Spring 4-4-2004

Mom or Manager?: How Social Factors and Personal Choice Affect the Work/Family Balance in the United States, Japan and Germany

Christine E. Mueller
Western Michigan University, christine.greisheimer@kraftfoods.com

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

The Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College

Centennial 1903-2003 Celebration

THE CARL AND WINIFRED LEE HONORS COLLEGE

CERTIFICATE OF ORAL EXAMINATION

Christine E. Mueller, having been admitted to the Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College in Fall 2000 successfully presented the Lee Honors College Thesis on April 7, 2004.

The title of the paper is:

Mom or Manager?: How Social Factors and Personal Choice Affect the Work/Family Balance in the United States, Japan, and Germany

Dr. Roberta Allen, BIS

Gordon Dobler, Mgmt

Angelika Kausche, BIS

Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5244
PHONE: (269) 387-3230 FAX: (269) 387-3903

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Senior Honors Thesis

Christine Mueller

Western Michigan University

4 April 2004

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One often hears the term "work/family balance," but what actually makes work and family balanced? To some, it could mean relieving some of the pressures of child-rearing that conflict with career. To others, it could mean providing flexibility in jobs that conflict with family. Clearly, there are differing opinions on what constitutes a "balance." In fact, a balance between work and family could potentially represent a different prioritization of work and family for all individual women.

As a result of this differentiation, this report will investigate the work/family balance based on two factors: social influence and personal choice. The first factor is significant because society dictates and enforces the prescribed roles for women. The degree of career progression a woman can achieve is partly bounded by restrictions of society. The other factor, personal choice, is the factor that only each woman can determine for herself. No matter what the structure set up by society, a woman can only progress as far as her personal goals determine. In addition to the relationship between society and choice, this report will explore the barriers to pursuit of a management career inherent in these factors.

The choice of countries investigated is also significant, as they have some similar characteristics. The United States, Japan and Germany are three industrialized, market economies engaged in commerce with the world and each other. Also, as will be explained, their social situations after World War II were aligned to the male breadwinner model. This indicated that the role of a male was to earn money for the family, while women were responsible for maintaining the home and raising the family. However, varied social development since World War II has resulted in different expectations for women, especially concerning women's roles for work and parenting. These differences The differences will be evaluated as functions of social and legal factors.

THE UNITED STATES

Historical Influence

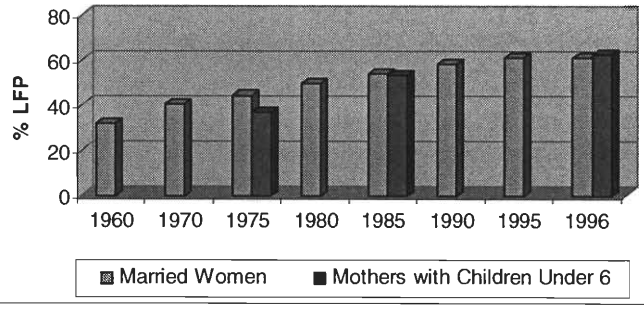
Women's roles in the United States have been fluctuating since the American Revolution. Alpern reported that the colonists brought their belief system of sex roles over to the American colonies, where most women raised children and worked in the household (20). Though "some women took part in public economic life," it was done in opposition to societal expectation, while "the majority of women in this time period had little information about the economic status of their own families" (20-21). However, during the Revolution, women became "deputy husbands," taking over their husbands' businesses until the men returned from war. This sparked among women a new confidence in their own abilities, but was contradicted by the "ideal" of a woman's life of leisure, where she was only a status symbol to her working husband. By 1830, less than 5% of married women worked outside of the home (24). The "deputy husbands" became a recurring theme throughout history, and with each war women seemed to be making advances in showing their abilities to work. However, Alpern revealed that "When the war ended, the entire structure slipped back down nearly, but not quite, to where it had started" (31).

The years of WWII clearly illustrated the last major instance of this trend. Alpern indicated that "within five years in the early 1940s, more than 6 million women joined the labor force," and most of these women were married, over 35, and from the middle class (38). Women were given technical line jobs that were previously unavailable to them, including welding, plumbing, ship- and tank-building, manufacturing, and machine operations (Wisensale 82). A study by the Women's Bureau at the end of the war indicated that 86% of women workers wanted to remain in their occupational group, but a large part of the wartime workforce was pushed out once again, with working women declining from 19.3 million in 1945 to 15.8 million in 1947 (84). This downsize was partly aided by the cutoff of funding for all government-sponsored wartime daycare facilities by October 1945 (84). Additionally, traditionalist women pushed for the return of women to the home. Popular literature, such as Elizabeth Long's *The American Dream and the Popular Novel*, Marynia Farnham's *Modern Women: The Lost Sex*, and even the *Ladies' Home Journal* viewed career-minded women as "selfish," as their priorities should remain in the home (Alpern 39, Wisensale 84). As these barriers pressured women to return home, the economic boom of the 1950s helped keep them there. Smith reported, "The healthy economy during these years meant that a family could survive and even prosper on one income" (8). The result of this was the "baby boom," where an abundance of babies born kept millions of women at home to take care of children (8).

Beginning in the 1960s, women's participation in the workforce was given more attention. President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women, started in 1961 and headed by Eleanor Roosevelt, addressed sex discrimination in employment, women's wages, and working conditions. However, it also supported women's role as a homemaker, by making a primary goal the enabling of women to continue in their

housewife role while making "significant contributions" to the world around them (Alpern 41). In contrast, the women's liberation movement in the later 1960s consisted of a more radical group of women and focused on civil rights activism (Smith 9). Despite their differing motives, both groups brought more attention to women's rights and opportunities in the workplace and were influential in the growth of women's labor force participation, as shown in Figure 1. During this time, married women's participation in the labor force increased 31.9% in 1960 to 40.5% in 1970, rising to 49.8% in the 1970s, and reaching 61.2% by 1996 (Wisensale 87). At the same time, working mothers constituted the fastest growing sector of the U.S. workforce, with the labor force participation rate of mothers with children under six increasing from 37% in 1975 to 63% in 1996 (87). Much of this increase could be contributed to legislation for women's employment rights, which will be discussed later. However, another contributing factor to the increased incidence of women in the workforce was the increasing educational attainment of women. Fagenson and Jackson reported that women earned 8.7% of bachelor's degrees and 3.7% of master's degrees in business and management in the 1969-1970 school year, and those percentages increased to 46.7% and 34.0% in 1990-91 (392). Additionally, by 1985, men and women attended college in equal numbers (Smith 10).

Figure 1: Labor Force Participation Rate of Married Women and Mothers, 1960-1996



Source: Wisensale, 87. Data compiled from Cynthia M. Tauber's *Statistical Handbook on Women in America (1996),* 2nd ed. Phoenix: Oryx Press

Current Situation

Workforce Composition

While women have been increasingly entering the workforce and pursuing higher education the past four decades, their attainment of managerial level careers has been slower and met with more opposition. In 1950, women made up 14% of managerial positions, with managerial positions constituting 9% of the workforce (Alpern 40). However, results of a *Fortune* poll at that time revealed that 53% of male executives thought women handled people less well than men, and 65.9% thought women were less able to make decisions (39). Though women as managers increased to 16% by 1970, Smith indicated that companies were still reluctant to hire qualified women with university degrees to positions traditionally given to men (10). More significant growth occurred in the 1980s and '90s, with women in management positions rising to 42% by 1992.

Part-time employment, or working less than 35 hours per week, has experienced only miniscule growth since the late sixties in comparison to growth in management. Drobnic and Wittig reported that in 1968, women part-time workers made up 24.9% of the female work force. By 1992, this percentage had only increased to 25.4%, totaling an increase of less than one percent (294). These numbers are especially small when considering that by 1992, part-time work only comprised 17.5% of the workforce. However, the women that are employed part-time make up a majority of the part-time workforce at 66.4% of all part-time workers (294).

The Career/Family Choice: Finding the Balance

Women's roles have nearly reversed in comparison to the 1950s. Wisensale reported that "the family in which the father is the sole 'breadwinner' and the mother stays home to raise children . . . has not been the norm since the 1970s." On the contrary, according to the U.S. Bureau of Census, this type of family made up only 18.7% of families in 1997 (19). Additionally, in the same year the Bureau of Labor Statistics identified 11.3 million married couples with children under six years, and 61.4% of these families had working mothers (19).

