LIFESTYLE AND LEVEL OF FAMILY FUNCTIONING
IN DUAL CAREER FAMILIES WITH PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

By

DAVID A. SPRUILL

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL
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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

LIFESTYLE AND LEVEL OF FAMILY FUNCTIONING IN DUAL CAREER FAMILIES WITH PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

By

David A. Spruill

August 1990

Chairman: Margaret L. Fong
Major Department: Counselor Education

Little is known about the level of family functioning in dual career families or about the distribution of lifestyle types based on the division of labor in the home. The purpose of this study was to examine the distribution of dual career couples among lifestyle types, to assess the level of functioning among the dual career couples, and to determine the relationship between lifestyle type and levels of functioning in dual career couples. Fifty dual career married couples with preschool children participated in the study. A dual career couple was defined as a married couple in which both spouses were employed full time and were committed to occupational careers and to maintaining a family life together. Participants completed questionnaires assessing the division of labor in the home and levels of family functioning. The couples were
classified into one of four lifestyle types based on the participation of spouses in parenting and household management tasks.

Couples were distributed among all four lifestyle types with 72% reporting the sharing between spouses of some aspect of household management and parenting tasks. Participants in this study reported levels of family functioning that were well within normal limits for non-clinical families.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was computed to determine if there were significant differences in levels of functioning among lifestyle types. There were no significant differences in level of functioning among lifestyle types in this sample.

Conclusions were that, although inequality exists in the division of labor in dual career married couples, the gap is narrowing and that men are increasingly assuming more responsibility for both household management and parenting tasks. Based on levels of functioning, there were no detectable differences between the dual career married couples in this sample and the non-clinical sample used in developing the norms for the Family Assessment Measure.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Dual Career Families

The focus of this study was on the dual career family, a family structure in which both the husband and the wife are committed to occupational careers and to maintaining a family life together (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). The dual career family is a small, but significant, subset of a larger family grouping known as the dual earner family. Dual earner families are families in which both husband and wife were earners at some time during a calendar year (Hayghe, 1982), while in a dual career family, the paid employment of each spouse requires a high degree of commitment and has a continuous developmental character (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

In 1987, there were 33.84 million married couples with earners in the United States. Of these couples, dual earner families represented 14.96 million or 51%, and traditional families represented 9.6 million or 32.6% (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1989). Hayghe (1982) reported that in 1980 dual career families represented 12% of all married couples with earners and predicted these families to increase proportionately by 7% per year. Young (1980) predicted that traditional families will continue to
represent increasingly smaller proportions of married couples with earners.

Ironically, despite the prevalence of this family type, dual career families are considered non-traditional family patterns in the American culture (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976; Sekaran, 1986). In fact, because the dual career family is a relatively new and different family lifestyle, there is much concern for the adaptability of the family and the long term effects of this new family lifestyle.

Research on the larger family grouping of dual earner families is in its infancy. Although general knowledge of the characteristics of dual earner families and the impact of this lifestyle currently exist, less is known about the dual career family and the variations within this family type.

The dual career family lifestyle is thought to be associated with significant stress and strain (Cherpas, 1985; Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Hester & Dickerson, 1981; Knaub, 1986; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971; Sekaran, 1983, 1986; Skinner, 1980). Although sources of stressors are found in many life situations, they are thought to be particularly acute in this lifestyle because of work/role overload, role conflict, and multiple role cycling (Hall & Hall, 1979; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).
In their pioneer qualitative study of five dual career families, Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) identified five sets of socially structured sources of strain for dual career families: (a) overload dilemmas (more demands and commitments than the time to accomplish them), (b) normative dilemmas (discrepancies between personal and societal norms concerning right and proper behavior), (c) identity dilemmas (conflict between early gender role values and current wishes and practices), (d) social network dilemmas (conflicts between the desire to establish and maintain social relationships outside the family and the shortage of actual free time to pursue them), and (e) role-cycling dilemmas (the meshing of the various demands and cycles of personal and career roles).

Subsequent research on the dual career family has been largely speculative and focused mainly on the negative effects of this family lifestyle. Most researchers consider dual career families as a general family type, with little concern for the variety of individual differences which may exist within this family type. Thus, other than this limited, descriptive data of dual career couples as a single category, little knowledge exists about lifestyle types and family functioning and their relationships within dual career couples. It is also not
known what role these variations play in the adaptability and stress of dual career families.

According to Gilbert (1985), common stressors in dual career couples include (a) whether and when to have children, (b) how many children, (c) combining occupational and family roles, (d) child care, (e) concepts of equity, (f) occupational mobility, and (g) occupational prejudice and sex discrimination. These strains can result in lowered marital satisfaction (Sekaran, 1986), perceptions of inequity (Rice, 1979), role conflict (Regan & Roland, 1985), competition (Hall & Hall, 1979), and lowered job and life satisfaction (Sekaran, 1985).

At present, there is no integrated major system to describe variations in dual career families (Cherpas, 1985). The literature describes various classification systems which suggest variations in focus of energy on home versus work (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971), method of interaction with home and work (Hall & Hall, 1979), and role patterns (Hunt & Hunt, 1982; Sekaran, 1986). These typologies, although interesting, were not empirically based or developed.

An initial step in empirical validation of family types has been reported by Cormier et al. (1988). Basing their typology on division of labor in the home, they developed an instrument to measure participation in
household and parenting tasks. A study of 166 dual employed couples was conducted to provide reliability and validity data. For the study, the couples had to have at least one child under the age of 18 living at home, and both partners had to be employed outside the home at least 20 hours per week. Instruments were developed to measure participation in household and parenting tasks, perception of equity or fairness in the distribution of these tasks, and the costs and benefits of the dual career lifestyle. Additionally, data were gathered measuring stress levels, dyadic adjustment, and use of coping skills. From the analysis of the couples responses, four types of lifestyles emerged: traditional, in which parenting and household management tasks are not shared between spouses; shared, in which both parenting and household management tasks are shared between the spouses; participant-household, in which only household management tasks are shared between spouses, and participant-parenting, in which only parenting tasks are shared between spouses. These lifestyle types were then examined to determine their relationships with stress, dyadic adjustment, and perceived equity in the marital relationship.

Cormier et al. (1988) reported finding less stress, more equity, and greater dyadic adjustment in dual employed couples classified as shared, while couples classified as
traditional had higher stress levels and the least amount of equity. Of particular interest was the finding that between the participant-household and participant-parenting types, women in the participant-household group reported lower adjustment levels. Cormier et al. suggested that, because these women are performing more of the parenting tasks, these tasks may be more demanding and thus become a source of greater stress. The researchers concluded that "division of parenting tasks may be a crucial issue in understanding the conflicts experienced by dual employed couples" (p. 2). They further suggested that there is a crucial link between household task distribution and overall adjustment of the dual employed couple.

The four dual employed family lifestyle types developed by Cormier et al. (1988) have provided a useful framework for examining dual career families as well. Research is needed to investigate the impact of parenting and levels of functioning on the four family lifestyle types identified by Cormier et al. In this study, these four family lifestyle types refer to dual career families.

**Parenting in Dual Career Families**

Parenting is a commonly used term which describes several different roles. Hamner and Turner (1985) pointed out the difficulty of defining parenting roles and the lack of consensus concerning appropriate parenting competencies.
Brooks (1981) defined parenting as a process that includes nourishing, protecting, and guiding the child through the course of development. Most parents have little or no training to be parents. This is compounded by the lack of agreement among experts as to what constitutes effective parenting.

Major parenting issues for dual career parents include the consideration of two careers, less available time and energy, a greater degree of complexity, and less overall flexibility to meet childhood crises and needs. Parenting in dual career families has been examined largely in terms of its negative impact on marriage and family. The primary focuses of parenting studies have included marital adjustment and marital satisfaction (Skinner, 1980); effects of maternal employment on the child (Hoffman & Nye, 1974); role functions and perceptions (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1982); division of child rearing responsibilities (Gilbert, 1985); and stresses, strains, and coping strategies (McCubbin et al. 1980).

One of the specific difficulties of being a dual career parent is that family models developed and supported by social institutions engaged in health, education, recreation, and policy affecting the family are largely based on the traditional family (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Holmstrom, 1972; Jones & Jones, 1980; Russo, 1987; Skinner,
1980). The resulting lack of models based on the dual career family requires the development of ad hoc solutions by trial and error (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

The lack of societal and cultural guidelines further increases the confusion and anxiety faced by dual career parents. Raush, Greif, and Nugent (1979) pointed out that, as a result of this diffusion, "modes of relation in marriage and family have become matters to be worked out by each individual unit rather than prescribed givens. A massive burden is thus placed on communication" (p. 469). Communication is considered the most important parenting skill, but is also the most difficult to learn and use consistently (Hamner & Turner, 1985; Wagonseller & McDowell, 1979).

Relatively little is known about parenting in dual career families. Studies of parenting in dual career couples frequently focus on the negative impact of parenting in this lifestyle. This parallels the primary research focus on the dual career family lifestyle. An alternative view would be to examine the characteristics of healthy family functioning and their relationship with the dual career family and parenting within this lifestyle.

**Family Functioning**

Conceptualizing the family as the unit of study represents a major contribution to the field of family
therapy (Barnhill, 1979). Initial research was largely focused in the area of family psychopathology. Only recently have researchers begun to examine and isolate the dimensions of healthy family functioning (Fisher, Giblin, & Regas, 1983).

