt a lack of support due to societal pressures to conform to traditional gender roles (Kollinger-Santer & Fischlmayr, 2013). These women’s lack of support, from a gender perspective (Ferree, 1990), could be tied to the lack of power and privilege they experience from larger social structures. Women’s positions may make it more difficult for women to negotiate demands in both their work and family roles.

Similar to the previously mentioned findings of Allen and Finkelstein (2014) regarding children, travelers found the work-related travel situation most challenging with children under the age of 10 (Kollinger-Santer & Fischlmayr, 2013). Kollinger-Santer and Fischlmayer (2013)
interviewed international business travelers, more specifically 27 women and 67 men, with a majority from an Austrian background, to discover factors that influence their perceptions of balance between work and family roles, as well as to explore differences between men and women. In a telephone survey of frequent business travelers, Fisher and Stoneman (1998) reported that the majority of travelers found it difficult to cope with being away when children younger than seven were present in the home and believed their travel may lead to their children feeling disappointed in them. The results from these studies suggest that the perception of balance between work and family roles may be most difficult for travelers with young children. Espino et al. (2002) had the spouses of travelers report on what their children found hardest when the other parent traveled, which included the lack of daily contact with the traveling parent, missing important events, long absences, and the parents return into the home.

It is important to note that the general work-travel population, based on social structures, is one that is privileged. The majority of these studies focused on White travelers, whose job carry economic privilege. In addition, there are more men that travel for work compared to women. This is important to note when interpreting findings as the intersection of travelers identities influence their experiences and meanings they make of their roles. Work-travel is an important context to examine within the literature as it is becoming much more common in the workplace, yet this phenomenon is not being heavily studied in the parenting literature. The work-related travel literature demonstrates the influence travel has not only on the individual but also on the traveler’s family, specifically their partner and children, yet there is very little focus on the spill over of emotions and stress from work into family roles (i.e., marital and parental roles). Therefore, my study examined how perceived work factors (i.e., work overload, effort
recovery, and job satisfaction), of those who have an additional demand of frequent overnight travel, spill over into the family, specifically in regards to the marital role and parental role.

**Perceived Work Factors**

**Work Overload**

Work overload, stemming from role overload and role theory, a concept in symbolic interactionism, refers to an individuals’ perception that there is a lack of time to complete the tasks they must do at work (Reilly, 1982). In today’s fast-paced society, many workers are expected to be available 24/7, working longer hours, and taking work home with them (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Work overload is an important demand to examine because it has been suggested to lead to poorer physical health, such as exhaustion, measured using a questionnaire focusing on feeling emotionally drained, fatigued, and burned out, in a sample of IT workers (Ahuja, Chudoba, Kacmar, McKnight, & George, 2007; Moore, 2000) and full-time frontline hotel workers and their managers in Romania (Karatepe, 2013). Work overload is also associated with poorer mental health, measured as depression, in a longitudinal study of dual earner couples across the transition to parenthood (Perry-Jenkins, Goldberg, Pierce, & Sayer, 2007).

Family factors such as relationship conflict (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2007) and work-family conflict (Bolino & Turnely, 2005; Skinner & Pocock, 2008) are influenced by work overload as well. Perry-Jenkins et al. (2007) used Braiker and Kelley’s (1979) relationship conflict subscale, assessing how often partners argue and/or have negative interactions and found that both men and women who experienced higher levels of work overload experienced higher levels of relationship conflict. The findings of that study are in line with the negative work to family spillover perspective, in that stress from the work role spill into the marital role, subsequently creating conflict between partners. Similar to the findings by Perry-Jenkins and her colleagues,
Bolino and Turnley (2005) and Skinner and Pocock (2008) suggested that perceptions of work overload lead to feelings of conflict between work and family roles. Bolino and Turnley (2005) sampled alumni from a private university in the United States using surveys. Both the alumni and their partners completed surveys separately. Feelings of work overload were associated with higher feelings of conflict between work and family roles. In support of these findings, Skinner and Pocock (2008) found work overload to be the strongest predictor of work-family conflict. This sample from a national survey (2007 Australian Work and Life Index; AWALI), did not report particularly high levels of work overload, yet work overload was still the strongest predictor of feelings of conflict between work and family roles. Skinner and Pocock (2008) suggested that effective management of work overload is the key strategy for a healthy work-life relationship. These results demonstrate the importance of examining work overload when examining family roles.

Like other work demands, there is research supporting that work overload is gendered. Costigan, Cox, and Cauce (2003) sampled dual earner parents during the transition to parenthood. Results demonstrated that mothers experienced more overload than fathers, and each parent experienced different predictors of work overload. For mothers, having a male child, a higher occupational status, poorer personal adjustment and their husband’s having lower job autonomy predicted greater feelings of work overload. Fathers had greater perceptions of work overload when they had a lower occupational status and lower job autonomy. However, similar to mothers, fathers experienced greater work overload when they experienced poorer personal adjustment. Poorer personal adjustment involved: feeling anxious and moody, avoiding close relationships, and worrying about their ability to deal with stress (Costigan et al., 2003). Skinner and Pocock (2008) found that work overload was a stronger predictor of work-family conflict for
men compared to women, even though the ratings for men and women were similar, demonstrating the gendered experience of work overload. Aumann, Galinksy, and Matos’ (2011) study used a nationally representative sample of the U.S. population, and their findings supported Skinner and Pocock’s results. They found that men experienced more conflict between work and family compared to women. Men reported that they felt they had to work very fast and very hard, but felt that they had enough time to complete their tasks, they did not feel work overloaded them. However, Aumann and colleagues suggested this could be due to the use of technology and the blurred boundaries between work and family life, making it easier to complete work tasks at home. This is important to consider with the work travel population, as they are not able to finish work at home if they are on a trip. Thus, on a trip, travelers may constantly be working the entire trip and subsequently feel like there is not enough time to complete all their tasks.

Furthermore, feelings of overload were higher for those women who had more children residing in the home (Pearson, 2008). Pearson (2008) sampled 155 women working full time from rural areas in the Southwest United States and found that work overload was a strong predictor of psychological health. Psychological health was measured across six factors: Depression, anxiety, loss of behavioral/emotional control, emotional ties, general positive affect, and life satisfaction. In support of Pearson’s (2008) findings, Glynn, Maclean, Forte, and Cohen (2009), suggested that greater perceptions of work overload were associated with poorer mental health. Mental health was measured via five items inquiring about factors such as: energy, feeling calm and peaceful, feeling downhearted, and emotional problems interfering with accomplishing tasks. They sampled Canadian women aged 25-54 who had a child younger than 17 years of age living in the house. Women who worked between 35-40 hours reported better mental health than those women who were not employed, suggesting that the work role, or

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perhaps the salience of this role from an symbolic interactionist perspective (Marks, 1977), is important for women’s mental health. Work overload had a stronger association with mental health than other socio-demographic variables (e.g., income), demonstrating the importance of examining the multiple roles women experience. This is important to consider from an intersectional perspective. This sample was all Canadian women that were diverse in social class. Household income was a strong predictor of mental health; that is, those that have a higher social class have more resources than those that have a lower social class. Since work overload was a stronger predictor of mental health than factors such as income, demonstrates the importance of context. It is not only social locations that influence experiences, but also the environment (i.e., work and feeling overloaded) that influence experiences and outcomes. Barnett (2004) also suggested that multiple roles are better for women and stated that is not the number of roles, but the subjective quality of those multiple roles, that is important. Barnett’s discussion on the importance of researching the subjective quality of the roles is in line with a symbolic interactionist perspective. Therefore, this study focuses on the subjective, not objective, facets of the work and family roles.

**Effort Recovery**

Effort recovery, proposed by Meijman and Mulder (1998), is the amount of effort an individual needs to put forth in order to sufficiently recover from stressors. It is during recovery that the individual returns to their pre-stressor level. If recovery is incomplete, the individual has to expend more effort to perform properly within their roles (Meijman & Mulder, 1998). Effort recovery suggests that effort expenditure may have unfavorable consequences if there is not an adequate amount of time for recovery. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, individuals may feel conflict between their work and family roles if they do not have enough effort to enact
or perform their roles in both domains. If individuals are unable to perform their roles, this may influence their self-concept of what it means to be a worker, a partner, or a parent.

These recovery processes can include those related to work (e.g., mentally disconnecting from work and not thinking about job related issues when not at work) and non-work (e.g., social and physical activities) activities. It is important to study effort recovery as a worker’s recovery experiences influenced work factors such as work engagement, that is, a positive work-related state of mind (Sonnentag, Mojza, Demerouti, & Bakker, 2012) and also workers’ well-being (van Hooff, Geurts, Kompier, & Taris, 2007). In addition, Sonnentag and Niessen (2008), using a daily diary methodology in a sample of various service industries and departments of public administrations organization in Germany, found that the influence of poor recovery over several days accumulated which lead to adverse consequences such as lower levels of vigor. For my study, it is especially important to study the need for recovery after work because when traveling individuals may not have adequate time to recover, and inadequate recovery may lead to harmful consequences.

There are a number of job factors that are related to a worker’s recovery state. Using a sample with a variety of different jobs from five organizations from various sectors such as business, telecommunications, hotel and catering, travel services, and education, Kinnunen, Mauno, and Siltaloppi (2010) demonstrated that greater psychological detachment is associated with less of a need for recovery. In other words, people who were able to not think or ruminate about their job when not at work did not have such a need for recovery. Therefore, these individuals recovered quicker after the workday than an individual who was not psychologically detached from work. This sample did not let negative spillover occur by psychological detaching themselves from their work role. These findings are supported among a study of pastors and their
spouses, as well as among public administration workers, in which psychological detachment was negatively related to the need for recovery (Sonnentag, Binnewies, & Mojza, 2008; Sonnentag, Kuttler, & Fritz, 2010). A lack of recovery experiences also predicted a lack of positive mood and higher fatigue at bedtime (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2008), as well as morning affect the next day (Sonnentag et al., 2008). The literature demonstrates the importance of psychological detachment from work in order for sufficient recovery. However, it is important to note that psychological detachment may be a luxury of the privileged. People within a lower social class may need to work multiple jobs and may not be able to detach from work, as they are always working and have no “off time” from work (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005).

Furthermore, Sonnentag (2001), using a daily diary methodology, suggested that a person’s psychological detachment from a job may not be able to occur if during leisure time these individuals are doing work related tasks. Employees who reported higher levels of work-related effort may spend more time working overtime on the weekend, instead of utilizing that time for leisure, which interferes with the recovery process (van Hooff et al., 2007). van Hooff and colleagues (2007) divided a sample of Dutch academic faculty into two groups, those that reported high levels of work-related effort and those that reported low levels of work-related effort. The high effort group was more preoccupied with work than the low effort group. The high effort group found active leisure activities during the weekdays more effortful, perhaps due to the lack of psychological detachment from work and thus finding it difficult to concentrate on leisure while being preoccupied with work (van Hooff et al., 2007). Interestingly, individuals who reported higher levels of work-related effort did not significantly differ in their activity patterns at work compared to those that reported lower levels of work-related effort,
demonstrating the importance of perception and meaning of the workers experiences related to work.