For these nearly seven million women, achieving a balance between work and family is critical to maintaining both roles. While a successful balance can be interpreted differently by individuals, Thompson and Beauvais explained the work/family balance as "the ability to manage job and non-job responsibilities in ways that result in individuals having satisfying and productive work and non-work lives" (165).

With this definition, Thompson and Beauvais asserted that a balance is not without conflict and defined the work/family conflict as "a mutual incompatibility between the demands of the work role and the demands of the family role" (166). They also explained that trying to integrate the work role and the family role can cause significant conflict within a woman's time, psyche, and behavior (166-7). For women opting to work and have children, these are significant conflicts, as they can effect both their career and family roles. However, the degree to which a woman experiences conflict within one of her roles is dependant upon her prioritization of the other. Women's priorities can reflect one of three orientations:

- *Career-primary*: Women strive for success in their careers while subordinating their personal lives.
- *Family-primary*: Women pursue their careers within the constraints of their families.
- *Dual career/family*: Women try to give equal prioritization to both career and family (Parasuraman & Greenhaus 202-3).

Each of these orientations will be discussed, including the current situations of women with these priorities and possible consequences of choosing them.

Career-Primary Orientation

The societal perception that modern-day Americans prioritize work is not just a perception. In 1999 the United States became "the number one country in the world in

hours worked per employee each year: 1,996 (Wisensale 89). This means that career women are also spending more time at the office. According to a 1997 study by the Families and Work Institute, mothers' time at work outside the home has increased by five hours per week in the last twenty years, even though 63% would like to work less (Wisensale 89). Thompson and Beauvais attribute this partially to the globalization of business, which has resulted in 24-hour workdays (164). Whatever the case, the increasing demands of a management career often force women to make sacrifices in their personal lives, especially as they climb higher up the corporate ladder.

One of the biggest considerations career-women have to make is the decision whether or not to have children. Thompson and Beauvais's time conflict theory suggests that women must sacrifice time with the family to spend more time at work. This became evident in a *New York Times* poll in 1989, which indicated:

> Although 70% of women with full-time jobs reported that women had equal or better than equal chances of promotion where they worked, most feel that progress has been achieved at the expense of time with their children and the quality of their family lives (Parasuraman & Greenhaus 187).

This is especially true for women executives, who made up 11.1% of board seats in Fortune 500 companies in 1998 (Smith, D. 15). Even back in 1988, nearly 57% of women managers aged 25-34 and 25% of women managers aged 35-44 were childless (Fagenson & Jackson 392). While deciding not to have children greatly reduces the amount of time conflict between work and home, it is a decision that affects women's entire lives. A senior executive quoted in Parasuraman and Greenhaus said, "I would never want my mother to know how much it hurts me to be childless (199).

On the other hand, deciding to have children while pursuing a career can create time and stress conflicts that make the job no longer worthwhile. Such was the case for Karen Hughes, Counselor to President George W. Bush. She left her position in Washington in July 2002 to work from her home in Austin, TX, stating, "There were no rhythms in my life except for the constancy of work" (Sellers 96). She claimed that her prestigious position put strain on her marriage and left her feeling disconnected from her 15-year-old son. In taking a step back from her career, Hughes was able to focus more time on her personal life.

Family-Primary Orientation

When a woman chooses to put her family before her career, then her career must be developed within the boundaries of her family life. Though it may give her more satisfaction in her personal life, she can expect that her career involvement, and therefore salary and advancement, will be much less than if she devoted more time to her career.

The factor of reduced career involvement and advancement was addressed by Felice Schwartz, president and founder of Catalyst, a non-profit organization working to improve leadership and career development of women in corporate America:

> One can certainly have a career that is important and significant, in which a degree of autonomy is achieved by making it to the middle levels of the corporation. But if a woman really wants to make it to the highest levels of the corporation, then she cannot be a primary player in her children's lives (Schwartz).

This argument once again relates to time-conflict, where any amount of time a mother wishes to spend with her children is done at the expense of time spent at work. Parasuraman and Greenhaus elaborated on this career sacrifice by explaining that reduced career involvement can include "restricted time devoted to the job, seeking a less demanding job and/or refusing a promotion. . . cutting back on job-related travel, or unwillingness to relocate (196). For example, former vice president of Fannie Mae Jamie Gorelick turned down a COO promotion, because she wanted to focus more attention on her two sons. Not only did Gorelick turn down the position, but she later quit Fannie Mae altogether and took a less demanding position at a small law firm (Sellers 88).

In a 1989 article in the *Harvard Business Review*, Felice Schwartz attempted to solve the discrepancy between career-primary and family-primary women by suggesting what women later called the "mommy track." With this option, a woman who identified with wanting to have children could enter a company in a less-intensive career path, allowing her more time away from work. Women's perception of the article was that Schwartz was trying to reinforce sex discrimination by separating the "breeders" from the "strivers," essentially excluding women with children any chance of furthering their career (Wisensale 91). Schwarz responded, indicating that she was only highlighting two ends of a spectrum, and a company that is able to accommodate the extremes can also accommodate all women's set of work/family priorities (Nelson-Horchler 25). However, the opposition to her suggestion showed that women did not want to sort themselves into categories based on their priorities, but instead wanted flexibility and acceptance towards motherhood from their companies.

Another major consideration for family-oriented women is the decrease in salary associated with an interruption of a career. As it is, women only earned 72% of men's salaries in 2001 for the same work (Mathis & Jackson 111). Economist Sylvia Ann Hewlett added that taking time off from work until a child is of preschool age can result in "a reduction in future earnings of 13-19% for the rest of the woman's career" (Parasuraman & Greenhaus 196)

While a woman's decision of how much time to devote to work can be difficult, Thompson and Beauvais indicated that many companies try to give women more flexibility with their work hours. In addition to maternity leave, companies offer flextime, compressed workweeks, permanent part-time work, telecommuting, and job sharing to keep women in their jobs. Flextime, or the flexibility to determine when in the day to work a required number of hours, was the most common option offered (65%) in a survey of 1,400 CFOs about their companies (172). There are also resources women can use to find jobs in companies that offer flexibility for women. In 1997, *Working Mother* magazine extended its search of "family friendly" companies to an annual "top 100" companies for working mothers. These companies are analyzed within six categories:

- *Leave for new parents*, including paid leave, paternity leave, adoption aid
- *Flexibility*, including flextime, compressed workweeks, and working from home
- *Child care*, including on-site care, dependant care fund, referral service
- *Work/life*, including how the company gauges employee satisfaction
- *Advancement of women*, including promotion opportunities and statistics on female executives
- *Pay*, including level of base pay and savings options (Wisensale 96)

Career/Family Orientation: Modern-Day Supermoms

According to Thompson and Beauvais, the beginning of the 1980s brought a new definition of a powerful woman: one who "had it all." These women, often dubbed "supermom," juggled a rising career with involved mothering (165). They were portrayed as "on the go, organized, competent" without requiring time for themselves (Parasuraman & Greenhaus 196). However, the early 1990s revealed new characteristics of these women: "stressed out, bedraggled, and bug-eyed from lack of sleep" (Thompson & Beauvais 165). They showed "strain-based conflict," where the psychological strain generated from one role spilled over into the other, and the dual roles became detrimental to one another (166). This example illustrates how critical it is for women to determine their own priorities concerning a career and family, because there are not enough hours in a day to pursue career and family both as full-time commitments.

Discrimination

Despite women's priorities and choices, additional barriers exist that can hinder women from advancing in a management career, whether in the form of blatant discrimination or adverse impact. These can include stereotypes, the glass ceiling effect, and pregnancy discrimination.