Barnhill (1979) examined the literature on concepts of healthy family functioning and identified eight dimensions:

1. individuation versus enmeshment,
2. mutuality versus isolation,
3. flexibility versus rigidity,
4. stability versus disorganization,
5. clear versus unclear or distorted perception,
6. clear versus unclear or distorted communication,
7. role reciprocity versus unclear roles or role conflict, and
8. clear versus diffuse or breached generational boundaries.

Basing his assumptions on the concept of mutual causality and on reinforcing the importance of the family as the unit of study, Barnhill (1979) concluded that "a family, by improving functioning in one or a few areas will likely improve its functioning in the others" (p. 97).

The concept of healthy family functioning has been characterized by the variety of perspectives used by researchers. Defining normality or health represents a
relatively new dilemma for researchers. In their classic study of family functioning, Offer and Sabshin (1966) noted the diversity of viewpoints and approaches to these issues. Following their thorough review of the literature, they identified four basic perspectives used by researchers in defining "normality" or health: (a) health defined as the absence of overt pathology; (b) health defined as "optimal functioning" determined by a theoretical system; (c) health defined as average functioning; and (d) health defined as process, a perspective which takes into account the changes in systems over time.

Grotevant and Carlson (1989), in their recent review of self-report measures of whole-family functioning, also noted the lack of consensus among family theorists concerning the constructs of family functioning. From the variety of constructs, they identified five common areas: structure, process, affect, orientation, and other.

Levels of family functioning were initially assessed in terms of pathology, with families lying at either end of the healthy versus dysfunctional scale. Researchers are beginning to view the functioning of families as falling on a continuum. Beavers (1977) described family functioning as falling at three distinct points on this continuum: severely disturbed, midrange, and healthy. Others described effective family functioning in terms of a
curvilinear relationship (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985). In the circumplex model, healthy families are thought to be those with balanced levels of cohesion and adaptability rather than at extreme ends of these two dimensions (Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1979).

As previously noted, there are a variety of viewpoints defining the constructs of family functioning. One such viewpoint was incorporated in the Process Model of Family Functioning (PMFF), which included Offer and Sabshin's (1966) definition of health as process and is based on family dynamics and the interactions between individual subsystems and the family system. This model emphasized the importance of examining family interactions from a variety of levels and relationships: the family as a system, dyadic relationships, and individual family members (Steinhauer, Santa-Barbara, & Skinner, 1984). Steinhauer et al. (1984) identified seven dimensions of healthy family functioning based on their Process Model of Family Functioning: task accomplishment, role performance, communication, affective expression, affective involvement, control, values and norms.

The PMFF was designed to go beyond other models of family functioning in three ways. First, by emphasizing the interaction between the major constructs of family functioning, not only family structure but family process
is described. Second, both the family system and the individual subsystems within the family system are incorporated. Third, an attempt to define the interface between the family and the social system in which it operates is made (Steinhauer et al., 1984).

Using the PMFF allows researchers to measure specific relationships within a family system. Thus, dyadic relationships such as parent-child relationships can be assessed and compared with assessments of the family as a unit.

Another perspective on family functioning is provided in the Beavers Systems Model of Family Functioning (Beavers, 1977). This model consists of two major constructs, family health/competence and family style. The construct of family health/competence represents the overall level of family functioning. It is based on the concept of negentropy, which is the amount of energy available for productive work (Beavers, Hulgus, & Hampson, 1988). According to Beavers et al. (1988), families are considered most competent when they "have maximum organization and available energy to bring to bear on adaptive challenges (negentropy)" (p. 3).

Families are divided into three categories, according to the amount of negentropy present (Beavers et al., 1988). Seriously disturbed families have the least amount of
negentropy and are characterized by poor boundaries, confused communication, lack of shared attentional focus, stereotyped family process, despair, cynicism, and denial of ambivalence. Midrange families are relatively clear in structure and organization but are also rigid and have difficulty adapting to change. These families are characterized by relatively clear communication, constant efforts at control, interpreting loving as controlling, distancing, anger, anxiety, depression, and handling ambivalence by repression.

The third category is the healthy family. Healthy families are highly negentropic and try to maintain structure with flexible, adaptive functions. The characteristics of the healthy family are thought to be negotiation skills, individual choice, ambivalence, respect, warmth, intimacy, and humor.

The second construct of this model, family style, refers to "the degree to which the family has a strong, inner orientation and gratifies itself within the family or within the outside world" (Fredman & Sherman, 1987, p. 35). The dimensions of this construct are thought to range from centripetal (inner-focused) to centrifugal (outer-focused) (Beavers et al., 1988). Centripetal family members seek emotional support from within the family; centrifugal family members seek emotional support from outside the
family. Beavers et al. suggested that competent families tend to be more or less centripetal or centrifugal, with poorly functioning families found at the extremes of this dimension.

The assessment of family functioning represents an important advance in family research. What is now needed is to examine perspectives on the family to determine which factors influence family functioning. Other variables would include family lifestyle type and parenting relationships. This will assist professionals in more fully understanding the family as a system by providing the basis for more informed diagnosis and intervention and forming the foundation for family life education programs (prevention).

**Statement of the Problem**

An examination of the relationship between levels of family functioning and dual career family lifestyle type was the focus of this investigation.

The major emphases of research on the dual career couple has been in the areas of marital adjustment, marital satisfaction, the effects of maternal employment on the child, stresses and strains, coping strategies, and role functioning (Baruch, Beiner & Barnett, 1987; Benin & Agostinelli, 1988; Cherpas, 1985; Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Knaub, 1986; Leslie & Anderson, 1988; Skinner, 1980). The
effects of both parents pursuing a career on their respective parenting roles are not known. Research on parenting within the dual career family is scant, with most existing studies descriptive in nature. Few dual career family researchers have designed empirically based studies, and few have attempted to measure relationships between key variables. This paucity of research is especially acute in the dual career parenting area.

There has been no attempt in the dual career family literature to link key elements of family functioning. Although there exists ample evidence of the importance of these key family variables, their interrelationships have not been empirically tested. The research on family lifestyle types by Cormier et al. (1988) is promising and provides a useful framework for examining the relationship of dual career family lifestyle types with levels of family functioning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between dual career family lifestyles and levels of family functioning in dual career couples with preschool children. Specifically, the four family lifestyle types identified by Cormier et al. (1988) were related to the seven dimensions of family functioning based
on the Process Model of Family Functioning (Steinhauer et al., 1984).

Research Questions

This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the distribution of lifestyle types in terms of parenting and household management behavior among dual career married couples with preschool children?

2. What are the levels of family functioning in dual career married couples who have preschool children?

3. What is the relationship between levels of family functioning and dual career family lifestyle types?

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of clarity, definitions of the following words are provided:

Career is defined as any sequence of jobs that require a high degree of commitment (a large investment of time and energy and job training), high personal salience, substantial ego involvement, and that have a continuous developmental character (where advances in responsibility, power, pay, and status accrue over time) (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

A dual career married couple is a married couple in which both spouses are employed full time and are committed
to occupational careers and to maintaining a family life together (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

A dual career family with preschool children is a dual career married couple who have at least one pre-school age child who is the product of this marriage or was adopted by the married couple.

A preschool age child is a child with an age ranging from 2 years through 5 years.

Dual career family lifestyle type refers to a typology of four family lifestyles developed by Cormier et al. (1988). Types are based on the division of labor for parenting and household management duties. In this study, these types refer to dual career family lifestyle types. Specifically, these are (a) traditional, dual career families in which the parenting and household management tasks are not shared; (b) shared, dual career families in which both spouses participate equally in parenting and household management tasks; (c) participant-household, in which both spouses share household management but not parenting tasks; and (d) participant-parenting, in which both spouses share parenting but not household management tasks.

Family functioning is defined as an overall measure of family strengths and weaknesses based on the Process Model of Family Functioning (Steinhauer et al., 1984).
Organization of the Study

The remainder of this dissertation is presented in four additional chapters. In Chapter II, the related literature is reviewed and analyzed. In Chapter III, the methodology of the study is presented, including a description of the population and sample, the sampling procedure, the instruments, the data collection procedures, and the data analyses. In Chapter IV, the findings of this study are presented. The final chapter, Chapter V, consists of a discussion and interpretation of the results, limitations of the study, implications of findings, and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Presented in this chapter is literature relating to dual career families, parenting in dual career families, family lifestyles, and levels of family functioning. Major relative themes of interest to be reviewed include the prevalence, characteristics, and major issues of dual career families, with particular attention to the parenting role. Then, literature relating to family lifestyle types is presented followed by a review of literature on family functioning.

Dual Career Families

Gilbert and Rachlin (1987) reported three variations of the nuclear family structure based on marital relationships and career development: the traditional family, the dual earner family, and the dual career family. The traditional family is defined as one in which the husband is the sole provider and the wife is a full-time homemaker. Gilbert and Rachlin classified a dual earner family as a family where both spouses are employed; however, both are not pursuing careers. Jobs are distinguished from careers by having limited advancement opportunities, hourly wages, and few significant pay
increases based on achievement or length of employment (Hertz, 1986). Although one spouse (usually the male) may be involved in pursuing a career, the other is employed at a job or both may be working at jobs (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987).

The term dual career family was first used by Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) following their 1968 research study of what was then considered an aberrant family pattern. They defined the dual career family as a family structure in which both the husband and the wife are committed to occupational careers and to maintaining a family life together. The term career refers to employment which requires a high degree of commitment and has a continuous developmental character (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). Wilensky (1960) further described careers as most commonly beginning at a salaried level in the organization and providing a clear path for advancement to increasingly higher levels of responsibility, authority, and reward.