In line with the ideas of perception and meaning from symbolic interaction theory, Tucker, Dahlgren, Akerstedt, and Waterhouse (2008) sampled 12 participants in three different activities and suggested that it is not the type of leisure activity per se that is important in the recovery experience, but how the worker experiences the activity. If the worker cannot psychologically detach from work, their experience of any leisure activity may not be positive. This is important to consider in a sample of frequent work travelers, as they may not have time to psychologically detach from work, when they are on a trip and constantly working.

The idea of different perceptions and usefulness of activities also applies to gender and effort recovery. In Sonnentag and Bayer’s (2005) study, women spent more time on household and child-care activities, and women tended to have higher need for recovery scores (Kiss, De Meester, & Braeckman, 2007), suggesting that these activities may not be perceived as useful in their recovery efforts and may even hinder their recovery. Similar results are portrayed in a study with middle-class, dual earner couples with at least one child 8-10 years of age residing in the home in the United States (Saxbe, Repetti, & Graesch, 2011). Couples’ locations and activities were recorded every 10 minutes around their homes using scan sampling observations. With scan sampling, the behaviors of the couple were recorded at predetermined time intervals (i.e., 10 minutes) by a trained researcher in the couple’s house. Both husbands and wives who were involved in more housework had a higher need for recovery in the evening. However, women were most frequently involved in housework, while men were most likely to be involved in leisure activities. Men had better recovery experiences when they were involved in more leisure and when their wives were involved in less leisure. These results discuss gender at the individual
level, but we need to remember that gender is a social structure, in that gender is embedded and reinforced at the individual, interactional and institutional level of society (Risman, 2004). Perhaps the women in this study felt societal pressure through their social interactions and from social norms and subsequently “do gender” (West & Zimmerman, 2009) by completing the household chores. Research using biomarkers, specifically cortisol, support these findings (Gustafsson, Lindfors, Aronsson, & Lundberg, 2008). Cortisol sampled from white-collar workers every second hour across two working days demonstrated a significant interaction with gender. More specifically women had higher levels of cortisol 15-20 minutes after waking up, which was associated with poorer recovery (Gustafsson et al., 2008). This literature demonstrates how gender as a social system actively influences men and women’s daily interactions and activities in the effort recovery research. I aimed to gain a deeper understanding of traveler’s perceptions of effort recovery and how that influenced their various family roles in my study.

**Job Satisfaction**

Similar to work overload and effort recovery, job satisfaction is a subjective work factor. Scholars have examined job satisfaction as both an independent variable and an outcome variable. However, as with work overload and effort recovery, job satisfaction is not thoroughly examined in the parenting literature. Job satisfaction is important to examine because it influences the workplace (Jones, Chonko, Rangarajan, & Roberts, 2007) and the worker, specifically their physical and mental health (Faragher, Cass, & Cooper, 2005; Pearson, 2008). Job satisfaction also influences the worker’s relationships with others (Lee, Zvonkovic & Crawford, 2013; McNall, Nicklin, & Masuda, 2009). For example, in a sample of married, full-time working women, lower levels of job satisfaction predicted higher feelings of conflict.
between their work and family roles (Lee et al.). The research demonstrates how individual’s perceptions of their job influence both their work and family roles.

Much of the literature examines job satisfaction to predict other work factors (e.g., workers intention to quit, job performance). Among salespeople in the United States, higher levels of job satisfaction predicted higher levels of commitment to their workplace and lower levels of turnover intent (Jones et al., 2007). Findings with managers on the West Coast of the United States supported the results of job satisfaction predicting turnover, after controlling for age, gender, ethnicity, and job performance (Wright & Bonett, 2007). This relationship was stronger when psychological well-being was low (i.e., lowers reports of happiness), demonstrating the importance of perception and meaning people make of work factors. Job performance may have been controlled for in Wright and Bonett’s (2007) study because research suggests that the higher the salesperson’s perception of their job performance, the higher they will report their levels of job satisfaction (Jones et al.). However, it is problematic to control for age, gender, and ethnicity, all of which are intersections of a person’s identity. Researchers should not control for the various identities the person experiences. The intersection of identities produce different outcomes for individuals, so to control for these identities, studies are decontextualizing their findings. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, people’s identities are very important as this influences how they enact their multiple roles. When researchers control for gender, race, and ethnicity, the nuances behind how and why individuals perform and enact their roles cannot be explored. Thus, scholars should interpret these findings with caution.

There are also varying work factors that influence job satisfaction. In a British sample, workers in the education and health sectors were less satisfied with their income but more satisfied by the sense of achievement of their job (Gazioglu & Tansel, 2006). Those who
reported higher incomes also reported higher levels of satisfaction. However, Bender, Donohue, and Heywood (2005), using a national data set (The National Study of the Changing Workforce; NSCW) found that job satisfaction of men increased with additional earnings, but for women it did not. The intersections of gender and social class influenced individual’s perceptions of job satisfaction, demonstrating the importance of examining social stratifications and their influence on individual’s perceptions and meaning of their roles.

In a longitudinal study of 201 heterosexual dual earner couples (Grandey, Cordeiro, & Crouter, 2005), job satisfaction was measured at two time points using a 9-item measure asking individuals to think about their job in the past year using pairs of affective terms provided to them (e.g., enjoyable-miserable). Women reported significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than men and this attitude was stable overtime. Similar findings were reported using the NSCW and a sample of educators in Greece (Bender et al., 2005; Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). Women reported higher job satisfaction than men, specifically women in workplaces dominated by women (Bender et al.), demonstrating how gender is constructed and reinforced at the interactional and institutional level. Working women may feel more supported and have more fair and supportive opportunities working in an environment that is predominately women, compared to an environment consisting of predominately men. However, Bender and colleagues (2005) suggested that it might be that women tend to pick workplaces that value job flexibility; thus, reporting higher job satisfaction and demonstrating the importance of context, which in this specific case is workplace culture. Bender and colleagues (2005) inference also speaks to the assumption that women value job flexibility because society reinforces the idea that it is their job to take care of the household and manage their job around their housework. The workplace is an institution in which gender is embedded.
Job satisfaction was also relevant in perceptions of balance between the work and family roles among top executives (Stock, Bauer, & Bieling, 2014). In line with this finding, women with lower levels of job satisfaction reported higher feelings of conflict between the expectations and demands in their work and family roles (Lee et al., 2013). However, some studies (e.g., McNall, Masuda, & Nicklin, 2010) control for gender, which as stated previously, is an issue within the literature. Gender theory (Ferree, 1990) suggests roles are assigned gendered meanings. Daily interactions influence the construction of these roles; thus, when examining interactions in the work and family domains, men and women may have different experiences based on their social stratification, so it is unwise to control for gender and subsequently assume that both men and women have similar experiences.

Other factors examined in the job satisfaction literature are intimate relationships and family relationships. Utilizing a longitudinal study, Ilies, Wilson, and Wagner (2009) found that higher daily job satisfaction predicted higher daily marital satisfaction (as reported by the individual, not the spousal report), as well as higher positive affect at home (measured as their positive affective state or emotion at home, not at work), compared to days when they experienced lower daily job satisfaction. The emotions from job satisfaction spilled into the home, more specifically influencing marital roles. The spillover effect of a person’s mood from their job satisfaction was also supported in a meta-analysis examining the connection between job satisfaction and subjective well-being (Bowling, Eschleman, & Wang, 2010). This spillover effect supports findings reporting the negative link between job satisfaction and feelings of conflict between work and family demands and expectations (i.e., work-family conflict) (Cortese, Colombo, & Ghislieri, 2010), in that higher reports of job satisfaction were associated with lower levels of work-family conflict. In another meta analysis, McNall et al. (2009)
reviewed the consequences of work and family enrichment. Work-family enrichment is distinct from work-family conflict. Work to family enrichment is applying the benefits of work to family roles (McNall et al., 2009). Their results suggested that work to family enrichment was positively associated with job satisfaction. In other words, individuals with higher perceptions of job satisfaction felt they had more benefits they gained from their work roles that they could apply to their familial roles. The literature demonstrates the influence job satisfaction has on daily well-being and family; however, there is a lack of research examining job satisfaction, and the other work factors, and their connection to parenting. I aimed to further examine select work variables and how these various work factors spill over into family roles.

**Work and Parenting**

Although work overload, effort recovery, and job satisfaction and their association with parenting behaviors have not been examined within much of the parenting literature, there is literature suggesting that job demands and work conditions link to parenting behaviors. A study with fathers in low-income, nonmetropolitan communities examined paternal engagement and workplace support (Goodman, Crouter, Lanza, & Cox, 2008). Workplace supportiveness was measured as flexibility around family needs, co-worker support, and supervisor support. They found that a less supportive work environment was associated with less paternal engagement, demonstrating how work factors may spill over into the role of the parent and affect a person’s quality of parenting (Goodman et al.).

Ransford, Crouter, and McHale (2008) also examined support within the workplace, specifically supervisor support, in combination with work pressure. The high-risk group consisted of parents with low supervisor support and high work pressure. There was no association between fathers’ risk group and intimacy reported with their adolescents, but there
was a relationship in regards to conflict between adolescents and fathers. Fathers in the high-risk group with adolescent children reported more conflict than fathers in the low-risk group. In addition, mothers in the low-risk group with adolescent daughters reported higher levels of intimacy than mothers in the high-risk group with adolescent daughters (Ransford et al., 2008). These results demonstrate how negative aspects from the parent’s work role can spill over into their parenting role, as lower supervisor support and higher work pressure (negative aspects in the work role) influence how this sample parented, more specifically, they reported more conflict with their children.

Parents may also feel that their work and family roles compete against one another. This conflict between work and family roles had a negative association with the perceived quality of parent-child interactions among a sample of 60 Israeli Jewish married couples (Cinamon, Weisel, & Tzuk, 2007). In addition, the more hours a parent worked, the less time they spent in leisure activities with the children (Bass, Butler, Grzywacz, & Linney, 2009). In Bass et al.’s (2009) study, perceived job demands were not related to leisure time with children or interactions with children. However, perceived job demands were only measured by a single item in this study, “I had too many demands on me at work today”, which is not enough to grasp the entirety of all perceived job demands a parent faces at work. As gender theory (Ferree, 1990) suggests, these work experiences of men and women may be experienced differently; thus, a single item measuring all perceived job demands is inadequate. The finding that perceived job demands were not related to parent interactions with children should be interpreted with caution.

Recently, Wheeler, Updegraff, and Crouter (2015) examined Mexican origin families. They suggested that mothers’ and fathers’ perceptions of work, such as work overload, were negatively related to parenting behaviors, specifically parental engagement, demonstrating how
negative aspects of work can spill over and influence behavior in the parenting role. However, there is limited research examining this specific parenting practice in the literature regarding parents who travel for work who have young children. Parental engagement with their children is a behavior that may be challenging for those who travel for work as they are constantly entering and exiting the house, and thus not always physically present to display and enact this behavior. Therefore, I focused on parental engagement for my study.

**Parental Engagement**

Parental engagement, for the purposes of my study, refers to the parent’s expression of love and affection, as well as emotional availability and support to children (Skinner, Johnson, & Snyder, 2005). For this study, the focus was at the individual level, that is, traveler perceptions of their engagement with their children. Research must first examine factors (e.g., work factors) that influence parenting behaviors in order to develop better parenting education and interventions. However, for the purposes of this section, I reviewed and provided research as to why parental engagement is crucial to examine in the parent, as it relates to child outcomes.