Stereotypes

Northcraft wrote that a major barrier women face is "the stereotype that men and women have different managerial styles, and that the managerial style of males is better suited to the pursuit of corporate excellence" (220). Some of the characteristics commonly given to male managers include decisiveness, firmness, logic, and lack of emotion (Karsten 94). Women are considered to possess more "soft skills," or those involving other people, including interpersonal communication, collaboration, and group goal attainment (Northcraft & Gutek 221). However, there is little evidence to suggest a large differential between the actual managerial practices of men and women or the discovery of one superior management style (221). Similarly, Sellers wrote that women and men view career success differently - men in terms of rank and women in terms of influence – so the qualities that would aid a man in moving up the corporate ladder would not be the defining qualities of an effective woman manager (82).

The Glass Ceiling

For a woman trying to climb the ranks, stereotyping can result in an actual barrier to promotion, known as the "glass ceiling." This refers to an invisible barrier preventing women from advancing within the organization. Opinions on the causes of the glass

ceiling effect differ. On one hand, both female and male managers agree that male stereotyping and lack of line management prevent women from moving upward. However, male executives placed more emphasis on women's own lack of experience, while women claimed stereotypes from others was the primary cause (Harris 61). A Glass Ceiling Commission was established by the president and Congress in 1991 to address the issue, and it concluded in 1996 that the glass ceiling was a "serious economic problem" (Smith, D. 12). It also issued a set of recommendations to guide companies' strategies for removing discrimination, including demonstrating commitment to gender diversity from the top down. However, research on the effectiveness of the commission's recommendations is cloudy, since statistics of low female participation in top management do not distinguish between discrimination and women's choices.

Pregnancy Discrimination

Pregnancy discrimination, in its most basic definition, occurs when employers treat women differently from others when they become pregnant, especially when the treatment has negative effects on a woman's employment, pay, rank, etc (Chester & Kleiner). Women established in a career can therefore face difficulties when deciding to have children if the organization is not supportive of their pregnancy. Some employers practice pregnancy discrimination because they are fearful of the effects on the company.

> They are guaranteed to have high medical costs, a reduction of productivity, and the inconvenience of replacing the employee with temporary help during their maternity leave. In addition, the employer still faces the likelihood that the employee will not return to work after her pregnancy (Chester & Kleiner).

Pregnancy discrimination is also on the rise. Gellar reported that cases filed increased 10% in 2002 alone, amounting to a 40% increase since 1992. He suggested on one hand that this figure actually gives more credit to women than discredit, since "more women are assuming higher levels of authority, and there is increased sensitivity to these work/life issues, and more women are aware of their rights." However, he also wrote that, in efforts to keep out of legal battles, "blatant discrimination has given way to more subtle bias, with pressure still on women not to have children if they want to pursue careers" (C5).

Legal Interventions

The first attempt by the United States government to eliminate workplace discrimination occurred over a century ago with the Civil Rights Act of 1866. However, Harris indicated that this law was too vague to use in court (37). While it addressed "all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States," it in practice only prohibited racial discrimination (39). The first significant law addressing workplace discrimination against women did not appear until almost one hundred years later. Since the 1960s, many more laws have been passed that support equity for women in the workplace. How much these laws have helped women balance a career and family depends heavily on, once again, a woman's own priorities.

The Equal Pay Act

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 represents the U.S. government's first recognition of gender inequity, in this case as pertaining to pay. It asserted that employers must pay "similar wage rates for similar work without regard to gender" (Mathis & Jackson 110). It also established the only four reasons for which pay may differ, including differences in seniority, job performance, quality/quantity of production, and factors such as skill, effort and working conditions (110). Though the pay gap between men and women has been closing, women have still not achieved complete equality as men in relation to salary. In 1980, the average annual salary of women workers was 60% of men's salaries, and only rose to 72% by 2001 (111).

This discrepancy in pay, intended to be alleviated by the Equal Pay Act, could be a contributing factor to a woman's career orientation. On one hand, a woman who is family-oriented might see the pay differential as a reason for her to take more time off work, since her husband would be able to earn more money for the family. On the other hand, a career-oriented woman might view the pay difference as a need for her to climb to a higher position in the company, where she would be able to receive the higher salary. The pay difference could also discourage any woman from wanting to take extra time off from work for children, since the pay differential would accentuate the career-long decrease in salary from taking leave.

The Civil Rights Acts and Affirmative Action

The next two legislations both aim to eliminate discriminate against women, among other minorities. However, they have opposite approaches to equal treatment in employment. The Civil Rights Act focuses on considering everyone in the workforce as equal. This is often referred to as a "melting pot" strategy, because it blends the characteristics of all employees into one homogenous workforce. Conversely, Affirmative Action focuses on the enhancement of opportunities for minority groups. This is commonly considered a "salad bowl" strategy, because it creates a workforce of individuals identifiable by their diverse characteristics.

The Civil Rights Act (CRA) of 1964 was the next attempt after the Equal Pay Act by the government to create equality, not only for women, but for all protected classes, including race, color, religion, or national origin. This act applies to all private employers of 15 or more people who are employed 20 or more weeks per year (Mathis & Jackson 105). The section most applicable to employment is Title VII, which asserts that it is unlawful to discriminate against any of the protected classes in "all employment-related decisions, including hiring, job assignment, transfer, promotion, discharge, and so on" (Lee 248). Initially, women were not even supposed to be included in the CRA. Opponents of the CRA only added sex discrimination because they thought it would keep the act from passing (Karsten 40). For women, the passing of the CRA was an important milestone, because it gave them the legal right to not be discriminated against when

applying for and working at a job. The CRA also established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which was created to "enforce the provisions of Title VII (Mathis & Jackson 105).

Affirmative Action (AA) was established in 1965 with Executive Order 11246, later amended by orders 11375 and 11478. Issued by President ~~George W. Bush,~~ it asserted that all companies with at least 50 employees and $50,000 in government contracts must have an AA plan, showing attempts to utilize protected class members (Harris 56). Karsten identified an AA plan as "an ongoing, results-oriented process that identifies underutilization of minorities and females in employment and develops specific procedures to remedy the situation" (48). The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFFCP) was established to enforce AA planning and nondiscrimination in government contracts (Mathis & Jackson 108).

Despite initial strides towards non-discrimination, the CRA showed flaws. First, with the CRA, it was very difficult in sex discrimination claims to prove that a woman was discriminated against for her gender. Lee reported that without any hard evidence, employers could easily blame employment decisions on poor performance or other work-related issues (248). Employers also discriminated against women applying for management positions or promotions by using subjective criteria to evaluate the candidates and indirectly inflict gender bias (249). These circumstances made it nearly impossible for an employee to win a court case against a company, since the plaintiff had to first provide proof of discrimination (Mathis & Jackson 107). Lee explained that this process could ruin a career, making the fight of a discrimination case not worth the trouble to a woman with an established career. Between 1983 and 1989 only 9% of sex discrimination claims in hiring and 13% in discharge came from women who were managers (250).

To make the Civil Rights Act of 1964 more beneficial to the groups it aimed to protect, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 was created as an amendment. Its main purpose was to change some of the provisions of the 1964 CRA that were more detrimental to women than helpful (Lee 251). For one, the 1991 CRA raised the amount of compensatory damages that could be received in a discrimination case, making it easier for the plaintiff to secure a good lawyer. Additionally, it gave plaintiffs a better opportunity to win the case by shifting the burden of proof to the employer, making them prove that the discrimination in question was a "business necessity" (253).

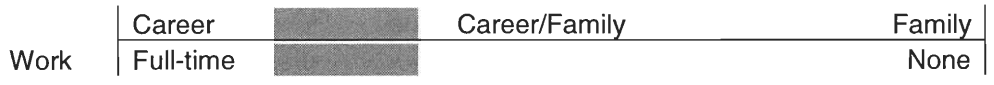
The Pregnancy Discrimination and Family Medical Leave Acts

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) was developed in 1978 as an amendment to Title VII of the CRA of 1964, requiring employers "to treat pregnant employees the same as nonpregnant employees with similar abilities or inabilities," thereby asserting that pregnancy leave should be treated as any other medical leave (Jackson & Mathis 110). Geller reported that the passing of the PDA was influenced by a controversial pregnancy discrimination case in 1976 (C5). In that year, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of General Electric, when pregnant female employees filed suit for being excluded to

disability pay normally granted to workers with general sickness or injury. Congress, backed by "widespread criticism of the ruling," responded with the PDA (C5). Later, in 1993, the PDA was expanded by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This act pertained not only to pregnant women, but also to all employees with a need for medical leave because of family issues. The FMLA guarantees 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a baby or other family member to employees who have worked at least 12 months in a company of 50 or more. It also guarantees that the employee may return to their position without a break of service (Mathis & Jackson 459).