Sekaran (1986) stated that a major characteristic of dual career couples is the approach to the work situation. According to Sekaran, dual career spouses have a commitment to keep up with developments in the field and an expectation of upward or lateral mobility not demanded of other job-holders. It is this career salience (i.e., the level of commitment to the career and the extent to which
the career is a vital part of one's life) that is the distinguishing factor of the dual career couple (Cormier et al., 1988; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976; Sekaran, 1983). Pogrebin (1975) further defined the dual career couple in terms of the equal priority and seriousness given to the careers of both spouses. In contrast, in dual earner couples, the husband's career success is the concern of both partners.

Disagreeing with Sekaran and others, Hall and Hall (1979) asserted that the distinguishing features of the dual career couple are their attitudes and experiences related to work. They stated that commitment to work is not an important factor; it is the amount of time spent in work roles that defines and distinguishes the dual career couple from the dual earner couple.

Such broad definitions of dual career couples obviously invite numerous interpretations by researchers. It is characteristic in the literature on dual career couples to have different definitions used by each researcher. Common to most definitions is a commitment by both partners to occupational careers and to maintaining a family life together (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) described dual career families as a variant pattern in the culture. Although the numbers of dual career families are steadily increasing,
current statistics would suggest that dual career families continue to be a variant family pattern in our culture in that they still represent a small proportion of the larger group of dual earner families.

With respect to traditional, dual earner, and dual career families, Young (1980) reported that the percentage of traditional families has been dropping and this trend is expected to continue. In 1987, out of a total of 33.84 million married couples with earners in the United States, there were an estimated 14.96 million or 51% dual earner families. Traditional earner families represented only 9.6 million or 32.6% of all married couples (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1989). Hayghe (1982) reported that in 1980 dual career families represented 12% of all married couples with earners and predicted that the number of dual career families will increase by 7% each year.

Characteristics of Dual Career Families

The dual career family lifestyle is identified by the support and investment of the family in both career and family responsibilities and is associated with reward and pain (Hester & Dickerson, 1981). Because each spouse is concerned with pursuing a career and maintaining a family life together, there are demands for a large investment of time and energy.
Despite the disagreements on precise definitions of the dual career couple, there is rather uniform consensus among researchers that the dual career family differs from the traditional family in significant ways. In her study of dual career and traditional couples, Holmstrom (1972) found dual career couples to be less family oriented and more career oriented and to have fewer children than traditional families. Rice (1979) described the traditional family as having more stereotypical and rigid role functions when compared to the high degree of role sharing common among spouses in many dual career families. In the traditional family, the male partner is expected to perform the instrumental functions, with the female partner responsible for the expressive functions.

Early research conducted on dual career families was primarily descriptive in nature, with a focus on women (Gilbert, 1985; Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987). Researchers reported a greater discrepancy for women than for men between the dual career lifestyle and traditional social and marital role patterning (Rice, 1979). In contrast to men, dual career women often are expected to add their career to the jobs they already pursue, that is, housewife and mother.

Recent research on the characteristics of the dual career lifestyle has an emphasis on the stresses and
strains of this lifestyle and how the stresses are managed (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987, Skinner, 1980). Other major characteristics described in the research literature are the marital relationship, the effect of maternal employment on the children, coping strategies, and role functions.

**Stresses and Strains**

As noted earlier, pioneering research was conducted by Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) who studied in great detail the structure, problems, and coping strategies of five dual career families. Their in-depth interview data resulted in the identification of five socially structured sources of strain for dual career families: (a) role overload dilemmas (resulting from the multiple roles held by the couple as spouses, jobholders, friends, parents, relatives, etc.); (b) normative dilemmas (resulting from the differences between the dual career lifestyle and the normative behaviors prescribed by society); (c) identity dilemmas (resulting from the confusion between roles prescribed by society and the roles acquired in the dual career family lifestyle); (d) social network dilemmas (resulting from the reduced time available for social interaction); and (e) role-cycling dilemmas (resulting from the conflict regarding whether work or family should take preference in given situations).
Although based on only five families, this list of stresses was accepted as complete and became the framework for subsequent research on dual career role strain. The five major dilemmas described by Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) provide a useful framework for examining the stresses of the dual career lifestyle.

**Overload Dilemmas**

Overload strain, often termed accumulative role strain, has been well documented as a source of stress for dual career couples (Bebbington, 1973; Hall & Hall, 1979; Sekaran, 1986) and for married, working women in particular (Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987).

Typical of the literature, Rice (1979) noted that pressure or overload most often is the result of the demands of the multiple roles assumed by dual career couples who are often faced with intense and constant pressure from both work and family worlds. Stress can come from having too many role demands or from excessive demands from fewer roles. A strong achievement orientation can create overload from both partners being intensely involved in their respective careers (Rice, 1979). This results in relationships that are often strained to intolerable levels (Hall & Hall, 1979).

Rice (1979) identified three prominent personality characteristics which serve as stressors in dual career
couples: (a) need for achievement, (b) strong narcissistic and/or self-esteem enhancement needs, and (c) difficulties in forming a sustained interpersonal commitment. Relying primarily on data from dual career couples in therapy, Rice concluded that these characteristics are strongly interconnected and influence the roles and functions of the dual career couple and family.

According to Rice (1979), these characteristics are difficult to achieve and maintain in the dual career family. Although the high value placed on their chosen lifestyle allows dual career couples to weather many stressful events with less difficulty than more traditional married couples, without periods of balance in the relationship, there may be a perception of inequity in the relationship and subsequent marital conflict.

Identity Dilemmas

At the heart of identity strain in dual career couples are the differences in marital roles. In dual career couples, both partners have a high degree of power in the relationship (Rice, 1979). This contrasts with traditional couples in which the husband usually has a greater amount of power due to his higher occupational and educational status. Issues of power are exacerbated in dual career couples due to the wife not being entirely dependent on her husband for financial support. This allows each partner to
bring power struggles out into the open and allows them greater freedom in choosing whether or not to remain in the marital relationship (Rice, 1979).

Holmstrom (1972) expanded on knowledge of the identity dilemmas experienced in dual career couples in terms of the discrepancy between dual career family role structure and roles prescribed by society. Based on interviews with 27 dual career couples and 7 traditional couples, Holmstrom identified three major societal barriers which increase the confusion created between cultural and assumed roles in dual career families: (a) the rigidity of occupations, (b) the isolation of the nuclear family (accompanied by the virtual demise of the extended family), and (c) the "current equation of masculinity with superiority" (p. 1) (which results in unequal treatment of career women/mothers and an emphasis on the career of the men/fathers).

The overriding barrier, according to Holmstrom (1972), is the gender bias which equates masculinity with superiority and femininity with inferiority. Although it is an assumption that neither partner in a dual career family relationship will subordinate their career to the other, women in a dual career family pattern often are expected to subordinate their career to their husband's career when the two careers are in conflict. Dual career women also have fewer job opportunities, frequently with
lower job titles or lower pay for the same work as men. Women are also socialized to be dependent, less achievement oriented than men, and to fear success (Holmstrom, 1972). Compounding this is the lack of societal organizations and sanctions to provide solutions to difficulties experienced from these barriers (Holmstrom, 1972).

Role Cycling Dilemmas

Conflict in dual career couples has as its primary source the conflict between work and family worlds. In what Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) described as role cycling dilemmas, the conflict may come in the form of role demands such as may occur when both partners must travel at the same time, or the conflict between ideal and actual standards. Hall and Hall (1979) found that "for many of us, stress is caused by the feeling that we are not living up to the standards we have set for ourselves, as parents, partners, or professionals. Guilt and a sense of failure often accompany the stress" (p. 95).

In their early research studies on conflict in dual career marriages, Poloma (1972) and Garland (1972) found that dual career couples minimize marital conflict, primarily by the wife accommodating to domestic responsibilities and assuming multiple roles. Wives were reportedly satisfied with assuming a more traditional
marital role structure and expressed a willingness to subordinate their careers to that of their husbands.

In more recent studies, Gilbert (1985), Johnson and Johnson (1977), and Rice (1979) suggested that earlier findings do not hold up and that contemporary women are not satisfied with assuming traditional roles in dual career families and instead strive to achieve more equitable marital and career role structures.

Social Network Dilemmas

The limited time available for socializing is a major stress source for dual career couples. Deliberate choices must be made concerning who will be included and who will be excluded from their social network. Often these decisions are painful to make and result in anger, guilt, and resentment.

Another major source of stress identified by Rice (1979) is the management of support systems. In dual career couples, little time is available for domestic tasks. Increasingly, outside help is purchased to complete domestic tasks. Conflicts arise concerning the type and extent of domestic help desired and the fragile nature of these support systems. The lack of backup systems is especially acute in dual career couples with young children who must rely on day care services.
Normative Dilemmas

Often, the differences between socially prescribed roles and the roles assumed in dual career families are a source of stress. In general, society does not yet support the dual career family lifestyle (Gilbert, 1985). It is this lack of environmental or societal approval which creates additional stress for dual career couples. Examples of this lack of support can be found in the lack of quality day care services, negative attitudes from employers, the lack of flexible scheduling for dual career parents, and the absence of any overall family policies (Gilbert, 1985). For many dual career couples, the discrepancies between assumed roles and those supported by the culture create a large degree of stress.