Parental engagement is important to examine because this dimension of parenting is related to many child outcomes (Hare, Marston, & Allen, 2011; Khaleque, 2013). Many studies support the relation between parental engagement and subsequent child outcomes. In a recent meta-analysis, Khaleque (2013) demonstrated that both maternal and paternal engagement was significantly related to children’s psychological adjustment (i.e., low hostility and aggression, independence, positive self-esteem, positive self-adequacy, emotional stability, emotional responsiveness, and a positive worldview). This finding was supported by Bean and Northrup’s (2009) results that maternal and paternal engagement with their child were positively related to adolescents’ reports of self-esteem. Bean and Northrup only examined a Latino sample, while
Hare and colleagues (2011) used a racially/ethnically and socioeconomically diverse sample with a longitudinal design. However, Hare et al. (2011) only examined maternal behavior. They found that mothers who had higher engagement had higher levels of self-reported emotional communication and observed emotional disclosure three years later with their children. A sample of primarily lower middle-class European Americans found similar results, in that more parental engagement predicted more adolescent disclosure, as well as less secrecy regarding personal issues (Smetana, Metzger, Gettman, & Campione-Barr, 2006). These studies demonstrate how parental engagement is associated with many psychological outcomes in children and adolescents; thus, is important to examine in research. However, before scholars can attempt to improve child outcomes, first we must examine what factors may influence this specific parenting behavior.

Parental engagement is an important parenting behavior throughout the child’s life. In regards to age, pre-adolescents had more positive emotionality and self-regulation when their mothers had higher levels of engagement (Lengua & Kovacs, 2005). Adolescents who experienced lower levels of parental engagement reported higher levels of depressed mood (Hipwell, Keenan, Kasza, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Bean, 2008). Hipwell et al. (2008) examined adolescent girls 7-12 years of age over a six-year period; however, they only examined maternal behaviors, not paternal behaviors. There is a lack of research in the parenting literature focusing on father’s perceptions. Parental engagement is also important past the age range of adolescents. Kazarian, Moghnie, and Martin (2010) sampled Lebanese college students and found that higher levels of parental engagement are related to higher levels of subjective happiness. In another sample of college students from the United States, higher perceived perceptions of control (beliefs used to regulate action and interpret performance) of the student
were predicted by parental engagement with their child (Fulton & Turner, 2008). Thus, the literature demonstrates that parental engagement is an important parenting behavior throughout the life span. This behavior is especially important to examine in a sample of individuals who may not be physically present in the home from day to day to exhibit this behavior (i.e., frequent work travelers).

**Marital Conflict as a Mediator**

When parents experience negative emotions or mood at work, this may spill over into marital role as well. Workers may not have enough time, energy, or resources to fulfill both their work and family roles. Much of the parenting literature focuses on the influence of marital processes on parenting behaviors, more specifically on marital conflict. As stated previously, this focus started as more children were experiencing parental divorce. Cummings and Davies (1994; 2002) suggested that is it not necessarily the event of divorce that negatively influences the child, but the marital conflict prior to, during, and after the divorce. When comparing three different countries, the United States, Sweden, and the Netherlands, Gjerdingen and colleagues (2001) found that the multiple roles of men and women influenced their perceptions of marital conflict. Demands in the household and at work may be competing and the couple may subsequently have less time for each other. Kitzmann (2000) found that after a conflictual marriage exchange measured via an observational procedure, fathers showed less support and engagement toward their sons; however, for mothers, there was no significant difference in their levels of support and engagement. Fathers demonstrated negative emotions spilling over into their parenting role, disrupting their parenting. However, mothers demonstrated no evidence of this type of spillover. Kitzmann (2000) gave no context of her sample in regards to social locations (e.g., ethnicity, social class) and no indication if the parents were full time workers, part time, or did not work at
all for pay. All this is crucial information to understand when interpreting how parents perceive and enact their multiple roles.

Marital conflict also directly links to parenting behaviors. Krishnakumar and Buehler (2000), in a meta-analytic review, examined 39 studies between conflict and parenting. Parenting behaviors examined in their study were: harsh discipline, control, support and engagement, and global parenting quality. Krishnakumar and Buehler (2000) suggested that the parents’ preoccupation with marital conflict impaired dimensions of parenting. In line with their results, McCoy, George, Cummings, and Davies (2013) used a multi-method, longitudinal assessment of mothers, fathers, and children collected across three time points. They found marital conflict linked to fathers’ use of inconsistent discipline. From a spillover perspective, the negative emotions or mood from the marital conflict may have spilled over and negatively influenced the parenting role (i.e., lower levels of parental support and engagement and inconsistent discipline). Krishnakumar and Buehler (2000) suggested that marital conflict had strongest impairment on parental engagement and support; therefore, this study focused on parental engagement in order to better understand how marital conflict influences this parenting behavior in a sample with the demand of work travel. However, the antecedents of marital conflict, that is, what produces marital conflict, are equally as important to study when scholars are trying to better understand what influences the family roles. If parenting scholars are attempting to improve parenting by reducing marital conflict, the focus should be examining what causes marital conflict. In this study, I aimed to examine how feelings of overload with work, feelings of effort recovery, and perceptions of job satisfaction influence marital conflict.

Rogers and May (2003) used data over 12 years among a nationally representative sample of married individuals to examine work and marital quality. They found that decreases in
job satisfaction lead to higher reports of marital conflict, demonstrating support for negative work to family spillover. In another study with married couples, Claxton and Perry-Jenkins (2008) sampled dual earner couples transitioning to parenthood measuring their leisure time and marital conflict. Wives who reported more shared leisure prior to the child reported less conflict one year later. However, husbands with more independent leisure before the child reported more conflict one year later. Many women may not have time for leisure though, as they are often the partner completing family work after paid work (i.e., the second shift), demonstrating how larger social structures influence behaviors in family roles. The research demonstrates how various aspects of work (e.g., job satisfaction) influence marital conflict. However, there is no focus on how these work factors influence marital conflict and subsequently parenting behaviors in a sample of frequent work travelers. Such parents are constantly away from their family, which gives them less time for close interactions in their household, compared to workers who are present in their household every night after work. Being physically separated from both their partner and their child may influence how they enact their roles, and this may also influence the mechanism of spillover from the marital to parenting role. However, roles are socially constructed from larger institutions, one main institution being that of the workplace. Therefore, it is imperative to consider work factors in the parenting research.

The Current Study

In sum, the literature and theoretical frameworks suggest that perceived work factors may negatively or positively spill over into roles individuals perform within the family, such as the marital or parental role. Much of the parenting literature only focuses on mothers. This study focused on not only mothers’ perceptions, but fathers’ perceptions as well. In addition, the parenting literature predominately focuses on family factors that influence parenting behaviors
(e.g., marital conflict). The research does not focus on factors outside of the family that may influence how individuals perform these roles. Therefore, this study focused on how the workplace influences the parenting role, above and beyond what is commonly examined in the parenting literature (i.e., parent gender, marital processes). This study also focused on a population that frequently travels for work, a phenomenon that is increasingly more common among jobs today, but is overlooked and/or grouped together with other occupational demands. Therefore, my current study focused on how perceived work factors, specifically work overload, effort recovery, and job satisfaction influenced marital conflict and parental engagement for frequently overnight travelers. Specific research questions included:

1) Are there differences among mothers and fathers who travel for work in their reports of work overload, effort recovery, job satisfaction, marital conflict and parental engagement?

2) Do perceived work factors predict parental engagement over and above parent gender and marital conflict?

3) Do perceived work factors predict marital conflict (work to family spillover), which in turn predicts parental engagement?
CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Participants and Procedures

Participants in this study were part of a larger multi-method study regarding the effects of extensive work-related travel on families and health (Zvonkovic, 2011). Data were collected from 2007-2011. Those who traveled more than 20 nights in one year, had the same job for at least a year, and were partnered or married for at least one year were eligible. Families were recruited through the employers of the frequent travelers and utilizing snowball sampling techniques. Once potential families were recruited, they completed a basic preliminary survey to determine eligibility and representativeness of the work-travel population (e.g., occupation and industry). If the families were eligible, in-home semi-structured interviews were conducted with the travelers, their spouses, and children residing in the household (above the age of 8) by trained researchers. Each participant was interviewed separately by different trained research assistants.

During the interview, travelers completed written survey questionnaires addressing questions about their job and family. For each child, the traveler filled out reports of their behavior with that child. For example, if the traveler had three children, they filled out the same parenting questionnaire three times for their behavior with each child. Children above the age of 8 also completed written survey questionnaires addressing their family and their perceptions of their parents work. Participants above the age of 8 also used a personal digital assistant (PDA) in a six-week period to record daily activities and feelings. Interviews lasted between 90 minutes to two hours. Written and verbal consent were obtained during the time of the in home interview with all participants in the family present. One hundred families participated in the larger multi-method study. Each participant was compensated $50 for their participation. For example, if there were two adults and two children above the age of 8 in the household that participated in
the study, each individual was given $50 for a total of $200 for that family. Institutional Review Boards approved all methods for our study.

For the purposes of this study, I used questionnaire data from travelers with young children ages 0-7. I was interested in parents’ perceptions of their parenting toward their younger children. I used traveler reports, not partner or child reports, as I was interested in the traveler’s perceptions and meanings of their work and family roles, not their family members’ perceptions. If the traveler had more than one child in that age range, traveler’s reports of their parenting behavior with their oldest child, within the 0-7 age range, was selected for these analyses. For families who had twins, the parent report for their behavior with one child was randomly selected.

**Measures**

**Socio-demographic Information**

Socio-demographic information from the participant was gathered during the interview, as well as on the questionnaire. Socio-demographic information asked in the interview included but were not limited to: gender, number of family members residing in the household, length of marriage, travel schedule, the number of nights traveled per year, gender of each child, child’s age, and job industry. Trained research assistants then coded this information. Socio-demographic information from the survey included but was not limited to: age, income, level of education, and racial/ethnic background. Complete measures can be found in the Appendix.

**Perceived Work Factors**

**Work overload.** Participants’ work overload, the extent to which individuals feel a lack of time to do the tasks they need to do, was rated on a 13-item scale from Reilly’s Overload questionnaire (Reilly, 1982). In past research, alpha coefficients were reported as $\alpha = .88$ (Reilly,
1982). Example items were: “There are too many demands on my time,” “Sometimes I feel as if there are not enough hours in the day,” and “I can’t ever seem to get caught up.” Response options ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). No items were reverse scored. Score were summed and possible scores ranged from 13 to 65. Higher scores indicated less work overload/time pressure. For the individuals in this sample, Cronbach’s alpha was $\alpha = .80$ for this scale.

**Effort recovery.** Travelers were asked to rate their experiences of short-term coping demands from work using the 11-item effort recovery scale (Jansen, Kant, & van den Brandt, 2002; Jansen, Kant, Van Amelsvoort, Nijjuis, & van den Brandt, 2003). Example items included: “My job causes me to feel rather exhausted at the end of a work day,” “I find it hard to show interest in other people when I just came home from work,” and “During the last part of the working day, I cannot optimally perform my job because of fatigue sometimes.” Response options ranged from 1 (never) to 9 (always). One item was reverse scored. Scores were summed and possible scores ranged from 9 to 99. Higher scores indicated more of a need for recovery from work. Cronbach’s alpha was good ($\alpha = .88$) for this scale.