Analysis

In summary, the previous information discussed shows not only the importance of a woman's choices, but to what degree her choices impact career and family as well. The decision to prioritize career or family is not a black or while issue. Instead, a woman's preferences can visualized by a sliding spectrum. Unlike the recommendation of Felice Schwartz, this spectrum does not suggest that a woman must sort herself into a category based on her preferences. Conversely, her position on the spectrum predicts future events, such as work hours, family hours, promotion potential, salary potential, etc.



This spectrum shows extreme career orientation on the left and extreme family orientation on the right. Extreme career orientation represents those women who will sacrifice family completely for their career, while extreme family orientation represents those who are full-time mothers and housewives. Career/family orientation represents the "supermom" strategy, where women try to equally prioritize career and family, resulting in extreme stress and negative effects in both dimensions. The low incidence of part-time workers, the increased educational attainment of women, and the growing incidence of women in management positions suggest that more women prioritize somewhere between career and career/family, indicated on the spectrum by the grey region.

The spectrum shows just some of the ways that women must adjust their work and home lives, depending on their priorities. For example, a career-prioritizing woman devoting more time to market work would be more likely to pursue a full-time career. The amount of time devoted to work would also determine to what level she could be promoted and the income level she could reach. At the same time, she sacrifices time for housework and children. The opposite is true for women approaching the family orientation extreme.

An important point to note is that the spectrum makes all levels of employment available, leaving choice as the only variable. Though individual women may encounter barriers to achieving a high-level career, society as a whole does not discourage the general movement of women into careers. The laws discussed were created to improve women's employment opportunity. A woman that perceives these laws as ineffective may do so

because they are incongruent with her personal goals. For example, a career-oriented woman might be content with the ability to take 12 weeks off of work for maternity leave. This period gives her time to recover from childbirth, spend time with her infant, and arrange for child care before returning to work. However, a more family-oriented woman might view 12 weeks as too short of a period and desire to spend more time with her infant. For her, the law would be a hindrance that could influence her to pursue part-time work or exit the labor force completely.

The research shows that the number of women able to pursue a management career has grown significantly since the post-war period. More women are pursuing university and post-secondary education, giving them the educational qualification to be hired into upper management. Combined legislation from the Civil Rights Acts and Affirmative Action assert that, while women should be treated as equally as other employees, employers should recognize their diverse qualities and perspectives by striving to hire and promote them. Companies have initiated more flexible programs, in efforts to retain key female employees that have children. Therefore, the only factor that society or government cannot regulate is women's own priorities, and only the very career-oriented can make it to the top. As Sellers noted: "If these educated, accomplished, powerful women don't seek the biggest jobs, who is going to?" (82).

JAPAN

Historical Influence

Contrary to popular stereotype, women do work and have historically worked in Japan. According to Tipton, in the late 1800s, the family was a unit of production where the wife worked in the family farm or business in addition to doing housework. Wives were only restricted to domestic tasks in samurai families (210). And like the United States during World War II, women were actively recruited into the workforce while soldiers went to war. It wasn't until the war ended and soldiers returned to their jobs that the primary roles of mother and housewife were socially expected for a woman. During this period Japan saw the development of the role of "professional housewife," who made a career out of raising the children, educating the children, and managing the finances (Tipton 208). Even though some women, especially farmwomen during the off-season, continued to work in retail and factories during the '50s and '60s, it was considered a symbol of high-class status for the woman to stay at home (Broadbent 5). When a woman worked, it meant that her husband was not fulfilling his duty as the provider. This made staying at home a privilege of the upper-class, which put heavy pressure on middle-class women to also uphold this image, even if their family was not financially sound. Steinhoff and Tanaka reported that this image was not often a reality for a Japanese family, and wives often had to do piecework at home to inconspicuously supplement their husbands' income (80).

Around the same time of the women's liberation movements in the United States in the 1960's and 1970's, Japan saw the formation of a feminist movement and the development of women's groups. Among other rights, these groups sought more equal gender

representation and employment opportunities in business (Tipton 208). However, while the number of women entering the workforce has grown significantly since the '60s, it has mainly occurred in part-time jobs. For example, Broadbent indicated that women's participation in part-time jobs increased four-fold from 8.9% in 1960 to 32.5% in 1994, and women in 1989 filled 94% of part-time jobs (6-7). Additionally, while the amount of jobs created for women increased by 29% in the 1970s, 78% of these jobs were part-time positions (6). While this movement gave many Japanese women jobs, there was no security or career progression. Broadbent described how women workers were often called the "housewife workforce," that could be as easily downsized as it was developed. Part-time women workers were often viewed as a "safety valve" that could be adjusted at different points in the economic cycle (7). These practices were justified by the rationale that a woman's primary responsibility was in the home, and part-time work was only used to earn extra pocket-money.

Current Situation

Ideal Contradicts Workforce Reality

As a result of Japanese women's history since WWII, the social expectation for a woman can be described as "ryosai kenbo," or "good wife, wise mother" (Tipton 209). Society considers this the ideal role for a woman, and Miller reported that in the 80s and early 90s, it was "a universal opinion among [older men] that married women belonged in the home." However, workforce statistics show that this is not the case. In 1990, women of all age groups comprised 41% of the workforce (Steinhoff & Tanaka 79). Additionally, among women in the 20-24 age group, or those women coming out of college, 72.7% were working in 2001, showing that women of college graduate age are eager to work (Broadbent 4). The result of this contradiction between ideal and reality is the seeming non-existence of women managers, since their prevalence in business is so small, and the tendency of existing women managers to be concentrated in lower levels. Even in 1995, "women comprised 7.3% of lower level managers, 2.3% of section heads, and 1.5% of department heads" in a survey of nearly 2,000 Japanese companies (Broadbent 10).

Education

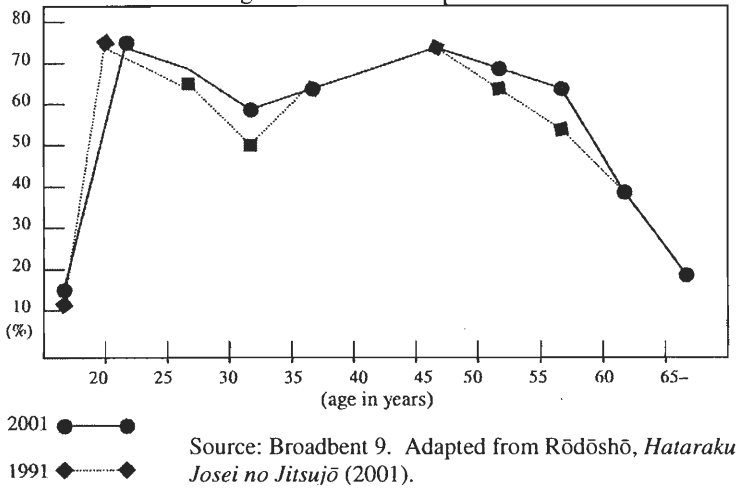
While Japanese children are especially driven and competitive when it comes to education, academic development of girls is a factor in discouraging them from pursuing careers before they even face adulthood. Tipton reported that, while a higher percentage of girls than boys continue on to upper-secondary school after compulsory education, fewer girls than boys attend "competitive high schools that would prepare them for entrance into a four-year university" (212). This is a reason why only 22.9% of four-year university students in 1996 were female, while the rest of women seeking higher education opted for the "less rigorous" 2-year institutions (212). Another factor, according to Japanese student Ayako Sasaki, is that not all women that attend 4-year universities pursue studies that lead to a management career. She described what Miller called "bridal departments," which were majors such as literature that were more likely to feed into clerical jobs.