Taking a somewhat different approach, Bebbington (1973) sought to explain why families voluntarily choose to adopt the dual career family lifestyle, given the significant amount of strain associated with this family pattern. Using self-report data from 14 dual career couples, he distinguished between two kinds of dual career family stress: internal and external. He proposed that internal strains such as work overload, identity, and role-cycling dilemmas develop within the family. External strains such as normative and social network dilemmas
represent the conflict between the dual career family and the prevailing social norms.

Bebbington (1973) also compared background characteristics of the dual career couples in his sample with 25 traditional couples. Significant differences were found between the childhood backgrounds of dual career and traditional wives. The early socialization experiences of dual career wives included a great deal of stress. Bebbington concluded that this stressful background of individuals creates a tension with conventional patterns which then produces the conditions leading to the development of dual career family patterns. It is these unique personal characteristics which, according to Bebbington, explain why dual career couples voluntarily choose this lifestyle and in doing so tolerate and accept significantly higher degrees of stress than traditional couples.

Effect on Marriage

Examining the personal characteristics of dual career couples, Rice (1979) noted that three common problem areas in the marital relationships of these couples are competition, issues of power, and difficulty with the support structure (i.e., managing domestic tasks). Although competition is considered a natural and inevitable part of marital relationships, competition in dual career
couples is heightened by their high need for achievement, an often perceived or real inequity in the relationship, and conflict resolution which often is in the woman's disfavor (Rice, 1979).

Hall and Hall (1979) reported that the limited time available for dual career couples to spend together contributes to stress in the marital relationship. This stress is experienced through loss of romance, competition, sexual problems, and an inequitable power balance.

According to Gilbert and Rachlin (1987), although dual career couples express a desire for more equitable marital role structures, achievement of a relationship based on strict equality is extremely difficult. This is due to a lack of societal support and poor preparation for necessary psychological and attitudinal changes. In practice, for most dual career families, this goal reflects more of a preference than reality and represents a considerable source of stress.

Effect on the Children

Hoffman and Nye (1974) suggested that much early research was based on the assumption that maternal employment was harmful to children. Thus, early researchers sought to identify the harmful effects on children in dual career families. In their review of literature up to 1974, Hoffman and Nye noted that early
studies were largely atheoretical, produced inconsistent findings, dealt with only two levels, the mother's employment status and a child characteristic, and did not control for extraneous variables (e.g., gender, age, ordinal position, family size, social class). Subsequent studies by Hoffman and Nye (1974), Gilbert (1985), and Knaub, (1986) revealed that, overall, children raised in dual career families have not been affected negatively, especially when compared with children raised in traditional families.

In her study of adolescents and young adult children raised in dual career families, Knaub (1986) stated that the three most reported benefits of growing up in a dual career family are positive role models, financial security, and the opportunity to develop independence. Skinner (1980) concluded that

There is no evidence to suggest that the dual career lifestyle, in and of itself, is stressful for children. What may be more significant for the children is the degree of stress experienced by the parents which may indirectly affect the children. (pp. 477-478)

Coping Strategies

Another area of research has been the linking of stressors with specific characteristics and coping strategies in the dual career family. Specific employment characteristics are associated with a reduction in tension
in dual career families. Positions or occupations which have flexible work schedules with no advancement penalties, entail a high degree of autonomy, and have limited travel requirements appear to lower stress levels in dual career families (Hall & Hall, 1979; Johnson & Johnson, 1980). In addition, the closer the couples income and education levels are, the more likely the husband is to participate in domestic chores (Gilbert, 1985; Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Lawe & Lawe, 1980), which eases the workload for the wife.

Dual career couples often find that a rearranging of priorities between family and work worlds becomes necessary with the addition of children. Most often, however, it is the woman who accommodates her work responsibilities to meet family needs (Sekaran, 1986). Reorganizing work and family priorities by both partners is seen by Skinner (1980) as a common means of coping with the demands of role overload and competing role demands. Common solutions include (a) securing outside help with domestic chores, (b) reorganizing the division of labor, (c) increasing the proportion of family responsibilities performed by the husband, and (d) cooperative arrangements with other families. This spirit of compromise is an effective way of creating a more equitable balance in managing roles and responsibilities. Lawe and Lawe (1980) suggested that
balance is the key to maintaining a degree of flexibility in the dual career family.

Another method of managing role strain is compartmentalizing roles. This refers to keeping the roles and responsibilities of the work and family worlds separate and subordinating either work or family roles as the need dictates (Johnson & Johnson, 1980). This is particularly difficult for women to achieve due to both societal and psychological pressures for women to accommodate work needs to family needs (Holmstrom, 1972; Jones & Jones, 1980; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1978; Russo, 1987; Sekaran, 1986).

Achieving an equitable balance in the division of labor in a household is a major dilemma for many dual career couples. Although some advocate an "interchangeable role system" in which both partners alternately perform the same roles and share these roles equally (Lederer & Jackson, 1968), others call for establishing clear roles which serve to eliminate division of labor as a source of conflict (Johnson & Johnson, 1980). Gilbert and Rachlin (1987) concluded that the establishment of an egalitarian family structure may not be possible given the current value structure favoring a patriarchal society.

Hertz (1986) reported that one way women accommodate to these values of a patriarchal society is by adhering stringently to the traditional male model. In this
pattern, both partners strive to meet traditional male roles in the work and family worlds, the husband as a matter of course, the wife as a way of proving her equal status. Career is a top priority for both spouses, and domestic and childrearing responsibilities are purchased (e.g., maid service, substitute childcare arrangements) as a way of maintaining career priorities (Holmstrom, 1972). Despite advocating more modern, egalitarian values regarding the division of labor, women still perform the majority of household and childrearing functions in dual career families (Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987; Benin & Agostinelli, 1988; Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Leslie & Anderson, 1988). A reduction in tension can result from increased participation of the husband in performing domestic chores (Cormier et al., 1988; Skinner, 1980).

**Dual Career Lifestyle Types**

Recognizing that there is variation in role behavior and coping strategies, researchers have attempted to organize dual career families into identifiable types or subgroupings. Dual career families have been organized by level of involvement in work and/or family worlds (Hall & Hall, 1979; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971), central life priorities and role structure (Hunt & Hunt, 1982), and role structure (Sekaran, 1986).
In an early typology, Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) described four types of dual career couples: familistic, careerist, conventional, and coordinate. In developing this typology, Rapoport and Rapoport assessed dual career men by the degree of emphasis they placed on career over family life as an area of satisfaction. The dual career women were assessed according to their degree of commitment to women's careers.

In the first type, familistic couples, both partners derive satisfaction primarily from the domestic world. Careerists, the second type, are defined as couples in which both partners emphasize career over domestic areas. In conventional couples, the husband emphasizes career but the wife emphasizes the family. These roles are gender based and are not interchangeable in this typology. The final type, coordinate couples, are couples in which the wife has a career emphasis but the husband values family life as well as career.

In their study, Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) found no significant differences in the level of 'very happy' marriages among the lifestyle types with the exception of the careerist couples. Careerist couples reported significant drops in marital happiness but were considered by the Rapoports to be an isolated lifestyle type at the time of their study.
Hall and Hall (1979) identified four types of dual career families, each determined by the degree of involvement of the partners in career versus home. These are accommodators, adversaries, allies, and acrobats.

Accommodators have one member who is high in career involvement and low in home involvement, the other member being just the opposite. Members may assume either role, but the roles are assumed in a complementary fashion, thus minimizing conflict.

When both partners have a primary orientation toward their careers, Hall and Hall (1979) labeled them as adversaries. Although home and family issues are important, neither partner is willing to make career sacrifices in order to fulfill home and family roles. They suggested that this type is associated with high degrees of conflict due to the competition over career priorities.

The type where couples unite on a priority are labeled allies. Allies are couples who place their priorities in either the home or career areas but who are less involved in the other area. This type is thought to be associated with little stress or conflict because conflicting demands in either area are easily worked out.

The final type is the acrobat couple. In this type, each partner is equally involved in both home and career arenas. However, the partners do not turn to each other to
fulfill needed roles. Individuals in this type achieve their satisfaction and identity by performing all the roles themselves. This creates pressures and conflict similar to that experienced by adversaries, but the difficulties are more internal than with the other partner. Hall and Hall (1979) noted this type is associated with high levels of personal stress.

Hunt and Hunt (1982) organized dual career families by central life priorities and gender roles prescribed by society. Traditionalists resemble the traditional gender role divisions with the male having a breadwinner or career orientation and the female having a home/family orientation. This type is similar to Rapoport and Rapoport's (1971) conventional type, both types representing socially prescribed gender roles.

Prioritizers do not view themselves as bound by these prescribed gender roles and, as a couple, both partners may assume either a family or career orientation. This type is similar to Rapoport and Rapoport's (1971) familistic and careerist types.

The last type identified by Hunt and Hunt (1982) are labeled integrators. Unlike any of the types described by Rapoport and Rapoport (1971), integrators are oriented to both job and family roles and work together in the same occupational area. The couple may be colleagues in the
same field, business partners, or assume complementary roles in a business team approach.

As a way of understanding the variations in the quality of life among dual career couples, Sekaran (1986) developed a typology based on the couple's central life interest and their sex role orientation. According to Sekaran, it is only by looking at combinations of these two personality predispositions that the quality of life in dual career couples can be measured.