**Job satisfaction.** Four items, developed by Peters, Zvonkovic, and Bowman (2008), measured job satisfaction. Utilizing a 4-point Likert scale, response options ranged from 1 (almost always) to 4 (not at all). All items were reverse scored. Higher scores represent higher job satisfaction. Peters et al. (2008) suggest good reliability ($\alpha = .88$) for the measure. The four items were: “I like the sort of work I am doing,” “I feel like my work gives me a chance to do my best,” “I feel a sense of accomplishment from my work,” and “I consider the job I do to be important.” Scores were summed. Potential scores ranged from 4 to 16, with higher scores representing higher job satisfaction. Cronbach’s alpha was good ($\alpha = .87$) for this measure.
**Marital Conflict**

To measure marital conflict, the conflict subscale from Braiker and Kelley’s (1979) 25-item scale of intimate relations will be used. Respondents were asked how they felt about their relationship with their partner. Utilizing a 9-point Likert scale, responses ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*very much*). This subscale measured overt conflict in the relationship using a 5-item scale. Example items included: “How often do you and your partner argue with each other?” “To what extent did you try to change things about your partner that bothered you (e.g., behaviors, attitudes, etc.)?” “How often did you feel angry or resentful toward your partner?” “When you and your partner argued, how serious are the problems or arguments?” “To what extent did you communicate negative feelings toward your partner -- e.g., anger, dissatisfaction, frustration, etc.?” Scores were summed and possible scores ranged from 5 to 45. Higher scores indicated more relationship conflict. Cronbach’s alpha was adequate for our sample (α = .76).

**Parental Engagement**

Parental engagement was measured using the 24-item acceptance/warmth subscale of the parents’ version of the Parental Behavior Inventory. This measure was originally developed by Schaefer (1965) as part of the Child’s Report Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI) and later revised by Schludermann and Schludermann (1970) to include a parent response version. Parent’s responses on their engagement toward their child ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Alpha coefficients reported have been acceptable with a range of .73 to .89 (Schwarz, Barton-Hanry, & Pruzinsky, 1985). Example items included: “I am a person who makes my child feel better after talking over his/her worries with me,” “I am a person who gives my child a lot of care and attention,” and “I am a person who often speaks of the good things that my child does.” No items were reverse scored. Scores were summed and possible scores ranged from 24
to 120. Higher scores indicated higher levels of parental engagement. Cronbach’s alpha was very good ($\alpha = .95$) for this measure for our sample.

**Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using SPSS 23. Valid mean substitution (VMS) was used to replace missing data. VMS, also called ‘person mean’ or ‘case mean’ substitution, replaces all missing data values of a case by the mean of all non-missing (valid) items for that specific person (Raymond, 1987). VMS is effective in replacing missing values with Likert-type data (Dodeen, 2003). An advantage of using VMS is that an individual’s estimation of missing values is not influenced by the rest of the sample. Dodeen (2003) compared VMS to multiple regression replacement (MRR) in effectiveness. Results suggested that VMS and MRR were similarly effective in estimating means and standard deviations of the scales they used. VMS was more effective in estimating parameters when compared to MRR (Dodeen, 2003); therefore, VMS was used for this study to handle missing data.

Preliminary analyses included frequency reports and descriptive statistics for socio-demographic information. T-tests, one-way ANOVAs, and bivariate correlations were used to analyze the connection between the socio-demographic information about the traveler and their reports on perceived work factors, marital conflict, and parental engagement. Bivariate correlations were also used to examine the relation between the perceived work factors, marital conflict, and parental engagement. A three-step hierarchical regression was built and tested to examine the amount of variance explained by perceived work factors over and above the gender of the traveler and marital conflict.

The mediation model was analyzed using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013), a macro added to SPSS for a regression based approach to path-analysis with moderation and mediation.
PROCESS allows for the generation of bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals (Hayes, 2013). Indirect effects were interpreted as significant if the confidence interval did not include zero. PROCESS generated ordinary least squares confidence intervals for all the regression coefficients (Hayes, 2013). The recommended 5,000 bootstrap samples were used (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrapping uses a resampling technique to generate multiple random samples from the original observations by resampling with replacement in order to reduce bias. In addition, bootstrapping allows for better detection of the sampling distribution of the indirect effect, which is used for the construction of confidence intervals. Bootstrapping also does not require a normal distribution yielding more accurate inferences than those methods requiring a normal theory approach (Hayes, 2013). Thus, the data analyses used for my study allow for greater power, Type 1 error control, and better detection of the indirect effects compared to the causal steps approach proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) (Hayes, 2009).

Model 4 (Hayes, 2013) was used to estimate the products of regression coefficients linking perceived work factors to parental engagement. Three models were analyzed with each perceived work factor run in a separate model. Perceived work factors were entered as the Independent Variable (X). Parental engagement was entered as the Outcome Variable (Y). Marital conflict was entered as M to represent a mediator between perceived work factors and parental engagement.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Socio-Demographic Information

Travelers were primarily men (n = 29, 70.7%) with an average age of 35.45 years (SD = 5.23). The sample consisted of 12 (29.3%) women, who were an average of 38.08 years (SD = 4.23) of age. The average number of nights traveling per year due to work was 77.46 nights (SD = 54.74), with a range from 24 to 280 nights. Participants were married for an average of 9.27 years (SD = 5.40). In addition, the majority of the sample was Caucasian/White, Non-Hispanic (n = 35, 85.4%), received a four year degree or higher (n = 35, 85.4%), and had a yearly household income of $100,001 or higher (n = 25, 61.0%). Travelers had approximately two children residing in the household. See Table 1 for further demographic information.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Travelers (N=41)</th>
<th>M (range)</th>
<th>(SD)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traveler Gender (male)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>(70.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveler Age (years)</td>
<td>36.77 (24 to 48)</td>
<td>(4.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly Personal Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $60,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(24.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,001 - $80,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(29.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,001 - $100,000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(17.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than $100,001</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(29.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(2.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(4.9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Year College</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(7.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Year College</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>(41.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>(43.9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(4.9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>(85.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican American, Hispanic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(2.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(2.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(4.9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Industry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(29.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(2.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive Statistics

Frequency statistics showed that work overload scores ranged from 21 to 48 ($M=33.81$, $SD=6.75$), which corresponded to the average item of feeling moderately overloaded. Effort recovery scores ranged from 19 to 83 ($M=46.90$, $SD=15.02$), which corresponded to the average item of some need for recovery. As for job satisfaction, scores ranged from 9 to 16 ($M=14.3$, $SD=2.03$), which corresponded to the average item as generally satisfied. Parental engagement scores ranged from 74 to 120 ($M=102.8$, $SD=12.85$), which corresponded to the average item as generally highly engaged. Lastly, marital conflict scores ranged from 11 to 37 ($M=21.90$, $SD=6.84$), which corresponded to an average item as some marital conflict.

To examine the connection between mean scores of the variables of interest and demographic information (i.e., education level, number of children in the household, and job industry), one way analyses of variance (one way ANOVA) were run. Due to the unequal group sizes, tests of homogeneity of variances were run to examine if the assumption of equal variances within the population was violated. This assumption was violated for examining the link between job industry and reports of job satisfaction, as well as number of children residing in the household and job satisfaction. If the assumption was violated, a Welch test was run. The Welch
test (also known as an unequal variance F-test) is based from the ANOVA test. This test accounts for the unequal group variances. The .05 level was used for the following analyses.

Level of education consisted of three groups: travelers with less than a bachelor’s degree, travelers with a bachelor’s degree, and traveler’s with a graduate degree. There were no group mean differences in reports of work overload, effort recovery, job satisfaction or marital conflict. There were significant group mean differences in reports in parental engagement, $F(2,38)=5.917, p=.006$. Travelers with less than a bachelor’s degree reported the lowest scores of parental engagement $(M=91.33, SD=14.801)$ and travelers with a graduate degree reported the highest scores of parental engagement $(M=108.94, SD=9.867)$. Follow up post hoc tests showed that the less than a bachelor’s degree group significantly differed from the group with a graduate degree, $p=.01$. The group with a bachelor’s degree did not significantly differ from the other groups.

Families had a range of 1 to 4 children residing in the household. Families were placed into one of three groups (1 child in the house, 2 children in the house, and 3 to 4 children in the house). Only one family had 4 children residing in the household; therefore, for analytic purposes, the families with 3 or 4 children in the household were combined into one group. There were no group mean differences in reports of work overload, effort recovery, job satisfaction, marital conflict, or parental engagement. Therefore, travelers did not report differences in the outcome variables based on the number of children residing in their household.

Job industry consisted of six groups (public service, public health, technology, industrial/manufacturing, business/financial, and general consumer). However, public health only had one traveler in the group and was combined with the general consumer group, making five the total number of groups for job industry. There were no significant group mean differences in reports of work overload, effort recovery, marital conflict, and parental
engagement. There were job industry group mean differences reported for job satisfaction, $F(4,14.096)=3.988, p=.023$. Travelers in the general consumer group reported the lowest reports of job satisfaction ($M=13.00, SD=3.08$) and travelers in the industrial/manufacturing group reported the highest levels of job satisfaction ($M=15.71, SD=0.488$). Follow up post hoc tests, examining the difference between pairs, revealed no significant pairwise comparisons.

To examine group mean differences in the variables of interest between demographics with just two groups (i.e., race, sex of the child), t-tests were executed. Due to unequal group sizes, non-parametric independent sample t-tests were used. Race originally consisted of six groups (Black, White, Mexican, Other Hispanic, Asian American, and Other); however, due to the small group sizes in select groups, Black, Mexican, other Hispanic, Asian American, and other were combined ($n=6$). Thus, there were two groups (White and Other). Results revealed no significant groups differences in work overload, effort recovery, job satisfaction, marital conflict, or parental engagement. For the gender of the child, there were no significant group mean differences in reports of work overload, effort recovery, marital conflict, and parental engagement. There were significant group mean differences in reports of job satisfaction. Travelers with boys ($M=14.84, SD=1.72$) reported higher job satisfaction than travelers with girls ($M=13.56, SD=2.28$).

To examine the relation between continuous variables, bivariate correlations were run examining demographic information and the variables of interest. Results are shown in Table 2. The number of nights away due to work related travel was not significantly related to any of the continuous variables. Results demonstrated that job satisfaction was significantly related to parental engagement ($r=.420, p=.006$). The more satisfied travelers are with their jobs, the higher their reports of parental engagement.
Table 2

Correlation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Relationship Length</td>
<td>.689**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Job Length</td>
<td>.545**</td>
<td>.513**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Nights Away Per Year</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>-.103</td>
<td>-.138</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Age of Child</td>
<td>.522**</td>
<td>.659**</td>
<td>.423*</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Household Income</td>
<td>.341*</td>
<td>.328*</td>
<td>-.085</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>.248</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Work Overload</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>-.118</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>-.168</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Effort Recovery</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>-.221</td>
<td>-.459**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>-.190</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>-.241</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.178</td>
<td>-.190</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Marital Conflict</td>
<td>.237</td>
<td>-.013</td>
<td>.153</td>
<td>-.260</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>-.113</td>
<td>-.233</td>
<td>.387*</td>
<td>-.123</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Parental Engagement</td>
<td>-.183</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.078</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>-.277</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>-.199</td>
<td>-.102</td>
<td>.420**</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * p < .05; ** p < .01
Effort recovery scores were significantly related to reports of marital conflict ($r = .387$, $p = .012$). The more effort travelers reported to recover after their workday, the higher their reports of conflict with their spouse. In addition, work overload was significantly related to effort recovery ($r = -.459$, $p = .003$). The more overloaded travelers reported, the higher their reports of their effort to recovery after work. All other work, marital, and parenting variables were not significantly related to each other at the .05 level.