The above information suggests that women's choices in which academic path to pursue are the initial barrier preventing women from having a career. Logically speaking, if only a quarter of 4-year university students are female, some of which who do not even study management-related majors, very few women are even qualified enough to be hired into a career after graduation. However, Miller wrote that women *have* made efforts to prepare themselves for management careers. For example, between 1990 and 1999, women's applications to the economics department of Keio University rose 111%, while applications to the business and commerce department rose 59%. This was at the same time as an economic boom that caused women's employment opportunities to decrease, leaving only 59.2% of female college graduates with jobs in 1999, and not all of them full-time positions. Therefore, in spite of unpromising economic conditions, women increasingly prepared themselves for full-time careers.

Workforce Transitions

According to Steinhoff and Tanaka, one of the reasons managers assume women are more family-oriented is because their behavior has historically supported this assumption. Up until the late 1980s/early 1990s, nearly 75% of women entered work immediately after college, worked through marriage, and then left their jobs to become mothers at around 27 years of age (80). Tipton added that, in many cases, women were encouraged to marry and have children before 25. This lead to their being nicknamed "Christmas cakes," since they were considered no good after the 25th (213). After raising children to school-age, Japanese mothers that previously worked tended to return to work. This pattern, shown in Figure 2, is known as the "M-shaped curve" and is characterized by the two peaks in women's employment: one in a woman's early twenties, and one in her late forties/early fifties. In between these peaks is a drop-off in employment that reaches its lowest in a woman's mid-thirties. Figure 2 shows that there has been a change in the curve over the past ten years. The proportion of women staying in the workforce during the child-bearing years has increased by nearly 10%, and more women have opted to stay in the workforce in their fifties (Broadbent 8-9).

Figure 2: The M-Shaped Curve



Source: Broadbent 9. Adapted from Rōdōshō, *Hataraku Josei no Jitsujō* (2001).

The flattening of the M-shaped curve is laden with underlying trends, including the changes in marriage age and birthrate. Tipton reported that in the 1990s, the average marriage age for women rose to 26. While Steinhoff and Tanaka noted that a majority of

women did not remain in the workforce long enough to pursue a management career, the upward shift in the marriage age left many women single well above the "Christmas cake" age. At the same time that women began delaying marriage, they also began delaying motherhood. Tipton described the "1.57 shock," which described the new record low birthrate in 1989 (213). Since birthrate fell below replacement levels, government officials encouraged women to have more children, in order to "provide the workforce for sustaining economic growth." However, this did not occur, and the birthrate fell to a new low of 1.33 in 2001 ("Japan Birthrate"). While many economic factors influenced the fall of the birthrate, simple time-conflict theory suggests that by having fewer children or delaying motherhood, women have more time to devote to work. This is critical for women pursuing a career, because a mother leaving the workforce for many years must return at part-time entry level and gives up the possibility of a full-time career (Steinhoff & Tanaka 81).

The Dual Track System

Because of the structure of women's work opportunities as determined by businesses, the choice of whether to focus more on career and family has a much larger effect in Japan. The "Dual Track System" supposedly proposed by Felice Schwartz and strongly opposed in the United States is the basis of Japanese business. Tipton described the Dual Track System as "a two-track recruitment and promotion system in which a recruit chooses to apply for either the managerial or the clerical track" (216). The main problem associated with this track is that the choices are such extremes. A woman that chooses to have a family does not have the time to meet the rigorous demands of a management career. Conversely, a career-oriented woman must devote too much time to work to also be a full-time parent.

The Career Track

The first half of the dual track system is the career track, where women begin with a company in an entry-level position in the management track. Since very few women pursue this track, only 3.5% in 2003, women are already singled out among the men in the office (Miller). A critical factor that affects women's decision whether to choose the career track is the expectation that she is expected to live up to the expectations for male employees if she is to succeed as a manager (Broadbent 17). Unfortunately for women, career expectations traditionally developed for a man leave little to no room for family. Broadbent explained that the typical career path for a man means "to join the company after graduation, undertake on-the-job and company-specific training and be promoted regularly on the basis of age and length of service and remain until retirement" (12). Lam added to this, indicating that a career track also involves "comprehensive job rotation and transfers for career development" (212). Outside of the office, Japanese employees are also expected to entertain clients at bars late into the night. These expectations convey the total commitment that managers must display to have a successful career. At the same time, the emphasis on length of employment and willingness to relocate leave little to no space for maternity or subsequent parental leave. For this reason, a 1996 Ministry of Labour survey showed that "59% of female managers [surveyed] were single, and of the remainder who were married, only 36% had children"

(Broadbent 17). Therefore, women who choose the management track in pursuit of top positions must prepare themselves for the possibility of never having children.

It would seem that the positive side of the career track is that it is the only opportunity in which women can get promoted to management positions. Extremely career-oriented women would be theoretically motivated and available to put in as much face time at work as men. However, a 1991 survey by the Society for the Study of Working Women indicated the following:

> "60% of women in the career track faced discrimination in wage and promotion opportunities compared with men. These women also reported feeling isolated at work, dissatisfied with their managers who did not support them adequately, and unhappy towards the company..." (Broadbent 16)

Therefore, the career track often leads to dissatisfaction with work at the expense of a family. This explains why Mitsuko Shimomura, a senior writer for Japan's leading newspaper, calls the career track "a lifelong trap" and explains, "Women have no interest whatsoever in getting caught in that crazy trap of working all the time for the corporation."

The Part-Time Track

The other side of the dual-track system, the part-time or "mommy track," does not offer women many advantages over the career track. Broadbent indicated that "part-time" work in Japan does not describe the number of hours worked, but instead an employment strategy for enforcing gender discrimination, since 54% of women employees work 35 or more hours per week and are still only considered part time (Broadbent 18). This means that women still need to work long hours that deter from family time, as in full-time work, but they are not rewarded accordingly. Tipton agreed with this, explaining that "part timers do not, for example, qualify for company pensions or paid vacations, and they receive smaller bonuses" (217). Part-time workers are not given job security and therefore are thought of as "cheap and easily disposable" (Broadbent 8). These workers are also not protected under laws governing part-time work. Therefore, since part-time workers can theoretically work the same amount of hours as full-time workers, the phrase "part-time" is only a misleading title used to exempt employers from paying benefits, resulting in adverse impact against women, the majority part-time group.

Legal Interventions

The Constitution and the Labor Standards Law

The Japanese constitution was created on November 3, 1946 and brought into effect on May 3, 1947. The section of the Constitution that mainly included women's issues was the Labor Standards Law (LSL), which "governs the relationship between labor and management" (Miller). Whereas the Constitution established equal rights by the state, Miller indicated that the LSL to extended the state-mandated prohibition of discrimination to the private sector. The LSL was adopted on April 7, 1947 and amended on September 30, 1998.

One section of the LSL provides for maternity protection and maternity leave to working mothers. The International Labour Organization describes this provision as providing a ban on heavy physical work and work with dangerous materials during and up to one year after childbirth. In regards to maternity leave, the LSL asserts: "a woman is excused from work within six weeks up to childbirth (...). Within 8 weeks after childbirth, there is in principle a ban on work, but the mother may return to work after 6 weeks, if upon her request and a doctor's approval" ("General"). The LSL also states that an employee cannot be terminated for "reason of marriage, pregnancy or childbirth, requesting child care leave, or during an employee's maternity leave and 30 days thereafter." Finally, the section concerning work hours states that the average work day is 40 hours per week and 8 hours per day. Though men are often expected to work long hours, the LSL provides that evening work "cannot be ordered to those workers who are raising a child and request to be excepted" ("General").

Miller reported that Japanese women debate the effectiveness of the LSL. One critical flaw of the LSL is that it does not explicitly prohibit against sex discrimination like the constitution does. Therefore, women are a protected class when it comes to the state, but not the private sector. Secondly, the LSL only explicitly states that employers should practice equal treatment of employees when wages are concerned. Miller explained that "since women are almost entirely excluded from men's work, the principle of equal pay for equal work is often inapplicable and, therefore, rendered useless." The provisions giving maternity leave and time off seem to give women job security when they have children, but on the other hand, they reinforce the idea in the minds of employers that women are not 100% committed to their jobs and will need time off eventually. While the maternity leave provision is necessary, since a leave of absence for childbirth is inevitable, the LSL could prevent employers from even wanting to hire women in the first place. Given these shortcomings of the LSL, why do women still support it? According to Miller, women are reluctant to give up the protection of the LSL over work hours. Given the norm that career-track employees need to work long hours, the LSL prevents employers from mandating overtime that would take away from the woman's responsibilities at home. This applies not only to mothers, but to married women who are responsible for housekeeping as well.