Central life interest can be divided into three subcategories, describing the preference the couple assigns to work, family, or equally to both. Sex role orientation defines the extent to which the couple assumes traditionally prescribed gender roles. Sex role orientation can be subdivided into traditional, nontraditional, and androgynous types. By combining the components of central life interest and sex role orientation, there are a total of 81 possible combinations of dual career couples. Sekaran (1986) collapsed these into four major types. These are superordinate, synchronized, synthetic, and severed partners.

Couples who assume androgynous sex roles and who value their careers but who also value and integrate family life are labeled by Sekaran (1986) as superordinate partners. Career goals may be compromised as a way of optimizing the
quality of family life. Of the four lifestyle types, Sekaran suggested this type experiences the highest levels of satisfaction and quality of life.

Synchronized partners assume complementary or similar sex role orientations and central life interests or may be matched in a number of different ways or combinations. The nature of the orientations and interests of synchronized partners serve the purpose of helping each other achieve their individual goals. An example of this type would be a couple in which the husband has a high family interest and a nontraditional sex role orientation and a wife with a high career orientation and nontraditional sex role orientations for both herself and her husband.

The third type identified by Sekaran (1986) is synthetic partners. These couples experience incompatibility in their sex role orientation and central life interests and feel that their individual goals are being compromised. Synthetic partners experience high levels of frustration and tension and may expend considerable effort in attempting solutions to this incompatibility. Quality of life is described by Sekaran (1986) as medium, at best.

The lowest levels of quality of life are experienced by severed partners. In these couples, the degree of incompatibility is so great that solutions are felt to be
impossible by the couple. There may be a nontraditional wife with a strong orientation to her career but not to her family, coupled with a husband with high family involvement, low career orientation, and a traditional sex role orientation. Sekaran (1986) reported these marriages are frequently terminated or, if divorce is not acceptable to the wife, result in the wife making a career compromise.

Based on her study, Sekaran (1986) believed the majority of dual career couples are synchronized and synthetic partners. Sekaran argued that other studies of dual career couple satisfaction may reveal inconsistent results and suggested that central life interest and sex role orientation be measured against other variables such as marital, job, and life satisfaction, and mental health to determine how these couple types account for variations among quality of life factors.

Another way of organizing dual career families is examining the division of labor established between the couple. Equality in the division of labor is considered a goal by many dual career families (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Nye, 1976; Scanzoni & Fox, 1980). Within the context of division of labor, the concept of equality can be viewed in terms of equity (i.e., a subjective judgement of fairness) and egalitarianism (i.e., objective measures of equality). Gilbert and Rachlin (1987) pointed out that, although the
concept of egalitarianism is appealing to many, it is difficult if not impossible to achieve in dual career families. It is much more useful to use equity (i.e., a sense of fairness) as a framework for evaluating dual career families. Gilbert and Rachlin (1987) concluded that equality, in the sense of egalitarianism, is not essential to becoming an effective dual career family (i.e., adequate mental health and psychological functioning) and added that "To replace the rigidity of traditional sex-role stereotypes with an equally rigid egalitarian role structure may not provide the most satisfactory adjustment for individual dual career families" (p. 32).

In dual career families, household and parenting responsibilities may be divided into three types, which Gilbert (1985) described as traditional, participant, and role-sharing. In the traditional type, all responsibility for family tasks is assumed by the woman in addition to her career responsibilities. In participant types, the husband and wife share parenting tasks but the wife retains responsibility for household duties. In role-sharing types household and parenting tasks are shared by both spouses.

In a more recent typology, Cormier et al. (1988) studied the division of household and parenting duties in 166 dual employed couples. Utilizing the lifestyle types
described by Gilbert (1985), they expanded the participant type to also include couples in which the husband and wife share household tasks but the wife retains responsibility for parenting duties. The two participant types are labeled participant-household and participant-parenting.

Cormier et al. (1988) measured the four lifestyle types against benefits, costs, dyadic adjustment, and stress factors. They found that traditional couples reported significantly lower benefits, higher costs, and lower dyadic adjustment than the shared couples. Participant-parenting couples reported significantly higher benefits than did the participant-household couples. Similar findings are reported by Benin and Agostinelli (1988) who stated that women are most satisfied when their husbands share in women's traditional chores.

The highest stress levels were reported by the traditional couples and the lowest by the shared couples. Women in participant-household couples reported the same levels of stress as women in traditional couples. It was suggested by Cormier et al. (1988) that this may be due to the participant-household women assuming a disproportionate share of the parenting tasks which may be more demanding than household tasks and may be a greater source of stress.
Parenting in Dual Career Families

Research reports focused on the parenting domain within the dual career family are scant, with most researchers measuring role functions or role perceptions, the deficits of the dual career family lifestyle, changes in marital adjustment and satisfaction, or the effects of maternal employment on the child (Hoffman & Nye, 1974; Knaub, 1986; Skinner, 1980). Few researchers examined parenting as a specific area within dual career families. A further limiting factor is that much research in this area has focused only on the coping strategies and characteristics of dual career families with children.

Dual Career Parenting Characteristics

The dual career family lifestyle appears to mirror the lifestyle of upper middle class white families (Johnson & Johnson, 1980). In their study of 28 dual career families, Johnson and Johnson found that dual career families tend to be nuclear and not as close to the extended families as are working class families. This results in the parents becoming the primary resource in the family and contributes to role overload (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). Although the use of paid helpers (i.e. baby sitters, maids) are considered a common adaptive strategy for the restricted time and flexibility in dual career families, no researcher
has studied the impact of paid helpers on dual career parents.

Major parenting issues for dual career families and traditional families are not mutually exclusive. However, there are some differences which are unique to dual career families, including the consideration of two careers, less available time and energy, a greater degree of complexity, and less overall flexibility.

Decisions regarding parenthood are more complex in dual career families when compared to traditional families due to the necessity of integrating both work and family worlds. Special considerations for dual career couples are (a) if, when, and how many children to have; (b) how important the child is to each spouse's self-concept and life goals; (c) the career stages of the parents; (d) restructuring family responsibilities and attitudes; (e) personal, family, and career expectations; (f) individual job characteristics; and (g) finding quality day care (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987).

The transition to parenthood has been described as both a life crisis and a normative life event. The addition of children brings on many challenges in any family but these challenges require more careful planning and execution in the dual career family (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987). Dual career parents are largely successful in
creating manageable family structures but these structures are fragile and often come unraveled during family crises (Johnson & Johnson, 1980).

The addition of children in dual career marriages has been associated with both an increase and a decrease in marital satisfaction (Houseknecht & Macke, 1981; Sekaran, 1986). Houseknecht and Macke (1981) found lower levels of marital adjustment/satisfaction in women in dual career marriages with children. Hoffman and Nye (1974) reported that a positive marital relationship is more likely when the number of children at home is small. In contrast, Sekaran (1986) reported positive mental health for mothers in dual career marriages is associated with having three to four or more children. Sekaran (1986) suggested that the positive benefits revealed in Hoffman and Nye's study may reflect the older children providing help with household and childrearing duties as well as offering solace to the mother.

When to have children is another important consideration for dual career families. In dual career families, the traditional time for childbearing occurs simultaneously with the career building phase, which is a time of intensity and commitment. This can result in conflict for the couple as important decisions must be made regarding the relative importance of the family and work
Many couples postpone parenthood until both partners have completed this initial career building stage. Hertz (1986) noted that parenthood often follows shortly after a promotion in dual career families. This sequencing allows dual career parents to cycle their most demanding roles rather than facing them at the same time (Johnson & Johnson, 1980; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1978).

Underlying the dilemmas faced by dual career parents is the basic conflict between family and work worlds. Fueling this conflict is the assumption that neither spouse will subordinate their career goals to family goals and that both spouses will commit themselves to involvement with both the work and family worlds (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987). Thus, the couple must decide what they are willing to give up in order to incorporate their new family roles and responsibilities with existing personal, family, and work roles and responsibilities.

These factors combine to create a major source of tension for dual career parents. Even in dual career couples expressing a high desire for equity in the performance of childrearing and household tasks, most dual career couples are not markedly different in this respect than traditional families (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Hester & Dickerson, 1981).
Women in dual career families experience a higher proportion of spillover between family and work worlds than do men, due to societal values which equate women with mothering and housekeeping (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987). This results in women performing a larger proportion of the household and childrearing responsibilities (Baruch et al., 1987; Benin & Agostinelli, 1988; Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987).

Although the assumption is that neither spouse is willing to subordinate their careers, in fact, both institutional practice and societal values place decreased emphasis on women's career as a high priority (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1978; Russo, 1987; Sekaran, 1986). Because it is more often the mother who accommodates work in order to handle family responsibilities and crises, her career may be negatively affected. As a result, the dual career mother may experience role overload and multiple role cycling strains which the husband does not (Baruch et al., 1987). Overinvolvement of dual career mothers in childrearing and household tasks reduces their satisfaction in both the family and work worlds. This is especially evident for wives with young children (Holmstrom, 1972; Sekaran, 1986). Time factors play a significant role in shaping dual career families. In addition to childrearing responsibilities, there are household chores and other non-work duties which must be taken care of. This combination
of duties and responsibilities both before and after work can create physical exhaustion and mental stress.

To compensate for the lack of abundant time to spend with their children, dual career parents design special activities with the purpose of enhancing the environment of the children, both within the home and in educational settings (Hoffman & Nye, 1974). Dual career parents often feel guilty and anxious concerning the lack of time and energy available to spend with their children. In their efforts to offset this guilt, these parents may resort to rationalization that it is the quality of the parent-child relationship that is most important (Johnson & Johnson, 1980). Skinner (1980) cautioned that these compensating behaviors, in attempting to prevent the lifestyle from creating strain in their children, may increase the degree of strain experienced by dual career parents.