**Gender**

In regards to the first research question, non-parametric independent sample t-tests were used due to the unequal group sizes. Results demonstrated that men and women significantly differed in regards to their reports of work overload $t(39)=2.530$, $p = .016$, with men ($M=35.42$, $SD=6.57$) reporting higher levels of feeling overloaded compared to women ($M=29.92$, $SD=5.70$). Effort recovery and parental engagement differed between men and women at the trend level. For effort recovery, $t(39)=-1.711$, $p = .095$, women ($M=53.00$, $SD=13.89$) reported a higher need for recovery after work than men ($M=44.38$, $SD=14.97$). For parental engagement, $t(39)=-1.760$, $p = .086$, women ($M=108.17$, $SD=12.57$) reported higher levels of parental engagement compared to men ($M=100.60$, $SD=12.51$). Men and women did not statistically differ in their reports of job satisfaction, $t(39)=-.485$, $p = .630$ or their reports of marital conflict, $t(39)=1.012$, $p = .318$.

**Perceived Work Factors**

To further examine the relationship between gender, marital conflict, and perceived work factors, a three-step hierarchical regression was built and tested, shown in Table 3. Regression diagnostics were analyzed for this regression model, including multicollinearity, Cook’s distance, leverage, and Mahalanobis distance. Multicollinearity, when more than two variables
are highly correlated with each other, is an issue as the regression coefficients are estimated to be larger than they should be and these estimates become sensitive to minor changes in the model, making the coefficients difficult to interpret (Hayes, 2013). To examine issues of multicollinearity, collinearity diagnostics were run examining the tolerance and the variance inflations factor (VIF). All variables in the model did not have a tolerance less than .10 or a VIF greater than 10, which indicated there were no issues of multicollinearity within this model. Cook’s distance, leverage, and Mahalanobis distance were run to examine any outliers or extreme values within the model. All tests indicated there were no outliers. When running the hierarchical regression, five thousand bootstrap samples were generated, as well as 95% bias corrected and accelerated (BCa) confidence intervals due to the nature of the small sample size in order to increase the power of the analyses (Hayes, 2013).

In the first step of the model, gender was included to examine the variance explained by parent gender in parental engagement. In the first step, the regression equation approached significance, $R^2 = .074$, $F(1,39) = 3.097, p = .086$. Gender explained 7.4% of the variance in parental engagement but was not a significant, unique predictor of parental engagement ($b=7.565, p=.088$). The second step was built to examine the variance explained by marital conflict over and above parent gender. Results showed 8.8% of the variance was explained when marital conflict was added to the model. The regression equation was not significant, $R^2 = .089$, $F(1,38) = 1.856, p = .170$. Marital conflict did not emerge as a significant, unique predictor ($b=-.236, p=.444$). The third step was built and tested to evaluate if perceived work factors added to the understanding of parental engagement over and above parent gender and marital conflict. Results showed that 30.9% of the variance was explained when the work factors were added to the model, and it was highly significant.
Table 3

*Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Parental Engagement (N = 41)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>beta</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>7.565</td>
<td>4.299</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>8.126</td>
<td>4.365</td>
<td>.291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-1.880, 15.567)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(-1.323, 16.530)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.236</td>
<td>0.308</td>
<td>-0.126</td>
<td>-0.103</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>-0.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-.846, .289)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(-.678, .524)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Conflict</td>
<td>-0.578</td>
<td>2.640</td>
<td>-0.161</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>-1.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.835, 4.563)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Overload</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort Recovery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R^2</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td></td>
<td>.089</td>
<td></td>
<td>.309</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F for Change in R^2</td>
<td>3.097</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.643</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.717*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* p < .05.
95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals (BCa) reported in parentheses.
(R²=.309, F(3,35) = 3.132, p = .019). Work overload (b=-.578, p=.031) and job satisfaction (b=2.460, p=.019) emerged as significant, unique predictors in parental engagement over and above parent gender and marital conflict. In other words, for every one unit increase in work overload, parental engagement reports decreased by 0.578 units. For every one unit increase in job satisfaction, parental engagement reports increased by 2.460 units. When comparing the work factors to each other, job satisfaction was the most influential in parental engagement as it had the largest standardized beta coefficient (beta=.418), followed by work overload (beta=-.304), and effort recovery (beta=-.189), which had the smallest standardized beta coefficient.

**Mediation Model**

To assess the mediation model and the third research question, PROCESS (Hayes, 2013), a macro added to SPSS for a regression based approach to path-analysis with moderation and mediation with bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals, was used. Each work factor was run in a separate model. Final results are reported in Table 4. Due to gender being insignificant and explaining very little variance in parental engagement, it was not included in the mediation model in order to make the model more parsimonious and increase power. The recommended 5,000 bootstrap samples were used (Hayes, 2013). Since there are two consequent variables in the model (i.e., marital conflict, parental engagement), there were two linear models. M is the regression equation for the work predictors on marital conflict. Y is the regression equation for work factors and marital conflict predicting parental engagement, where i₁ and i₂ are the intercepts, eᵢ and eᵧ are estimates of the errors and a, b, and c’ are the coefficient estimates.

\[ M = i₁ + aX + eᵢ \]
\[ Y = i₂ + c’X + bM + eᵧ \]

These two equations represents the statistical diagram found in Figure 1.
Work Overload

In the first step, with work overload as a predictor of marital conflict, the regression equation was not significant, $R^2 = .055$, $F(1,39) = 2.247$, $p = .142$. Work overload did not emerge as a significant, unique predictor of marital conflict ($a = -0.237$, $p = .142$). When adding parental engagement as the outcome, work overload and marital conflict explained 10.59% of variance in parental engagement; however, this was not significant, $R^2 = .056$, $F(2,38) = 1.129$, $p = .334$. This mediation model for work overload did not have significant direct, indirect, or total effects. The direct effect of work overload on parental engagement was not significant ($c' = -0.437$, $t(38) = -1.416$, $p = .165$). The direct effect of work overload, $c' = -0.437$, is the estimated difference in parental engagement between two travelers experiencing the same level of marital conflict but differ by one unit of work overload. The interval estimate for $c'$ is -1.062 to 0.188 with 95% confidence; therefore, zero cannot be ruled out as a plausible value for the direct effect. Thus, travelers’ reports of how overloaded they feel by their work did not have a direct connection to their parental engagement with their young children. In addition, marital conflict did not mediate this relationship, as the indirect effect ($ab = .059$) was not significant at the .05 level with 95% confidence.
confidence intervals including zero (-.0533, .3338), meaning marital conflict did not assist in explaining the relationship between work overload and parental engagement. The total effect (sum of indirect and direct effects) of the model was also not significant ($c = -.215$, $t(39) = -1.265$, $p=.213$). Two travelers who differ by one unit in work overload are estimated to differ by 0.215 units in their reported parental engagement. See Figure 2 for the statistical diagram for work overload.

**Figure 2.** Mediation model for work overload in the form of a statistical diagram.

**Effort Recovery**

In the first step, with effort recovery as a predictor of marital conflict, the regression equation was significant, $R^2 = .150$, $F(1,39) = 6.867$, $p=.013$. Effort recovery did emerge as a significant, unique predictor of marital conflict ($a = 0.176$, $p = .013$). For every one unit increase in effort recovery, marital conflict scores increased 0.176 units; therefore, a higher need to recover predicts higher levels of marital conflict. When adding parental engagement as the outcome, effort recovery and marital conflict explained 1.2% of variance in parental engagement, but this was not significant, $R^2 = .012$, $F(2,38) = 235$, $p = .792$. The mediation model for effort recovery did not have significant direct, indirect or total effects. The direct effect of effort
recovery on parental engagement did not statistically different from zero, $c'=-0.072$, $t(38)=-0.479$, $p=.635$, with a 95% confidence interval from -0.374 to 0.231; therefore, zero cannot be ruled out as a plausible value for the direct effect. Thus, travelers’ reports of their need for recovery after the work day do not have a direct connection to their parental engagement with their young children. In addition, marital conflict did not mediate this relationship, as the indirect effect ($ab=-0.016$) was not significant at the .05 level with 95% confidence intervals including zero (-.1743, .1105), meaning marital conflict did not assist in explaining the relationship between effort recovery and parental engagement. Two travelers who differ by one unit in effort recovery are estimated to differ by 0.087 units in their reported parental engagement.

![Figure 3. Mediation model for effort recovery in the form of a statistical diagram](image)

The total effect of the model was also not significant ($c = -0.087$, $t(39)=-0.639$ $p=.527$). See Figure 3 for the statistical diagram for effort recovery.

**Job Satisfaction**

In the first step, with job satisfaction as a predictor of marital conflict, the regression equation was not significant, $R^2=.015$, $F(1,39) = 0.603$, $p=.442$. Job satisfaction did not emerge as a significant, unique predictor of marital conflict ($a=-0.415$, $p=.442$). When adding parental
engagement as the outcome, job satisfaction and marital conflict explained 17.7\% of variance in parental engagement. This regression equation was significant, $R^2 = .177$, $F(2,38) = 4.098$, $p=.025$. Mediation analyses demonstrated a significant direct and total effect but did not demonstrate a significant indirect effect. The direct effect of job satisfaction on parental engagement was significant ($c' = 2.636$, $t(38)=2.812$, $p=.008$). The direct effect of job satisfaction, $c'=-0.437$, is the estimated difference in parental engagement between two travelers experiencing the same level of marital conflict but who differ by one unit in job satisfaction. The interval estimate for $c'$ is 0.738 to 4.533 with 95\% confidence; therefore, zero can be ruled out as a plausible value for the direct effect. Thus, travelers’ reports of how satisfied they were with their work did have a direct connection to their parental engagement with their young children. In addition, marital conflict did not mediate this relationship, as the indirect effect ($ab = .022$) was not significant at the .05 level with 95\% confidence intervals including zero (-.243, .617), meaning marital conflict did not assist in explaining the relationship between job satisfaction and parental engagement. The total effect of the model was significant ($c=2.657$, $t(39)=2.893$, $p=.006$). Two travelers who differ by one unit in job satisfaction are estimated to differ by 2.657 units in their reported parental engagement. See Figure 4 for the statistical diagram for job satisfaction.
Table 4