Equal Employment Opportunity Law

Since the LSL did not provide equal employment opportunity for women, only legalized discrimination against them, the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) was established in 1985 to "promote women's welfare and elevate the status of female workers" ("General"). Additionally, the EEOL had two main objectives: to prohibit blatant discrimination, and to exert "moral pressure on good practice employers" to go above and beyond the minimum standard of employment for women (Lam 209). The EEOL recognized that society put the responsibility of home life on women and that it had to help women balance work and family, instead of mandate that women work as if they were men. Additionally, it recognized that some of the protections given to women in the LSL, such as prohibition from work during times before and after pregnancy, were actually more effective in removing women from work.

The EEO law was successful in removing some barriers to women working. Lam wrote, "It is in job advertising that the most remarkable changes have taken place. The proportion of companies which excluded female job applicants declined from 41% in 1986 to 17% in 1987," only two years after instatement (210). Miller also wrote that the EEOL brought the issue of equal employment into society, and supporters of women working after having children doubled within 10 years after the instatement of the law.

On the other hand, critics of the EEOL argued that it actually harmed women's opportunities, because it defined those opportunities in vague terms. For example, a provision of the EEOL was that companies must "not exclude women." As interpreted by companies, this statement could be defined by the opposite, "must include women," but not in any quantifiable amount (Lam 208). So when recruiting new employees, employers could blatantly advertise that they intended to hire 70 males and 10 females, because it indicates an effort to hire any women at all. Therefore, the concept of equal opportunity was often determined by individual institutions and was dependent upon the "extent to which companies in general [were] prepared to comply with the stipulated requirements..." (209). This example also shows that the ambiguity of "equal opportunity" further removed women's rights to legally defend themselves against perceived discrimination. The more indirect forms of discrimination, such as purposefully hiring significantly fewer women than men, were covered under the EEOL as merely an effort to not exclude women. The result was that women who felt discriminated against no longer had a legal argument against the company. In its beginning, the EEOL had the potential to start bringing about change in social and business perceptions regarding women in careers. However, Miller emphasized,

> "The law had the potential to chill the possibility for social change by eliminating the role of the courts. At the very least, it allowed the government to determine, through its interpretation and enforcement of the law, at what pace that change would occur" (Miller).

Analysis

For the United States, women's choices were presented on a spectrum. This spectrum ranged from extreme family orientation to extreme career orientation. A major point made in this graph was the assumption that women's career progression is entirely dependent upon choice. The spectrum for Japan, on the other hand, shows what happens when choice must be made within the constraint of external barriers

As shown on the graph, women also have the ability to make a choice. As women become more career-oriented, they move closer to the career extreme at the expense family time. However, before women can reach the highest levels of career-orientation, they encounter a barrier, marked by the grey region. This is the barrier that so few

women have overcome in the pursuit of a management career. Meanwhile, the rest of working women remain on the family side.

Many factors contribute to the creation of the "ideal" society, still based on a male breadwinner ideal. The first is the structure of business itself. As previously discussed, the expectations for women are equal to those of men. Put another way, women must act as men to succeed in business. Japanese women in management are expected to work long hours, socialize after work, and devote their lives completely to their jobs. This leaves little room for anything outside of work and means that a woman has little time to devote to the home or family. As a result, Japanese women managers must essentially depart from their role as a woman and assume the role as a man. In this light, the above spectrum can reflect men's role as career-worker on the left and women's role as homemaker on the right. Crossing the barrier into a high career position can therefore be seen as the relinquishing of female identity, since a female career-worker cannot represent the "ideal" as imposed by society. This crossing also comes with the possible sacrifice of children, since raising children within the restraints of career commitment is nearly impossible, further departing a woman from her prescribed role.

Though Japan and the United States began after the war on similar ground, namely with a firm breadwinner model in place, the separation of work into gender roles is much more evident in Japan. This is in part due to the nature of Japanese society and its influence on change. Japanese culture focuses on a feeling of harmony and avoidance of confrontation. This has resulted in silent movement from both women and oppressors that has allowed little opportunity for extreme growth. For example, the increase of marriage age, the decrease of birthrate, the flattening of M-shaped curve and the pursuit of higher education show that women have collectively been putting themselves in a career-ready position, but their actions have not been drastic enough to challenge the steadfast ideals of the breadwinner society. Conversely, the indirect discrimination from supposed equal opportunity laws and male-oriented business structure discourage women from full-time careers without directly indicating so. Women's silent movements are met by silent oppression, so the barriers to career progression are disguised as women's own choices. Little consideration is given to the potential of women's career choices, were the system more flexible with women's role. This is why women's role changes are not as evident in a short-term focus as they are in a generational view. As Ms. Sasaki indicated, views for men and women concerning career and family experience change across generations instead of in the short-term. Following this perspective, significant change that will allow women managers to be a natural part of the workforce, as in the United States, will take much longer to achieve.

Overall, choice has a much different implication in Japan than it does in the United States. While American women are generally allowed choice within a full spectrum of opportunity, Japanese women are hindered by the boundary of the female role. Increasing the ability of Japanese women to pursue careers in the future depends not only on the choices of individual women, but the collective fight of all women to change the "ideal" society.

GERMANY

Historical Influence

The true beginning of the German influence on women in the workforce began during WWII. It was during this time that the Nazis tried to form their ideal of a perfect society. Like Japan, the Nazi regime valued the traditional family model and thought that women should stay home and raise children. However, this ideal was not the case of reality.

In fact, the Nazis found themselves with a conflict of interest. As much as they wanted women in the home, they also needed women to be publicly active representatives of the regime. Heineman described this conflict, saying "A never-married women could not have served as the symbol of German womanhood, but a wife could not have been an exemplary public figure: her first duty would have been to her husband" (38). For this reason, the Nazis chose to focus on young single women and teach them that, though it was their duty as a woman to marry and have children someday, it was their duty as a Nazi to serve the regime in the meantime. Thus began the "Year of Duty" program, in which women younger than 25 years worked for one year at practically no compensation. The idea was to introduce them to white- and pink-collar jobs, which they could obtain after the year was completed. Growth in this program was surged. Heineman reported, "Between February and July 1938, 77,400 young women completed a Year of Duty; 217,000 did so during the same period the following year" (41). The regime became dependent on its female workers, and in 1939, almost 90% of single women aged 20-29 worked (41).

However, the Nazi's efforts to keep married women in the home were not as successful as they had hoped. Marriage loans, which were allowed to families as long as the wife did not hold a paying job, did not deter women from working in the family business or doing work from the home. Heineman indicated that the proportion of married women in the female labor force increased from 29.9% in 1933 to 33.6% in 1939. Therefore, while the Nazi regime touted the preference for marriage and motherhood, the German economy was dependent on women (38-42).

After the war, the splitting of Germany into the eastern communists and the western democrats also split the ideals towards working and family. Because of the influence of communism by the Soviet Union, East German women were expected to continue working. This was mainly due to the fact that East Germany's crippled economy could not afford to have women *not* work. Therefore, Heineman indicated, "An extensive network of social benefits made it possible to juggle motherhood and employment even when no man was present..." (240). The growth of social benefits in the 1970s, including child care and maternity leave, helped keep more East German women in the economy. On the other hand, the main role of West German women continued to be that of a housewife, as it had been before the war. Opportunities to combine work and motherhood were fewer than in East Germany, and "although there were exceptions, most women seemed either to be wives and mothers or to be professionals and perhaps political activists" (240). Coincidently, after the reunification of East and West Germany

and the integration of East Germans into West German life, this is the ideal that has survived until present day.

Current Situation

This section will demonstrate how the structure of society, which supports the male breadwinner model, is also encouraged by women and their priorities. It will also focus on West Germany for any information presented before the German re-unification in 1990, since trends in the west more closely reflect trends in modern Germany. Additionally, the male breadwinner/female carer model displayed in West Germany more closely compares to U.S. and Japanese societies than the dual breadwinner model of East Germany.