Few models exist to assist dual career parents in combining the work and family worlds. Dual career parents, especially mothers, often experience guilt and anxiety based on pressures from violating traditional family and social norms. Being a dual career parent is made more difficult by the fact that the social institutions engaged in health, education, recreation, and policy affecting the family are largely based on the traditional family model (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Holmstrom, 1972; Jones & Jones,
This leads to the development of ad hoc solutions by trial and error (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

Knaub (1986) reported a need for education in the areas of coping strategies, successful negotiation, conflict resolution, and the benefits of the dual career family lifestyle. Preventive educational programs have been developed to assist dual career families in successfully managing the lifestyle (Amatea & Cross, 1983, 1984). Educational programs are increasingly offering life skills training courses which include family and parenting issues. Courses and workshops at the college and university level are being offered which specifically focus on the dual career family lifestyle and time management, using workshops, experiential exercises, role playing, and case studies (Sekaran, 1986). The media has also focused attention on the issues and concerns of the dual career family.

Knowledge alone may not adequately prepare individuals for the dual career family lifestyle. A basic understanding of self, life goals, and definition of success may be necessary to experience good physical and mental health and to achieve a high quality of life in dual career families (Sekaran, 1986).
Therapeutic interventions discussed in the literature center on the marital relationship rather than on specific parenting issues. Rice (1979) cited a need for restoring a sense of equity as a major therapeutic goal for dual career couples. Group counseling has also been suggested as being effective for addressing common problems as well as for those in particular life-cycle stages (Skinner, 1980). The overall goal of dual career families is to achieve an equitable balance of strains and gains in the (marital) relationship (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976).

With respect to parenting, major goals of intervention for parents focus on assisting the children in fostering independence, self-reliance, achievement, good psychological adjustment, consideration, self-control, and curiosity (Johnson & Johnson, 1980). These goals are supported by studies of children in dual career families. The researchers suggested that children benefit by having a greater sense of independence, self-reliance, achievement, responsibility, less rigid sex role behavior, and greater contact with parents (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Hoffman & Nye, 1974; Knaub, 1986).

Johnson & Johnson (1980) suggested the best approach for dual career families is a nonidealistic one which acknowledges the fact that most children in dual career
families usually do quite well and that there are no easy solutions, except for the passage of time.

Communication and conflict resolution have been identified by both parents and children in dual career families as being extremely important skills due to the complexity of the dual career family life style (Knaub, 1986; Skinner, 1980).

With the addition of children, dual career couples have less flexibility in meeting personal and career needs, and are frequently called upon to subordinate their own needs to those of the child. Most likely affected is the marital relationship itself. Hoffman and Nye (1974) reported the maintenance of a positive marital relationship is more likely under the following conditions: (a) the number of children at home is small, (b) the mother enjoys her job, (c) the husband has a positive attitude, and (d) both husband and wife have advanced education.

Gilbert and Rachlin (1987) reported that the importance of a child to each partner's self-esteem and life goals is a critical factor in the dual career family. Couples reporting the same degree of importance experience less tension in the marital relationship.

Family Functioning

Described as the most important contribution in the family therapy field is the concept of studying a different
unit of psychopathology, the family system (Barnhill, 1979). Early research on the family system focused on identifying dysfunctional family patterns which could be used to differentiate disturbed from normal families (Jacob, 1975).

Researchers have begun to explore the dimensions of health in families (Fisher, Giblin, & Regas, 1983). Many assessment models of family functioning have been created and a review of the literature reveals a variety of methods of studying and presenting observations (Fisher, Giblin, & Regas, 1983; Forman & Hagan, 1983; Hampson, Hulgus, Beavers, & Beavers, in press). The most widely acknowledged models appear to be the Beavers Systems Model of Family Functioning, the Circumplex Model, the McMasters Model of Family Functioning, and the Process Model of Family Functioning.

Circumplex Model

The Circumplex Model was developed by David Olson (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1979) and is based on his theory of family functioning. In the Circumplex Model, family functioning is viewed as nonlinear and centered around two constructs, adaptability and cohesion. Adaptability refers to the extent to which the family system is flexible and subject to change. Cohesion is defined as the emotional bonding that family members have
towards one another. A third construct, communication, is also included in the Circumplex Model. It is hypothesized that families scoring in the middle of each factor function more adequately than families at either end of these factors. Families with too much or too little adaptability or cohesion are considered dysfunctional, while families with a balance between these two extremes are considered functional.

Both observational and self-report assessment instruments have been developed using the Circumplex Model. The Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales III (FACES III) is a 20-item self-report scale designed around the Circumplex Model to measure the degree of family adaptability and cohesion. Included in the scale are four levels of family cohesion: disengaged, separated, connected, and enmeshed; and four levels of family adaptability: chaotic, flexible, structured, and rigid. This results in 16 possible family constellations, four balanced on both factors, four at the extreme ends, and eight in the midrange.

FACES III is designed to be used with the Clinical Rating Scale for the Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems (CRS). The CRS is an observational instrument used by a trained observer to rate the family on adaptability and cohesion (change).
Early versions of FACES were not able to discriminate between the two dimensions of adaptability and cohesion, but the current version, FACES III, reportedly has much improved independence of these two dimensions (Fredman & Sherman, 1987).

Although an extremely popular scale, FACES III has come under criticism for the use of the term adaptability, which is a positive growth concept in the context of moderation. Although the name adaptability remains in the title of FACES III, this dimension has recently been more appropriately renamed change (Fredman & Sherman, 1987).

Others have been critical of the interpretation that enmeshed families are dysfunctional. According to Fredman and Sherman (1987), enmeshment, defined as the unwillingness or inability to respect individuality and boundaries, is not the same as too much cohesion and is misleading.

Olson and others have acknowledged that the Circumplex Model no longer fits with current research data on normal families (Olson, 1986; Pratt & Hansen, 1987). In contrast with dysfunctional families, Olson reported there appears to be a linear relationship between adaptability and cohesion in normal families, with higher levels of these dimensions associated with higher levels of family functioning.
Beavers Systems Model of Family Functioning

The Beavers Systems Model of Family Functioning has two major constructs, health/competence and style. Health/competence is a global scale which reflects the overall level of family functioning. This construct is based on the concept of negentropy, which refers to the amount of energy available for productive work (Beavers et al., 1988). Beavers et al. asserted that "living systems are most competent when they have maximum organization and available energy to bring to bear on adaptive challenges (negentropy)" (p. 3).

The Beavers Model views families as being on a continuum from functional to dysfunctional. In contrast to the Circumplex Model, the Beavers Model does not view the extremes of chaos and rigidity as states to be avoided. Rather, family systems are viewed as differing in complexity and organization, moving on a continuum of organization from chaos, through rigidity, toward increased flexibility (Lewis, Beavers, Gossett, & Phillips, 1976).

Families are further subdivided into three categories, each reflective of the degree of negentropy present. These are seriously disturbed, midrange, and healthy families. Seriously disturbed families are characterized by poor boundaries, confused communication, lack of shared attentional focus, stereotyped family process, despair,
cynicism, and denial of ambivalence. Midrange families are relatively clear in structure and organization but are rigid and have difficulty adapting to change. They are characterized by relatively clear communication; constant efforts at control; interpreting loving as controlling; distancing, anger, anxiety, depression; and handling ambivalence by repression. Healthy families are highly negentropic with clear and flexible structure and organization. Lewis et al. (1976) stated that function is the greatest concern of the healthy family and that healthy families strive for structure with flexible, adaptive function. Healthy families are thought to be capable and promote negotiation, individual choice, ambivalence, respect, warmth, intimacy, and humor.

Family style is the second construct of the Beavers Model. Family style is defined as "the degree to which the family has a strong, inner orientation and gratifies itself within the family or within the outside world" (Fredman & Sherman, 1987, p. 35). Seen as separate from the functional/dysfunctional continuum, family style is believed to range from centripetal (inner-focused) to centrifugal (outer-focused) (Beavers et al., 1988). Beavers et al. (1988) observed that centrifugal families promote aggressiveness and discourage dependency; centripetal families promote the opposite style.
Family assessment instruments have been created around the Beavers Model. The Beavers Interactional Competence Scale: I, and the Beavers Interactional Style Scale: II (formerly named the Beavers-Timberlawn Family Evaluation Scale) are the two observational assessment instruments. The Competence Scale consists of 13 subscales: overt power, parental coalition, closeness, mythology, goal-directed negotiations, clarity of expression, responsibility, permeability, range of feelings, mood and tone, unresolvable conflict, empathy, and global health/competence. The family is rated on each of these subscales on a continuum from low to high.

The Style Scale has eight subscales. These are dependency needs, style of adult conflict, proximity, social presentation, verbal expression of closeness, aggressive/assertive behaviors, expression of positive/negative feelings, and global family style. As in the Family Competence Scale, families are rated on a continuum from low to high.

McMaster Model of Family Functioning

Originally developed in the 1960s, the McMaster Model of Family Functioning (MMFF) is based on the Family Categories Schema (Epstein, Sigal, & Rakoff, 1962) and the assumption that family health is associated with the accomplishment of essential tasks (Epstein, Bishop, &
Levin, 1978). These essential tasks can be grouped into three categories: basic, developmental, and hazardous tasks. Basic tasks are instrumental tasks which are concerned with fundamental issues such as the provision of food and shelter. Developmental tasks include those issues related to individual and family growth processes. These are the individual developmental stages of infancy, childhood, adolescence, and middle and old-age crises, and the family developmental stages such as the beginning of the marriage, the first pregnancy, and the birth of the first child. Hazardous tasks are defined as the crises related to illness, accidents, loss of income, job changes, and moves (Epstein, Bishop, & Levin, 1978).