*Model Coefficients for the Mediation Analysis for Parental Engagement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent</th>
<th>Coeff.</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>M (Marital Conflict)</th>
<th>Coeff.</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Y (Parental Engagement)</th>
<th>Coeff.</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X₁ (Work Overload)</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>-0.237</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>c'</td>
<td>-0.437</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M (Marital Conflict)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>-0.249</td>
<td>0.304</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>i₁</td>
<td>29.901</td>
<td>5.439</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>i₂</td>
<td>123.054</td>
<td>13.777</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
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<td>R² = 0.055</td>
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<td>F(1,39) = 2.247, p = .142</td>
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<tr>
<td>X₁ (Effort Recovery)</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>c'</td>
<td>-0.072</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M (Marital Conflict)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>-0.088</td>
<td>0.328</td>
<td>.791</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>i₁</td>
<td>13.640</td>
<td>3.307</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>i₂</td>
<td>108.010</td>
<td>8.129</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
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<td>R² = 0.150</td>
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<td></td>
<td>F(1,39) = 6.867, p = .013</td>
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<tr>
<td>X₁ (Job Satisfaction)</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>-0.415</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td>.442</td>
<td>c'</td>
<td>2.636</td>
<td>0.937</td>
<td>.008</td>
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<tr>
<td>M (Marital Conflict)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>-0.052</td>
<td>0.279</td>
<td>.853</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>i₁</td>
<td>27.860</td>
<td>7.745</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>i₂</td>
<td>66.156</td>
<td>15.544</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
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<td></td>
<td>R² = 0.015</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F(1,39) = 0.603, p = .442</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*R² = 0.055, R² = 0.056
F(1,39) = 2.247, p = .142, F(2,38) = 1.129, p = .334

*R² = 0.150, R² = 0.012
F(1,39) = 6.867, p = .013, F(2,38) = 0.235, p = .792

*R² = 0.015, R² = 0.177
F(1,39) = 0.603, p = .442, F(2,38) = 4.098, p = .025
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This study moves beyond previous inquiries examining parental engagement by incorporating perceived work factors, in addition to the commonly examined gender of the parent and measures assessing the quality of the marital dyad. More specifically, I examined these processes among parents with young children, which is suggested to be one of the most stressful times during parenting (Allen & Finkelstein, 2014). This study provides evidence for the power of perceived work factors in accounting for traveler’s engagement with their young children, above and beyond their gender and the extent to which their marriages are conflictual, both commonly examined in the parenting literature (Belsky, 1984; Belsky & Jaffee, 2006; Wilson & Gottman, 2002). My study also examined a population that is an overlooked population within the literature, who experience the unique work demand of frequent travel. My findings provide support for spillover theory.

Work Travel Sample

This sample was homogenous. Participants were mostly well-educated White men. While this sample is not representative of the population of adult workers at large, this distribution of education, income, and race is consistent with the population of work travelers (Gustafson, 2006). According to gender theory, the intersections of identities (i.e., gender, age, race, and social class) produce different outcomes for individuals (Few-Demo, 2014). This sample consisted of mostly men who were in their mid-thirties and were White/non-Hispanic. The sample was also from a very high social class, as a majority of the sample had a household income higher than $100,000. In addition, the travelers were highly educated with a majority of travelers receiving a bachelor’s degree or higher. Therefore, the intersections of these identities bestow power and privilege to this group. This sample may have more resources due to their
high social class, and the majority also has White privilege. This privilege may allow for travelers to have more success, compared to other workers in the general population, in their negotiations at the work and family level.

In regard to their education level, travelers with less than a bachelor’s degree had significantly lower levels of parental engagement with their young children compared to travelers with a graduate degree. Past research suggested that travelers with graduate or university degrees were more likely to be away for longer periods of time (Gustafson, 2006; Peters, Zvonkovic, & Bowman, 2008). Thus, one might infer that this would limit the amount of time parents can engage with their child; however, in this well-educated sample, the group of travelers who had a graduate degree had the highest parental engagement scores. Perhaps these parents have found other ways to engage with their child through technology, such as Skype or phone calls. The types of jobs that the less educated travelers are involved in might somehow limit their options for parental engagement in ways that higher educated parents were not limited, such as their ability to control their travel schedule or to be able to Skype or call according to their child’s schedule (Lyness, Gornick, Stone, & Grotto, 2012). In addition, previous literature also demonstrated that higher levels of education are related to higher quality parenting (Bornstein, Hahn, Suwalsky, & Hayns, 2003). Those with higher levels of education may have more resources based on their social location (i.e., higher social class), which may allow for more parental engagement with their children.

There were no differences in the work overload, effort recovery, job satisfaction, marital conflict, or parental engagement in regards to race, perhaps due to the homogeneity of the sample. In addition, I was not able to examine the nuances and social construction of race in this study as travelers simply selected their race from a few choices on a questionnaire. The majority
of samples in the work-travel research are predominately White. In the general work-family research, many of the samples are predominately White as well, and race is sometimes controlled for (e.g., Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Wright & Bonnet, 2007), which is a limitation of the work-family research. In the sample used in this study, travelers of color did connote privilege through their education and relatively high income. Therefore, the findings are not relevant to the entire range of experiences that might be encountered by workers of color related to their engagement with their children.

Interestingly, the number of nights away due to work was not significantly related to any of the perceived work factors, marital conflict, or parental engagement. This contrasted with previous research, which suggested that the number of nights away influences factors in both the work and family domain (Bergstrom, 2010; Gustafson, 2014). This could be due to the wide variability of the sample in the number of nights traveled. Perhaps the length of the average trip was short enough that it did not influence their engagement with their child or their conflict with their spouse. Mäkelä, Kinnunen, and Suutari (2014) suggested that the length of time spent away from home is more important than the frequency of traveling when they examined the feeling of conflict between work and family roles.

When examining the other correlations between variables, travelers who were more satisfied with their jobs also reported higher levels of engagement with their children. In addition, travelers who reported a higher need for recovery also reported higher levels of marital conflict. Lastly, travelers who reported higher perceptions of feeling overloaded at work also reported a higher need for recovery. Perhaps travelers who felt overloaded with their work were unable to detach from their work when they go home, which then in turn, hindered their recovery process (Sonnentag, 2001). While multicollinearity was not a statistical problem in the
multivariate analyses I conducted, the larger literature suggests that the concepts related to work and the concepts related to travel are inter-related, and there are contradictory reports of which factors are the most important (Mäkelä et al., 2014; Westman et al., 2008).

**Perceived Work Factors**

Gender of the traveler and marital conflict did not explain a large amount of variance in predicting parental engagement. This finding demonstrates the importance of extending beyond the family and examining other environments outside the family, such as the work environment to explain parenting behaviors. All three work factors explained a large amount of variance in predicting parental engagement, demonstrating the importance of examining work factors in parenting research. Job satisfaction had the strongest influence on parental engagement, followed by work overload and effort recovery. These results suggest that the context of the work environment influence parenting behaviors more so than the gender of the parent and marital conflict, as previous literature has commonly examined (e.g., Belsky, 1985; Cummings & Davies, 2002; Benson, Buehler, & Gerard, 2006; McCoy et al., 2013). Incorporating work factors into parenting research will assist in a better understanding how a parent enacts and performs their parenting role. This will also assist in increasing scholars’ and practitioners’ knowledge of individuals who hold multiple roles and how select roles may influence other roles more so than others.

**Work Overload**

In regards to work overload, results demonstrated that men reported higher levels of feeling overloaded by work compared to women. This is in contrast to the findings of Costigan et al. (2003) that indicated mothers experienced more overload than fathers. Results from my study highlight that women are able to successfully fulfill multiple roles in both the work and family
domain. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, multiple roles may be perceived as beneficial to women, and they may not feel as much conflict about their work and family roles competing as men do. In addition, recent research suggested men now experience more conflict between work and family compared to women (Aumann et al., 2011). As men are becoming more involved in the home, they may not have the time to complete their work tasks at home; therefore, leading to their feelings of being overburdened with work. Perhaps the workplaces of these men involved in frequent work travel do not have a workplace culture or policies that support job flexibility for men, which also may lead to more feelings of not having enough time to complete their work tasks (Aumann et al., 2011).

As for the connection between work overload and marital conflict, work overload did not add to the understanding of marital conflict or parental engagement. In other words, the feeling of being overburdened with work did not spill over from their work role into family roles. This is contrary to past research that supports the spillover perspective that feelings of work overload influenced relationship conflict and work-family conflict (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2007; Ransford et al., 2008; Skinner & Pocock, 2008). The sample used in my study reported on the whole a moderate amount of work overload. These results suggest that the travelers could have been feeling overloaded at their job, but they may have been able to leave the negative emotions at work, and especially so given that they spent quite a bit of time away from home due to traveling. Also, due to the limitations of a questionnaire about their experiences of work overload, I was not able to examine the day-to-day variation in feeling overloaded. It is possible that travelers may feel more overloaded on a trip because they may feel they are expected to work the entire trip (Gustafson, 2012), and since the travelers are not returning to their home
after each workday when on a trip, they are not home for family interactions; thus, these negative feelings of work overload may not spill over and interfere with their family roles.

Effort Recovery

In regards to effort recovery, results demonstrated that women reported a higher need for recovery compared to men. These results supported the previous effort recovery literature that suggested that women tend to have higher need for recovery (Gustafson et al., 2008; Kiss et al., 2007; Saxbe et al., 2011). The women in my sample may be involved in more of the housework after work, which may have hindered their efforts to recover after the workday (Kiss et al., 2007). From a symbolic interactionist perspective, it is the perception and meaning of the recovery experience that is important for the actual recovery process (Tucker et al., 2008). The women may have been involved in activities or social interactions after work that they did not perceive as useful to their recovery; thus, their recovery efforts were compromised. Overall, this sample reported moderate amounts for the need to recover from work. Due to the nature of traveling, these parents may not have had adequate amounts of time to recover if they are constantly working during their trip. In addition, the travelers may have also felt that their work piled up at their desk or family work piled up at home when they were gone on a trip (DeFrank, et al., 2000); therefore, they may not have had adequate amounts of time to recover when they returned from a trip.

When examining effort recovery and the connection to marital conflict, effort recovery did add to the understanding of marital conflict, which was in line with negative work to family spillover. The negative experience of not being able to adequately recover from work spilled into the marital dyad. Previous literature suggested that men had better recovery experiences because they were involved in more leisure activities than their wives (Saxbe et al., 2011). Perhaps
conflict arose when one partner felt that they were doing a large amount of family work while their partner was participating in leisure activities. If recovery is incomplete and the individual has to expend more effort, this may influence their ability to enact and perform their roles (Meijman & Mulder, 1998). From a symbolic interactionist perspective, individuals’ recovery may be incomplete, and subsequently they do not have enough energy or resources to perform their marital role, which may cause conflict between spouses.

When examining effort recovery and the connection to parental engagement, effort recovery did not add to the understanding of parental engagement. The need for recovery did not spill into the travelers’ parenting roles. Parents may have perceived engaging with their child as an activity that aided in the recovery process; therefore, recovery may not hinder their ability to perform their parenting role. These workers may also have been able to psychologically detach from work when interacting with their child (Tucker et al., 2008).

**Job Satisfaction**

In regards to job satisfaction, members of this sample were highly satisfied with their jobs. Travel may have attracted these individuals to their jobs, which may explain the higher levels of job satisfaction. This also could be due to the way job satisfaction was measured with only four items. Contrary to past literature (e.g., Bender et al., 2005; Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008), men and women did not report different levels of job satisfaction. Women tend to have higher job satisfaction when they work in workplaces dominated by women (Bender et al., 2005). However, workplaces that involve travel are mostly dominated by men (Gustafson, 2006), which may explain why men and women did not have significant differences in job satisfaction. In addition, the intersections of their identities influence their experiences of their job satisfaction and the lack of gender differences could be because of the privilege this sample holds. Also the
fact that men and women in this sample were working in the same occupations (rather than the population of U.S. workers at large, which reflects some occupational segregation), may allow them to negotiate their work roles more so than the samples in other studies who do not hold as much privilege.