Women's Employment

Gottschall and Bird supported the influence of West German ideals on present re-unified Germany, writing: "The historically dominant male breadwinner and female carer model in West Germany has resulted in comparably low female employment rates and a gender-structured labor market." Whether or not female employment rates are "low" is debatable, since 55% of all women and 46% of women with preschool children worked in 1994 (Wetzels 63). However, the question of choice again has a significant effect of the working status of women. According to Western Michigan University instructor Angelika Kausche, women in Germany actually prefer their role as mother. Pfau-Effinger supported this, writing that in 1992, 26% of West German women said that they would prefer to stay out of employment (184).

For the women who chose to work, composition of employment was split. Pfau-Effinger indicated that 35% worked full-time (186), while Blossfeld and Rohwer reported that nearly one-third of German women worked part-time in 1992 (170). While many factors could account for this split, Pfau-Effinger explained that women willingly sorted themselves into these groups, since only 35% of women actually wanted to work full-time (186). Blossfeld and Rohwer accounted for the choice of part-time work, saying: "There is plenty of evidence showing that [married women] give priority to family-centered non-market activities around which the part-time job must be fitted (170). The tendency for only a small percentage of women to choose full-time employment also has resulted in under-representation of women in management positions. In 1988, women only held 5.9% of top management positions and 7.8% of lower management positions (Antal & Krebsbach-Gnath 207).

Tendency to Leave the Workforce

The social norm for women to stay home with children has partly been instilled in employers because women actually do leave work to have children. Wetzels supported this in a study of women's tendencies to leave the workforce when having children. One part of Wetzels' study examined women's transitions into and out of the workforce with the birth of a child. Her study showed that, of the women surveyed, 32.6% worked prior

to *and* after the birth of the first child, while 41.9% worked and *did not* return afterward. This study showed that, while a majority of the women surveyed were employed before giving birth (75.5%), less than half of these women returned to work afterward. The other part of her study examined women's labor force participation both three months before and 24 months after the birth of a child, as shown in Figure 3. For West Germany, 72.9% of women studied were part of the labor force before the birth of their first child, while only 39.5% were back into the labor force afterward. This could be contributed to the fact that German women are allowed up to 36 months of maternity leave, as will be discussed later. However, even fewer returned to the workforce before the birth of their second child: only 37.3%. The trend for West German women in this study showed that more and more women dropped out of the labor force with each subsequent child.

Figure 3: Labor Force Participation

	Before 3 mo.	After 24 mo.
West Germany 1983-1992		
First Child	72.9	39.5
Second Child	37.3	36.1
Third Child	31.4	27.1

Source: Wetzels 71. Data compiled from the German Socioeconomic Panel

Social and Business Factors

The tendency for women to exit the workforce as explained above correlates with many factors in German society. In addition to the extensive leave given to working women, as will be described later, education, income disparity and the German tax system, and working status of husbands all support the male breadwinner model.

Education

Gottschall and Bird wrote that higher educational levels of women have caused female employment rates to grow. However, further investigation shows that, despite higher education, women are still a minority in careers with opportunities for managerial promotion. This is partly due to the fact that many women do not even complete college, but instead opt for vocational training, as 65% of women did in 1985 (210). The extensive German vocational training system, which combines classroom learning with apprentice-style work experience, does not feed women into corporate careers, but instead the stereotypically female support positions. For example, Antal and Krebsbach-Gnath reported in 1993 that women employees make up "86% of health services (excluding medical doctors and pharmacists), 79% of social services, 62% of retail, and 48% of teachers" (209). Gottschall and Bird claimed that the training program is actually split into a dual class system, putting men and women into their "natural vocations."

> This institutionalized arrangement distributes the majority of the male certificate holders into an occupationally organized labor market in the field of industry and commercial services with credential-based claims and career patterns and the majority of female credential holders into a less regulated feminized employment sector in the broad field of social support services with low income work and a sharp separation of semiprofessionals and professionals (Gottschall & Bird).

On the other hand, Antal and Krebsbach-Gnath reported that when looking for potential managers in the 41% of university students that were women in 1987, women were still primarily segregated into majors that did not lead into a management career. Over half of women university students were concentrated in majors such as arts and language. Additionally, during this time women made up 45% of unemployed college graduates, suggesting that higher education does not ensure greater job opportunities. This shows that, since companies put more emphasis on in-house training and not on acquired education, the ability of women to receive proper management training is dependent upon them getting hired into upwardly-mobile career positions in the first place. With the high incidence of women taking time off for children, as described previously, it can be inferred that an employer could be reluctant to hire a woman into a position where company expenditure on training could be wasted if she leaves the workforce. Antal and Krebsbach-Gnath supported this, saying: "If selection procedures filter women out in early career stages, they will not participate in training programs that are specifically designed as a basis for promotion" (210).

Income Disparity and Tax Benefits

Income disparity is a significant issue in women's employment, because it is a quantitative measure of the worth of women's work in comparison to her husband's. Logically speaking, if society encourages a single breadwinner, than the partner with the highest salary should continue working when a child enters the family. The approximately 30% gap between men's and women's earnings across all occupations occurs because of occupational gender segregation (Antal & Krebsbach-Gnath 210). As indicated previously, working women are more concentrated in positions with little training investment or upward mobility. If women are not in the same position as men to receive training and promotions, then an income disparity is inevitable. The second reason has caused a 20% gap between male and female managers and was described by Antal and Krebsbach-Gnath as "the unequal value society attaches to the work done by women and men" (212). As in the Unites States, this income disparity does not have one single cause, since the concept of "comparable worth" for similar jobs has been addressed by both countries.

While income disparity influences which spouse will concentrate on a career, the German tax system forces a family to question whether or not a woman's income actually makes a positive contribution. Wetzels indicated that the two incomes are added together and taxed at the husband's marginal tax rate. This way, a woman's additional income could push total income into a higher tax bracket, causing the couple to pay a higher tax rate. Therefore, Wetzels analyzed that "joint taxation encourages the second earner to specialize in home production as soon as there are differences in the earnings of both spouses" (25).

Husband's Occupation

The last social factor focuses on the effect of the husband's occupation in relation to his wife's. In a study by Blossfeld, Drobnic and Rohwer, they examined a woman's likelihood to leave the workforce for children as a function of husband's occupation. The researchers found, "When the husband has a much higher occupational position than his

wife – that is, when the differences in resources that the couple brings into the marriage are large – there is a tremendous influence on her likelihood to become a housewife (66). For example, the highest incidence for a woman to leave work occurred when a secretary was married to a physician. Conversely, the lowest incidences occurred when a secretary was married to a semi-skilled worker or a physician was married to a physician. These findings also reflect the above income disparity argument, since wives are more likely to work full-time when the husband cannot provide enough financial support (66). Another finding of the study showed that, though a woman might have extensive career resources, such as pay, education, benefits, etc., her husband's similar career resources might overshadow hers. Level of career resources for a women, the physician for example, only increased the likelihood that she would return to work part-time after child-leave (72).

Emphasis on Family

While the social factors help explain how society has shaped women's role, they do not account for women's general contentment with the system. According to Ms. Kausche, this is where women's family orientation plays a significant role. She indicated that family is a high priority for society as a whole, so pursuing a full-time career is not a primary goal for many women. For these family-oriented women, leaving the workforce is viewed more as an opportunity or privilege, of which some husbands are even envious. Pfau-Effinger supported this, writing that in 1991, only 24% of German women thought mothers of pre-school children should work (184). And unlike the United States, where material possessions are often an indicator of success, Ms. Kausche explained that a fulfilling German life does not require two incomes to fund it. Therefore, the social factors that encourage a breadwinner model are encouraged by women who want to take advantage of them.

Even businesses reflect this priority with the amount of free time given to all employees. In addition to the many public holidays, which amount to as many as 10 days annually, companies give employees as many as 30 personal days annually. This tendency reinforces the overall family priority in society, since it gives the breadwinners more time to spend with their families and demonstrates that work need not dominate all of employees' time.