In order to accomplish these essential tasks, families are conceptualized as functioning across six dimensions. These are problem solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, and behavior control.

Problem solving is defined in this model as the family's ability to resolve problems at a level that maintains effective family functioning. Problems are defined as issues that threaten the integrity and functional capacity of the family.

Communication refers to how the family exchanges information. In particular it focuses on whether verbal
messages are clear in content and directed to the person for whom the message is intended. Roles are defined as the established patterns of family behavior for handling family functions, that is, provision of resources, nurturance and support, personal development, maintenance and management of family systems, and adult sexual gratification.

Affective responsiveness measures the family's ability to experience appropriate affect over a range of stimuli. Both appropriate quality and quantity of feelings are considered in this construct. Affective involvement refers to the extent to which family members are interested in and place value on each other's activities and concerns. A moderate level of affective involvement is considered optimal for this construct.

The final construct is behavior control which measures the way the family expresses and maintains the behavior standards of its members. Behavior control patterns are assessed for three specific situations—physically dangerous situations, situations involving the meeting and expressing of psychobiological needs and drives, and situations involving socializing behavior both inside and outside the family. Four patterns of behavior control are also considered: laissez-faire, rigid, flexible, and chaotic.
The McMaster Family Assessment Device (FAD) was developed to evaluate families within the McMaster Model of Family Functioning (Epstein, Baldwin, & Bishop, 1983). This is a 53-item self-report scale reflecting the six dimensions of the MMFF and a seventh dimension measuring general functioning.

In designing the FAD, Epstein et al. (1983) reported rejecting the development of an observational instrument measuring family interaction as being too time consuming, not representative of general behavior of the family outside of the clinical setting, and generating large amounts of data which are expensive and complex to reduce to meaningful information. The FAD was designed for use in clinical settings and is appropriate for use with adolescent and adult family members.

**Process Model of Family Functioning**

This model is based on and is an expansion of the McMaster Model of Family Functioning (MMFF). Though they are both based on the Family Categories Schema (Epstein, 1962), the Process Model of Family Functioning (PMFF) was designed to emphasize family process rather than family structure.

The PMFF differs from the MMFF in three ways. First, the PMFF has an emphasis on the dynamic interaction between the major dimensions of family functioning in describing
family processes. Second, both individual and systems theory are integrated by examining the interface between individual subsystems and the family system. Third, the connection between the family and the social system by examining the individual, family, and cultural norms and values and how they interface is emphasized.

There are seven constructs in the PMFF, all interrelated. These are task accomplishment, role performance, communication, affective expression, affective involvement, control, and values and norms (Skinner, Steinhauer, and Santa-Barbara, 1983). Skinner et al. (1983) explained that the overall goal of the family is the achievement of basic, developmental, and crisis or hazardous tasks. Task accomplishment requires that the family organize itself to achieve its objectives. In order to achieve its objectives, the family must perform various roles. Role performance involves three steps: (a) the assignment of family member roles, (b) the agreement of family members to assume assigned roles, and (c) the fulfillment of the required behaviors.

In the performance of assigned roles in completing tasks, effective family communication is essential. While the goal of effective communication is the achievement of mutual understanding, family members may avoid or distort
messages sent, or simply not be available or open to receive messages sent.

The expression of affect can help or hinder task accomplishment and role performance. Major components of affective expression are the content, intensity, and timing of the feelings involved in the communication.

Affective involvement is defined as the amount and quality of family members involvement with one another. Key elements of affective involvement are the family's ability to meet the emotional and security needs of its members and to provide support for individual autonomy within the family.

The way in which the family influences one another is labeled control. Healthy families need to be capable of maintaining current processes while also successfully adapting to changes in task requirements (Steinhauer et al., 1984).

Finally, how tasks are defined and carried out may be influenced by the norms and values of the individual family members, the family as a system, or the predominant cultural values and norms. Important influences are the clarity of family rules, the tolerance for individual attitudes and behavior, and the congruency of family and cultural norms (Skinner et al., 1983).
The Family Assessment Measure (FAM) is based on the constructs of the PMFF and was developed to measure family strengths and weaknesses. The most recent version of this instrument, the FAM III, consists of three scales, each scale representing a different level of family functioning. The scales are (a) a General Scale which measures the family system, (b) a Dyadic Scale which measures specific pair relationships in the family, and (c) a Self-Rating Scale which measures the individual's perception of his or her functioning in the family.

Unique to the FAM III is the ability to measure the major strengths and weaknesses of a family from several different perspectives. Existing family assessment instruments, including the FAM III, do not lend themselves well to the inclusion of children's assessments of family functioning. The FAM III does, however, allow for respondents to assess the major strengths and weaknesses of specific dyadic relationships in families, including the parent-child relationship. This is a major advantage over other family assessment instruments.

The dual career family has been studied from a variety of perspectives, including marital satisfaction, stresses and strains, power, and role structure. Division of labor has also been identified as a key variable affecting the degree of satisfaction and distress in dual career
families. One area that researchers have not examined is the overall level of family functioning. This study attempted to broaden our knowledge of the dual career family by examining the overall level of functioning in dual career families and by exploring the impact of division of labor on level of family functioning.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study was designed to examine the impact of dual career family lifestyle type on level of family functioning. This chapter includes a description of the population, sampling procedures, the resultant sample, the instruments used, the data collection procedures, research questions, and the data analysis procedures.

Variables of Interest

Variables of interest were dual career family lifestyle type and levels of family functioning. In addition, demographic variables describing the subjects were obtained. Information on each variable was obtained on two paper and pencil self-report questionnaires consisting of a total of 85 items. The instruments took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. These questionnaires covered parenting behaviors, household management behaviors, family task accomplishment, role performance, communication, affective expression, affective involvement, control, values and norms, social desirability, and defensiveness. The measure of parenting and household management behaviors can be found in Appendix
B. The other inventory is copyrighted and is available from the authors.

**Population**

The population of interest was married, dual career couples who have preschool children. The population from which the sample for this study was drawn was married, dual career couples residing in Alachua County, Florida, who were parents of preschool children.

Alachua County has a population of 179,700 and is located in North Central Florida. The University of Florida (UF) and Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) are both located in Gainesville, the major city in the county. The population of Gainesville is 83,980 which includes a student population of 35,334 at UF and 7,773 at SFCC ([Florida Statistical Abstract, 1988](#)). Apart from the Gainesville community, Alachua County is predominantly rural. The rural nature of Alachua County and the presence of two higher education institutions skews the mean income for the county which is $15,478 compared with a mean income for the state of Florida of $17,679 ([Florida Statistical Abstract, 1988](#)). Of all the residents of Alachua County 25 years of age or older, 75.5% had 12 or more years of education; 29.4% had 16 or more years of education ([County and City Data Book, 1983](#)).
Sampling Procedure

The sample was drawn from dual career parents of preschool children who were enrolled at private day care centers within the county. To be included in the study, dual career parents had to be married, had at least one preschool-age child enrolled in day care on a half-time or more basis, and the preschool child was the biological or adoptive child of the couple. The directors of seventeen area private day care centers were contacted by the researcher, either in person or by telephone. The study and the data collection procedures were explained and permission was requested to distribute letters at the day care center to parents of 2 to 5 year old children enrolled at the center. Eleven day care centers agreed to allow letters to be distributed in their centers. Approximately 625 letters were distributed to parents in the participating day care centers. Additional letters were distributed directly to parents whose children were enrolled in other area day care centers. Of the 67 couples who agreed to participate in the study, 50 returned complete and usable survey instruments.

As a possible explanation for the low response rate, several day care center directors related that several other research studies had recently been conducted at their
center or were currently being conducted. According to these directors, some parents reported a lack of time to participate in any research studies.

Each day care was contacted by phone or in person 1 to 2 times each week during the period from March through May, 1990. In addition, 20 personal and/or telephone interviews were conducted with prospective respondents to answer questions or provide further information about the study.

A handout containing a description of the study, the criteria for participation, and a demographic questionnaire (Appendix A) was distributed to all parents of children enrolled at area day care centers. Parents were asked to return the handout with their name, address, and phone number and other demographic information to the day care center if they were willing to participate in the study.

**Resultant Sample**

At the end of the sampling procedure, a total of 50 couples had been sampled. This sample size compares favorably with other research studies in the dual career family area. Excluding samples used to develop test norms, the mean sample size for other dual career family studies is 33 couples.

The mean age of the participants in this study was 36.7, with ages ranging from 29 to 48. The sample was predominantly Caucasian (97%), with the remaining 3%
comprised of one Hispanic and two Black participants. The majority (33%) were employed in the field of management, 21% in education, 18% in the medical field, 10% in engineering/science, 3% in retail, and 15% listed their occupation as other. The majority (32%) held degrees at the bachelor's level, 29% at the master's level, 14% at the associate level, 9% at the high school level, 7% at the doctorate level, and 7% at the doctor/lawyer level. Of the sample, 90% were employed full-time, 10% were employed half-time. The average length of marriage for this sample was 9.74 years, with a range of 3 to 18 years.