When examining the connection between job satisfaction and marital conflict, job satisfaction did not assist in the understanding of marital conflict. Past literature suggested that daily job satisfaction predicted higher daily marital satisfaction, compared to days when workers reported lower job satisfaction (Illies et al., 2009). For these analyses, I assessed overall job satisfaction and overall perceptions of marital conflict, not daily reports, which may be why job satisfaction did not add to the understanding of marital conflict. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, perhaps travelers who were more satisfied with their jobs have more energy and resources to put into their marital role, which would not influence conflict. Among a sample with high social class, top executives’ job satisfaction assisted them in feeling that they had a balance between both their work roles and family roles (Stock et al., 2014). In other words, they did not feel these two roles were competing with each other. The travelers in my sample may not have felt their work and marital roles were competing with each other due to their high reports of job satisfaction, which would explain the non-significant direct effect.

When examining the connection between job satisfaction and parental engagement, job satisfaction added to the understanding of parental engagement. Job satisfaction had a large influence on the reports of parental engagement in this study. In other words, the positive aspect of job satisfaction positively spilled over into the parenting role, which increased levels of engagement with children. Parents who felt satisfied with their work were more engaged with their children; therefore, being happy at work has a positive influence on the parenting role. The
implications for employers to understand how important job satisfaction is for employees’ personal lives is crucial as these positive emotions may also lead to positive interactions with their children. This positive spillover demonstrates the importance of employers making sure their employees are satisfied, as this may influence how they perform their family roles.

Marital Conflict as a Mediator

Marital conflict did not assist in explaining the connection between perceived work factors and parental engagement. In other words, perceived work factors did not assist in the understanding of marital conflict, which in turn, did not aid in the understanding of parental engagement. Cummings and Davies (1994; 2002) suggested that marital conflict is harmful to parenting. However, marital conflict did not directly influence parental engagement or assist in explaining how work factors influence parental engagement in this study. This may be for a few reasons. First, marital conflict was only measured via five items from a questionnaire. A better measure to test the connection between work, marital conflict, and parental engagement may have been to measure daily reports of work, marital conflict, and parental engagement to account for daily fluctuations in these variables. In addition, other marital processes, such as marital satisfaction or marital love, could be acting as a buffer from letting the conflict in the marital role spill over into the parenting role. In addition, some of the parenting research suggests that an individual’s parenting is influenced by their partner’s feelings of marital quality, instead of the individual’s own feelings of marital quality (Ponnet, Mortelman, Wouters, van Leeuwen, Bastatis, & Pasteels, 2013). My study did not examine the partner reports of marital conflict, which may be a reason for the insignificant indirect effects of marital conflict. My study also did not examine parenting stress, a specific type of stress commonly examined in parenting research. Parenting stress is stress perceived by the parent in relation to their parenting and their child
(Abidin, 1992). Feelings of conflict between the work and family roles have been suggested to increase levels of parenting stress in a sample that had high job demands (i.e., firefighting) (Shreffler, Meadows, & Davis, 2011). Parenting stress may be an additional process that assists in better explaining the relationship between perceived work factors, marital conflict, and parental engagement. Perhaps marital conflict spills over into parenting stress, which then, in turn, spills over into parental engagement. Future research should extend this line of inquiry.

**Implications**

My study makes an important contribution to the work-life and parenting literature by focusing on various perceived work factors and their influence on parental engagement with young children in a population that is becoming more common with today’s 24/7 economy: people who travel frequently for work. This inquiry applied symbolic interactionism to demonstrate how people holding multiple roles (i.e., work role, marital role, and parent role) enact those roles in the context of traveling frequently for work. Findings demonstrated how the meaning of the work role (e.g., how satisfied a person is with their job) has real consequences for the individuals in their parent role, increasing their engagement with their child. My findings emphasize the importance of examining work factors for parents who frequently travel for work and their ability to engage with their young child. Scholars should account for various types of work factors when attempting to gain a deeper understanding of family roles, more specifically the parenting role. Parents who are employed spend a large amount of their waking hours at their jobs; thus, a context that takes up most of their day should have an effect on how they enact their personal roles including parenting.

Although work overload did not assist in explaining parental engagement as much as effort recovery and job satisfaction, this aspect of work is still important to consider. Perceptions
of time are important for individuals holding multiple roles, as there are only 24 hours in the day for them to complete all the tasks they must do within each role. Employers should also focus on job satisfaction in the workplace. Workers who are more satisfied are better engaged in family roles. My study provided support for the spillover theory and extends it to the parenting role, as most of the work-family spillover literature focuses on the spillover from work to the marital dyad (Ferguson, Carlson, & Kacmar, 2014; Minnotte, Minnotte, & Pedersen, 2013; St. Vil, 2014). A supportive work environment may also have an impact on job satisfaction as well (Hsu, 2011); therefore, employers should focus on creating and maintaining supportive workplaces. Employees that are unhappy and struggle to find a balance between their work and family roles have higher turnover rates (Moen, Kelly, & Hill, 2011), lower levels of commitment to their organization and lower job performance (Odle-Dusseau, Britt, & Greene-Shortridge, 2012), which are all negative for businesses. Work-life initiatives would benefit the employee and the employer (Greenhaus, 2009).

Effort recovery also influenced the marital dyad supporting spillover theory. Employers should offer trainings or workshops in ways in which employees can adequately recover after work. This should be a focus of the workplace as the lack of recovery can carry into the next workday and influence the workers ability to perform at their job (Sonnentag & Niessen, 2008; Westman et al., 2009). This is also especially important when traveling, as the need for recovery may influence the traveler’s job performance on the road, which may cost the company money and potential clients, as they are paying for the travel and expecting the work to get done correctly and efficiently. In order to decrease the need for recovery at home, individuals should attempt to participate in leisure activities that aid in the recovery process (van Hooff et al., 2007). Parents that feel a high need to recover after work may find activities such as mindfulness,
meditation, or physical exercise helpful as these activities have been found to buffer the effects of stress (Creswell & Lindsay, 2014; Goyal et al., 2014; Greenwood & Fleshner, 2011). However, people should explore which activities work best for them. Clinicians who are working with couples reporting relationship conflict should discuss the work environment in order to attempt to better understand where the conflict the couple is experiencing is originating. If clinicians and practitioners can attempt to better understand these spillover processes, they may be able to decrease the amount of conflict the couple is experiencing by targeting the origin of conflict (possibly work) and work with the couple on ways to manage their other roles from negatively spilling into their family roles.

In addition, women typically work the second shift of performing household labor (Bianchi, Sayer, Milkie, & Robinson, 2012; Lanchance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). Partners of individuals who perform a large portion of the second shift should be aware of this and attempt to assist their partner in the housework and childcare so their partner’s recovery process is not hindered. In this study, given that travelers might be doing less housework than their partner due to being away from the household, the women whose jobs required travel may not be involved in as much housework as the research suggests. The women in my sample may have certain privileges from their job that other women do not experience, which may account for the lack of gender differences within this study. In a clinical setting, it is important for practitioners and clinicians to discuss housework and childcare as this is an area that can influence power dynamics within the family and potentially marital conflict (Dush & Taylor, 2012).

Marital conflict did not assist in explaining how different aspects of work influence the parenting roles. Not only should clinicians and practitioners focus on the work environment and the influence various aspects of work environment can have on parenting, but also they should
focus on other marital processes within the family. Marital love may have the ability to buffer marital conflict. Clinicians and practitioners should focus on more than just the negative marital processes. Perhaps they should focus on the positive marital processes and focus on the strengths of the couple. Some lines of intervention (e.g., Sheely-Moore & Bratton, 2010) take a strengths-based approach and rather than assuming work can only have a negative influence and only poor quality marriages affect parenting, clinicians and practitioners can identity and employ the strengths of the family for better parenting outcomes and by providing a foundation for managing work to family spillover.

Scholars also need to consider the intersections of identities and how those produce different outcomes for individuals. This sample was highly privileged based on their race and social class. Therefore, they may have more resources (such as money and status) and more room to negotiate (within the couple) their work and family roles, subsequently influencing how they perform these roles. Scholars should also consider the salience of these identities in their work and the social mechanisms that support and reproduce these forms of privilege. This sample may have more tangible resources to hire help for family work, so women may not have to participate in the second shift, which may account for the lack of gender differences. However, by hiring out others for help (typically women), people may be subsequently oppressing others to do their family work (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2004). The idea of power and privilege created by the intersections of identity is extremely important for scholars to consider when examining both the work and family domain. It is also important for clinicians and practitioners to be aware of this when working with couples and families. Each couple and/or family will have different power dynamics. It is important that clinicians and practitioners focus not only on the work and family processes influencing the family, but also how power, or
lack of, is influencing how each individual performs their roles within that family. For example, if a family comes to therapy for child behavior problems, the marital dyad should be examined as well. If one partner is doing all the housework and working during the day and the other partner is only working during the day and will not help with housework, one parent may not have the time or effort to actively engage with their child. These power dynamics should be explored when working with families.

From a gender perspective, it is also important to consider the issues in the workplace that perpetuate gender inequality, which produce and reinforce power within the workplace. Policies that have been enacted and framed as “family friendly” often exacerbate the wage gap between men and women by reducing women’s earning capacity (Mandel & Semyonov, 2005). Not only do “family friendly” policies contribute to the gender wage gap, these policies increase gender discrimination within the work environment as women are perceived as contributing less effort to work when they utilize these policies (Mandel & Semyonov, 2005). The creation of better child care policies may allow women to dedicate more time to paid work and travel more often and subsequently diminish gender discrimination and become competitive in the job market against men (Mandel & Semyonov, 2005). If workplaces revise their policies to view men and women equally, perhaps men may participate more in housework and childcare, which subsequently may increase their perceptions of their engagement with their child. Research should continue to examine and understand work to family spillover in order for the government and policymakers to make changes necessary for a positive work-family life.

In sum, organizations need to create organizational environments that are supportive of their employees’ non-work responsibilities. This may decrease the need for recovery, the feeling of being overloaded, and increase people’s perceptions of job satisfaction. In addition, parenting
scholars should focus on context in their research, more specifically how the context of work (e.g., how overloaded a parent feels), not just the marital dyad, influences parenting behaviors. Scholars and practitioners also need to consider the intersection of identities and subsequent power and privilege, or lack thereof, when working with individuals, couples, and families and how this influences how individuals enact and perform their roles in social interactions.