Legal Interventions

The Mutterschutz and Erziehung Laws

The Mutterschutzgesetz, which literally means "mother protection law," was one of the first laws passed in West Germany that addressed protection of women's jobs during pregnancy. Passed in 1952 and modified over many years, the Mutterschutzgesetz mainly provided job security and acceptable leave for mothers (Krebsbach-Gnath & Antal 99). Provisions of the law include the following.

- *Fully paid* maternity leave 6 weeks before and 8 weeks after childbirth

- Right for mother to take leave up to 36 months after maternity period, with the first 24 months of leave compensated according to income (Krebsbach-Gnath & Antal 99).
- Income replacement after the 8th week of post-birth maternity leave though the end of the 36 month leave period. Income benefit per child was based on annual net family income before maternity leave.
- Same benefits for each subsequent child (Wetzels 30)

According to Gottschall and Bird, the income replacement was the most controversial part of the Mutterschutz. It essentially paid employees to be mothers for up to three years, sending the message that raising children was considered compensable work. As a result, mothers not working felt they should also be compensated for motherhood. Subsequently, the Mutterschutzgesetz was expanded in 1986 to cover more than just working mothers, and included the Erziehungsgeld ("Raising [children] Money") and Erziehungsurlaub ("Raising [children] Leave"). The Erziehungsgeld extended a "modest financial renumeration" to stay-at-home parents, even if they had not been employed, while the Erziehungsurlaub gave men the same right to work leave as women. According to Gottschall and Bird, "This was intended as a symbol of social recognition for the work of childcare. Additionally, some private companies have chosen to expand the Mutterschutzgesetz further by offering up to seven years of time off for maternity or paternity leave (Krebsbach-Gnath & Antal 100).

The Mutterschutz and Erziehungs laws have provided both positive and negative effects for working women, depending on a woman's career orientation. For women who want or need to work, the payments and extensive leave allow a woman more time to care for a child. However, these benefits can also be a hindrance to women applying to career-oriented jobs, since employers know that they will have to provide them, should the woman have children. Krebsbach-Gnath and Antal even suggested that employers can view women applicants as risky hires, so they prefer to hire them into part-time positions which require little training investment (101). According to Ms. Kausche, women who do want to pursue a career need to convince employers that they will be committed to work and will not take advantage of the lengthy time off allowed by the law. On the other hand, for family-oriented women, the laws make full-time motherhood so much of an acceptable profession that it is even compensated. It is for these women that the roles influenced by legal interventions are congruent with personal choices.

Analysis

Previously, two types of choice spectra have been discussed. The spectrum for the United States showed a range of choice not limited by external boundaries. Women's career progression could be achieved at the expense of other personal priorities, allowing the work and family balance to span the entire spectrum. The spectrum for Japan showed choice with an upper boundary. Choice based on priorities reached a maximum point, at which career progression no longer depended on a balance, but on the assumption of a whole new societal role. The spectrum for Germany represents a combination of these.

	Career	Family
Work	Full-time	None

As shown in the chart, women's choices can range from family orientation to career orientation, showing that women have the option to work full-time if they wish, as a small percentage of women do. The barrier in this case, shown by the line on the spectrum, is not entirely a barrier. It is a combination of social factors that influence women's decision to stay home with children and is partly viewed as more of a benefit than a barrier.

The benefit aspect of this upper boundary is a combination of social policy with social ideal. Unlike Japan, where work is the focal point of life, family is the main priority in Germany. Therefore, social policy that supports family is more widely accepted in Germany, since it is congruent with social ideal. Without the emphasis put on full-time work by society, women do not need a career for status. It then comes down to a simple question: If society values family over work, and the laws and business structure support this value, why should women try to fight the system? Aside from a personal desire to work, women have little incentive to try to balance full-time work with motherhood.

For women who do make the personal choice to pursue a full-time career, the boundary then might be seen as a barrier. As was discussed, the expectation for a women to leave work can result in employers' reluctance to invest in training her. Additionally, it sends the message that pursuit of a management career must be done at the expense of children, since social structure ~~since social structure~~ does not support full-time working mothers. This is a sacrifice that would be difficult to make in a family-oriented society. However, this also does not mean that a career *cannot* be achieved. It only shows that, to balance career and family, women must build a support network for help with child-raising duties, which is not available to all women.

Overall, the choice model for Germany shows that women have the opportunity to choose their level of career prioritization. Just only a minority of women choose to pursue a full-time career, since family-centered social policy supports the family-centered social ideal. Unlike the United States, social ideal influences more women to identify with family orientation. And unlike Japan, women are not as hindered by the barriers to career as they are contented with the opportunity to prioritize family.

CONCLUSION

This investigation has looked at three cultures that had similar situations after the end of World War II. Each saw the retreat of many women out of the wartime workforce and back into the home. Each had social ideals based on the male breadwinner model. And each has developed into a key market power, doing business with each other and the rest of the world. The analyses explained how these three countries, despite some similarities, developed women's roles in completely different ways.

In summary, women's role in the United States exists on a full spectrum of possibility, ranging from extreme career orientation to extreme family orientation. A woman's priorities are the main factor determining if she will achieve a full-time career. In Germany, the spectrum of women's choices also ranges fully from extreme career orientation to extreme family orientation. It is the social policies reflecting family values that discourage women from choosing a full-time career. Finally, the spectrum for women's role in Japan does not completely reach extreme career orientation, since full-time careers are still considered primarily a man's role. Pursuit of a career involves embodying the lifestyle of the other gender.

The critical question addressed in this investigation is the relationship between choice and social influence. As especially evident in the example of Japan, barriers can exist that allow women's choices to only take them so far. However, the conclusion of this report asserts that choice within societal boundaries is the most critical element for an individual woman in achieving her "work/family balance." A woman must first determine the importance of work and family in her own life, and then pursue a goal reflective of these values as much as society will let her. For a family-oriented woman in Germany, the choice is easy. The situation becomes more difficult for a career-oriented woman in Japan. In the United States, the sky is the limit – as long as women want it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a final note, much of the research also included advice for women in the United States on how to more effectively balance a full-time career with family, if that is the choice of the woman. Recommendations reflected each of the three following categories.

Family Friendly Companies

As previously stated, many companies are sensitive to the work/family issue and try to offer women more flexibility. These are the companies often named to *Working Mother's* 100 Best Companies for working mothers. The following are four main categories in which companies can make work more compatible with motherhood.

- *Time-based strategies*: These help employees manage their time and include flexible work hours, telecommuting, extra leave and personal days. With more time flexibility, women feel less constricted by their careers.
- *Information-based strategies*: These include programs for women that help them deal with work and family issues. Programs can include support groups, time management seminars, employee assistance programs, etc. When women have more information about their company and the options offered to them, they are better able to make decisions about their lives.
- *Money-based strategies*: These efforts help women with financial planning as it pertains to a family. These include insurance, flexible spending accounts, tuition reimbursement, etc. While conflicts from work and family can reduce a woman's potential future earnings, these strategies help her manage finances effectively.
- *Direct services*: Services include programs offered by the company that directly help a woman with work/family conflicts, such as on-site daycare, sick child

> leave, before/after school programs, etc. Not only do these programs help women manage time, but they also show the organization's commitment to parent assistance (Thompson & Beauvais 172-3).

Networks and Mentors

According to Fagenson and Jackson, women can gain more support by finding other women with whom to relate.

> Research consistently shows that women in organizations obtain mentors at the same rate as men and experience the same benefits as male protégés: they enjoy more promotions and power, greater job mobility, recognition, satisfaction, and easier access to powerful individuals in the organization than nonprotégés (Fagenson & Jackson 396).

By finding a mentor with similar experiences and building a network of both women and men, women build a support system that can help them work through work/family issues.

Open Communication

Perry asserted that clear communication between employee and employer is critical to helping the organization understand women's work and family goals. This includes informing supervisors about pregnancy, clearly communicating work goals after childbirth, training a replacement well in advance, and developing a system to ease back into work. When a company knows that a woman considers work a priority, it is less likely to assume that she will leave work after childbirth and more likely to provide assistance to accommodate her dual role.

These recommendations are only a few in the many steps a woman can take to balance family with work. Additionally, these recommendations do not only apply to the United States. As more women decide to work in the future, these general principles are tools that career-oriented women can use to overcome barriers still remaining in society, whether on an individual or collective level.

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