**Limitations**

My study should be interpreted in light of potential limitations. The sample was relatively small. People who frequently travel for work are difficult to recruit as they are constantly traveling to various locations for their job. This small sample size influences the power in the analyses. Although bootstrapping and the most parsimonious model were used to obtain more power, limited power and hence the ability to detect relationships among variables is still a limitation of my study. Future studies should aim to have a larger sample of work travelers, and extend to workers with other high job demands. Future samples should also include same-sex couples or single parents, as this study only examined heterosexual couples. Secondly, this study was cross-sectional. I was not able to determine causal pathways, and it is possible some of these relationships are bi-directional (for example, perhaps parental disengagement spills over and negatively affects people at work, straining their work experience and influencing how they perceive and enact their work role). Future studies should use a longitudinal approach when collecting data. Another limitation of this study is the use of questionnaires for each of the variables examined. This methodology does not account for variation in events or experiences from day-to-day; thus, daily diaries should be utilized in future research as well. Daily diaries are a new sophisticated, methodological approach that allow to researchers to examine day-to-day variability in thoughts, behaviors, and experiences (Robles, Reynolds, Repetti, & Chung, 2013).
Daily diaries are also nonintrusive measures in the individual’s natural environment that require little retrospective assessment (Bolger, Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003; Green, Rafaeli, Bolger, Shrout, & Reis, 2006). In addition, the use of self-report is a limitation as well. By only using the traveler report, social desirability bias may have led travelers to try to appear as socially desirable and respond to answers inaccurately (e.g., reporting less marital conflict, reporting higher levels of parental engagement with their child). Future studies should use more observational reports to decrease this type of bias. Another limitation is that gender was dummy coded in this study; therefore, the nuances of gender could not be explored to assist in explaining how travelers engage with their child. Qualitative research would be a better approach to better understand the nuances of gender in the context of work, marriage, and parenting. As discussed, the occupations that involve overnight travel are not in which large numbers of women can be found; hence, the lack of gender difference may be a reflection of the types of jobs rather than gender. Future studies should examine these nuances and how the social construction of gender influences the experience of work factors, marital processes, and parenting behaviors. Lastly, perceptions of parental engagement were used for travelers with children ages 0 to 7 in my study. During this time frame, there are three distinct developmental age periods (infants, toddlers/preschoolers, and young school age children); therefore, parental engagement at one stage may look differently than at another stage (Berk, 2009).

However, my study has several strengths. First, my study provided an in depth focus on work factors, not commonly examined in parenting research, that influence parental engagement. This focus enables researchers and practitioners to explore common factors (e.g., work) outside the family that may influence parenting. This study is unique because it examined a population of workers with the specific work demand of work travel that is becoming increasingly common,
yet is often overlooked in the work-family literature. Much of the research examining work travelers was obtained from travelers outside the United States, and my study examined those in the United States. The sample was also analogous to that of the work travel population; therefore, results of this study are generalizable to the broader frequent work travel population. This enables researchers and employers to gain a better understanding of the demands work travelers may face and how that may influence the roles they have within their family (e.g., the marital role, the parental role). In addition, this study used a sophisticated regression-based approach to mediation that allowed for greater power, a smaller chance for Type 1 error, and for a better detection of the indirect effect (i.e., marital conflict).

**Future Directions**

The findings in this study suggest that further research is necessary to better understand how work influences parenting behaviors. Future studies should examine other marital processes, such as marital love, to focus on the strengths of couple and the influence of positive marital processes on parental engagement. Future studies should also use the reports of the spouses and the children. By examining all family members, researchers will be able to examine differences in reports between family members and have data from more than one source. In addition, it could be possible that my sample has the resources to hire help to assist in family work. Future studies should account for resources, such as paid help, when examining parenting behaviors in a sample with power and privilege. More sophisticated methodologies and analytical strategies are needed as well. Perceived work factors, marital processes, and parenting behaviors may change on a daily basis; therefore, daily diary analyses should be used in future studies. Multi-level modeling analytic approaches should also be used in future studies as this methodological approach allows for the examination of both within and between family differences. This study
also demonstrated the importance of examining work factors in relation to parental engagement. Future research can extend this line of inquiry by examining other work factors that may influence parental engagement. Similarly, there is a need to examine perceived work factors and their influence on other parenting behaviors such as parental intrusiveness and sensitivity, as both these behaviors play a key role in child development and outcomes (Feldman, Granat, Pariente, Kanety, Kuint, & Gilboa-Schechtman, 2009).

The spillover perspective and research suggests that work to family spillover works bi-directionally as well (Andreassen, Hetland, & Pallesen, 2013; Grzywacz, Almeida, & McDonald, 2002). In other words, positive and/or negative emotions from the family may spill into the work roles. This study did not examine the influence of family roles spilling into work roles, as work to family spillover was the focus of the study; however, future studies should examine family to work spillover. My study demonstrated partial support for spillover theory. Future research should examine crossover theory in regards to work and parenting behaviors. Crossover theory suggests that there is a dyadic, inter-individual transmission of emotions or stress from one individual to another individual (Westman et al., 2009). For example, one parent stressed at work may bring that stress home (negative spillover), and subsequently that stress crosses over to their partner, who then experiences stress. Future studies should examine if there is a crossover of stress from feelings of work overload and effort recovery, or a crossover of positive emotions from job satisfaction from one parent to their partner, and if that crossover of stress then influences their partner’s parenting behaviors toward their child.

**Conclusion**

My study provides useful information for researchers and practitioners. This inquiry extended the parenting literature by incorporating factors outside of the home by examining
work factors that may influence the marital and parental role. Findings suggested that perceived work factors do assist in explaining parental engagement among a sample of traveling parents with young children. This study demonstrated how the need for recovery from work (i.e., effort recovery) negatively spill over into the marital role. My study also demonstrated how the positive emotions from work (i.e., job satisfaction) positively spill over into the parenting role. Employers, clinicians, family life educators, and family members themselves could benefit from a focus on increasing job satisfaction. My research has the ability to better parenting practices in a population that may not always be physically present in their home due to their job.
References


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doi:10.1023/A:1020272428817


doi:10.1111/j.1708-8305.2010.00441.x


doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2006.03955.x

doi:10.1007/s11199-008-9501-8


doi:10.1080/09585192.2013.860383


APPENDIX

Socio-Demographic Information

The following questions are background questions that will be used for comparison purposes only.

1. Please indicate your age:
   - □ 18-25
   - □ 26-30
   - □ 31-35
   - □ 36-40
   - □ 41-45
   - □ 46-50
   - □ 51 or older

2. What is your yearly personal income?
   - □ Under $10,000
   - □ $10,001 — $11,000
   - □ $11,001 — $20,000
   - □ $20,001 — $30,000
   - □ $30,001 — $40,000
   - □ $40,001 — $50,000
   - □ $50,001 — $60,000
   - □ $60,001 — $70,000
   - □ $70,001 — $80,000
   - □ $80,001 — $90,000
   - □ $90,001 — $100,000
   - □ $100,001 — $110,000
   - □ $110,001 — $120,000
   - □ Above $120,001

3. What is your yearly total household income?
   - □ Under $10,000
   - □ $10,001 — $11,000
   - □ $11,001 — $20,000
   - □ $20,001 — $30,000
   - □ $30,001 — $40,000
   - □ $40,001 — $50,000
   - □ $50,001 — $60,000
   - □ $60,001 — $70,000
   - □ $70,001 — $80,000
   - □ $80,001 — $90,000
   - □ $90,001 — $100,000
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4. What is the highest educational level you have completed?

☐ Less than high school
☐ High school
☐ Some college
☐ 2 year college
☐ 4 year college (Bachelor’s degree)
☐ Graduate degree
☐ Other

5. What is your race/ethnic background?

☐ Black/African-American, non-Hispanic
☐ White/Caucasian, non-Hispanic
☐ Mexican-American, Hispanic
☐ Other Hispanic
☐ Asian American
☐ Other

9. Please indicate your gender:

Male ☐ Female ☐

---

**Work Overload**

The following questions pertain to how overloaded you might feel at work, in general.

1. I have to do things which I don’t really have the time and energy for.

   1 Strongly Agree
   2 Agree
   3 Neither agree nor disagree
   4 Disagree
   5 Strongly disagree

2. There are too many demands on my time.

   1 Strongly Agree
   2 Agree
   3 Neither agree nor disagree
   4 Disagree
   5 Strongly disagree

3. I need more hours in the day to do all the things which are expected of me.
4. I can’t ever seem to get caught up.

5. I don’t ever seem to have any time for myself.

6. There are times when I cannot meet everyone’s expectations.

7. Sometimes I feel as if there are not enough hours in the day.

8. Many times I have to cancel commitments.

9. I seem to have to overextend myself in order to be able to finish everything I have to do.
10. I seem to have more commitments to overcome than some of the other people in the same family situation I know.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

11. I find myself having to prepare priority lists (lists which tell me which things to do first) to get done all the things I have to do. Otherwise I forget because I have so much to do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. I feel I have to do things hastily and maybe less carefully in order to get everything done.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

13. I just can’t find the energy in me to do all the things expected of me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

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**Effort Recovery**

The **next set of questions concern how you feel after work.**

1. I find it hard to relax at the end of a working day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. At the end of a working day I am really feeling worn-out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. My job causes me to feel rather exhausted at the end of a work day.
WORK, MARRIAGE, AND PARENTING

1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7---------8---------9
Never               Sometimes               Always

4. Generally speaking, I’m still feeling fresh after supper.

1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7---------8---------9
Never               Sometimes               Always

5. Generally speaking, I am able to relax only on a second day off.

1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7---------8---------9
Never               Sometimes               Always

6. I have trouble concentrating in the hours off after my working day.

1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7---------8---------9
Never               Sometimes               Always

7. I find it hard to show interest in other people when I just came home from work.

1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7---------8---------9
Never               Sometimes               Always

8. In general, it takes me over an hour to feel fully recovered after work.

1---------2---------3---------4---------5---------6---------7---------8---------9
Never               Sometimes               Always

__________________________________________________________________________

Job Satisfaction

The following questions ask about your work and how satisfied you are.

1. I like the sort of work that I am doing.
   1= Almost always
   2= To a considerable degree
   3= Occasionally
   4= Seldom

2. I feel my work gives me a chance to do my best.
   1= A Lot
   2= Some of the time
   3= A little
   4= Not at all
WORK, MARRIAGE, AND PARENTING

3. I feel a sense of accomplishment from my work.
   1= A Lot
   2= Some of the time
   3= A little
   4= Not at all

4. I consider the job I do to be important.
   1= A Lot
   2= Some of the time
   3= A little
   4= Not at all

---

Parental Engagement

Please read each statement about your experiences during this past year with (child). Then, show whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am a person who . . .</th>
<th>Not at All</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. makes my child feel better after talking over his/her worries with me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. likes to talk with my child and be with him/her much of the time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sees my child's good points more than his/her faults.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. almost always speaks to my child with a warm and friendly voice.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. thinks of things that will please my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. understands my child's problems and worries.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. enjoys talking things over with my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. gives my child a lot of care and attention.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. enjoys going on drives, trips, or visits with my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. smiles at my child very often.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### I am a person who . . .

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Not at All</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>often gives up something to get something for my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>is able to make my child feel better when he/she is upset.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>enjoys doing things with my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>makes my child feel like the most important person in the world.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>enjoys working with my child in the house or yard.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>comforts my child when he/she is afraid.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>enjoys staying at home with my child more than going out with friends.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>cheers my child up when he/she is sad.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>often speaks of the good things that my child does.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>makes my life center about my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>has a good time at home with my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>is proud of the things my child does.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>spends almost all of my free time with my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>isn’t interested in changing my child, but likes him/her as he/she is.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Marital Conflict

1. How often do you and (____) argue with each other?

1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7----------8----------9

not at all neutral very much
2. To what extent do you try to change things about (____) that bother you (e.g., behaviors, attitudes, etc.)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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3. How often do you feel angry or resentful toward (____)?

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4. When you and (____) argue, how serious are the problems or arguments?

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5. To what extent do you communicate negative feelings toward (____)—e.g., anger, dissatisfaction, frustration, etc.?

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