The preschool children of the couples ranged in age from 2 to 5 years with a mean age of 3.7 years. The majority of the children (60%) were 4 or 5 years old. Of the children in this sample, 48% were male and 52% female.

Instrumentation

Demographic Information

Information gathered regarding the couple included gender, race, age, education level, length of marriage, and field of employment. Information on the preschool child in day care included gender, age, and whether the child was a product of the current marriage or adopted. These demographic items were collected on a questionnaire developed by the researcher (Appendix A).
Dual Career Family Lifestyle

Type of dual career family lifestyle was determined by scores on the Parenting and Household Management Survey (PHMS) (Cormier et al., 1988). The PHMS is a survey instrument designed to measure the level of participation (division of labor) of each spouse in parenting and household behavior and to identify style of management used by the couple. The PHMS consists of items which name parenting and household behaviors. The respondents rate the frequency of their participation in each parenting or household behavior on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "always" to "never" for each of the 35 described behaviors. Items include such activities as "vacuum house," "empty trash," "take out the garbage," "arrange for babysitting," and "spend time with each child individually."

To score the PHMS, scores are tallied for each individual on household and parenting behaviors. Then difference scores are computed by obtaining the difference between the husband's and wife's score for each type behavior. In this study the median difference score for household management was 16, a median difference score of 6 is used for parenting. Couples were assigned to one of four dual career family lifestyle types (traditional,
shared, participant-household, and participant-parenting) on the basis of their difference scores.

Couples who differed by 16 points or less in their self-report of participation in household management tasks and 6 points or less in their self-report of participation in parenting responsibilities were classified as shared couples. Couples differing by more than 16 points on the household management difference score and more than 6 points on the parenting responsibilities score were classified as traditional couples. Couples with a difference score in household management tasks of 16 points or less and a difference score on parenting tasks of more than 6 points were considered participant-household couples. Couples with a difference in household management scores of more than 16 and a difference in parenting scores of 6 points or less were labeled participant-parenting couples.

Cormier et al. (1988) reported an initial reliability and validity study of this instrument based on a sample size of 166 couples (332 individuals). To determine test-retest reliability, 30 couples (N=60) were randomly selected from the sample of 166 and asked to complete the PHMS for a second time, 1 week later. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were .95 between the test and retest. A Cronbach alpha produced an internal
consistency coefficient of .93. Thus, based on this limited study, reliability is high.

Criterion validity was determined by comparing behaviors reported over a 2-week period, on a self-monitoring log completed by 30 couples (N=60) with their responses on the PHMS. The couples recorded on a daily basis the frequency of occurrence of the 35 parental and household management behaviors from the PHMS. At the end of the 2-week period, the couples completed the PHMS. The total frequencies from the self-monitoring logs were correlated with the corresponding items on the PHMS. Pearson correlations for each item provided a measure of concurrent criterion validity. The correlation coefficients for each item ranged from .68 to .98 with most correlations above .80. The mean coefficient for all correlations is .87.

Although still being researched, the PHMS is one of the few instruments available to assess parenting and household management behaviors. Other instruments are available which are designed to measure some aspect of family organization such as parents' routines (Family Routines Inventory; Jensen, James, Boyce, & Hartnett, 1983); equality (Defensive and Supportive Communication Interaction System; Alexander, undated); and partnership or sharing of responsibility (Family APGAR; Smilkstein, 1978).
None of these instruments specifically measures parenting and household management behaviors.

Level of Family Functioning

Overall measures of family functioning were collected. Family functioning was measured by the Family Assessment Measure (FAM III) (Skinner et al., 1983).

Family Assessment Measure. The Family Assessment Measure (FAM III), developed by Skinner et al. (1983), provided one measure of family functioning. The FAM III is a self-report paper and pencil instrument designed to measure family members' perceptions of their family's functioning. The FAM III is based on general family systems theory and specifically on the Process Model of Family Functioning developed by Steinhauer et al., (1984). The underlying assumption of the Process Model of Family Functioning is that the ultimate goal of the family is to provide for the biological, psychological, and social development and maintenance of family members, which assures the survival of the family. These goals are accomplished through the execution of certain tasks which may vary over the family life cycle but which represent the same basic skills and processes (Steinhauer et al., 1984). Thus, family functioning in the Process Model is best described by looking at family dynamics and attempts by
family members to define family processes and their interrelationships.

Unique to this instrument is the measurement of family functioning from three perspectives: overall, dyadic relationships, and individual functioning. Each aspect is reflected as a separate scale. The overall level of family functioning is reported on the General Scale. The dyadic relationships in the family are assessed on the Dyadic-Relationship Scale which has items on how members view each of their dyadic family relationships, such as the marital relationship or a parent-child relationship. On the third scale, the Self-Rating Scale, the individual member's perceptions of their own functioning within the family system are determined.

The FAM III is set up using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Answers are reported on a separate answer sheet which is hand scorable. Respondents are instructed to decide how well each statement describes the family (General Scale), how well each statement describes the respondent (Self-Rating Scale), and how well each statement describes the respondent's relationship with another family member (Dyadic-Relationship Scale).

Within each scale are the same seven subscales which correspond with the constructs of the Process Model: task
accomplishment, role performance, communication, affective expression, affective involvement, control, and values and norms. Each subscale is reported separately. In addition, the general scale includes two response style subscales (social desirability and defensiveness).

The FAM III consists of three instruments, each measuring one of the three overall scales. In this study one of the three scales was used. The General Scale was used as the measure of overall level of family functioning. The FAM III generally takes about 30-45 minutes to complete, depending on how many scales are being administered.

Skinner et al. (1983) conducted initial reliability studies on the FAM III. Internal consistency reliability was based on administration of the FAM III to 475 families (933 adults, 46% men and 54% women; and 502 adolescent children, 45% male and 55% female) who were clients of health and social services settings in the Toronto, Canada area. The mean age of the adults was 38.0 years, with 45% of the men and 38% of the women having some postsecondary level education. The mean age of the children was 14.9 years, with 50% in elementary school, 40% in secondary school, and 10% with some postsecondary education. Internal consistency reliability estimates (using coefficient alpha) were high for the overall scales:
adults—General Scale (.93), Dyadic Relationship Scale (.95), Self-Rating Scale (.89); children—General Scale (.94), Dyadic Relationship Scale (.94), Self-Rating Scale (.86) (Grotevant & Carlson, 1989). Subscale internal consistency reliability estimates were substantially lower, which is a reflection of the smaller number of items in each subscale. Subscale estimates are moderate for the General (.67-.87) and the Dyadic Relationships Scales (.64-.82). Subscale estimates for the Self-Rating Scale (.25-.63) not used in this study were substantially lower. Test-retest reliability estimates are unknown as of this writing.

Criterion-related validity has been established (Skinner et al., 1983). The authors' reported that scores on the FAM III clearly differentiate between children and adults (control, values and norms, and affective expression subscales) and between problem and non-problem families (role performance and involvement subscales; social desirability and defensiveness response style scales). Subscales were found to be negatively correlated with defensiveness (r = -.28 to -.48) and social desirability (r = -.35 to -.53) (Skinner, 1987).

The FAM III is still experimental and developmental in nature and further validity studies have not yet been completed. Work is in progress to determine other measures
of external validity and the FAM III is expected to be ready for publication in 1990 (Skinner, 1987; Skinner & Steinhauer, 1989).

Data Collection Procedures

Each couple that agreed to participate in the study and who met the criteria for inclusion in the study picked up a packet of materials at the day care center. The research packet contained a cover letter and instruments. The cover letter consisted of instructions, and a thank you statement (Appendix C). Participants were instructed to respond to the instruments individually without consulting their spouses.

To ensure confidentiality, names were not placed on the instruments or answer sheets. Each packet was given a code number which corresponded to the couple's names on a separate listing. This allowed for follow up of packets that were not returned while still protecting confidentiality.

If the packet was not returned within 2 weeks, a telephone call and/or a follow up letter was sent to the couple, reminding them to complete and return the packet.
Research Questions

In this study, the following research questions were posed:

1. What is the distribution of lifestyle types in terms of parenting and household management behavior among dual career married couples with preschool children?

2. What are the levels of family functioning in dual career couples who have preschool children?

3. What is the relationship between levels of family functioning and dual career family lifestyle types?

Data Analysis

To answer these research questions, the data were coded and analyzed using SAS. Descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlations, and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were used to analyze the data.

Descriptive statistics were computed for the sample's demographic characteristics. Descriptive statistics were also computed for the variables of parenting behaviors, household management behaviors, dual career family lifestyle type, and levels of family functioning.

Research question one was answered using measures of central tendency and dispersion. Couples were placed into one of four lifestyle types using couples difference scores
and comparing them to the median difference scores for the sample. In research question two the variable of interest was family functioning. Following data collection, descriptive statistics were computed for the entire sample and by lifestyle type.

Research question three was answered by first performing Pearson product-moment correlations on the seven subscales of the FAM III to determine the degree of intercorrelation among these scales. A MANOVA was performed to determine if there were significant differences in levels of functioning among lifestyle types.

Data analysis procedures and results are described in greater detail in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

This study was designed to describe the levels of family functioning in dual career families with preschool children. In addition, the relationship between dual career family lifestyle types and levels of family functioning in dual career families with preschool children was explored. The respondents were 50 dual career, married couples with preschool children in the Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida area. In this chapter, the results of the study are presented as they pertain to each of the three research questions.

Research Questions

Question One

What is the distribution of lifestyle types in terms of parenting and household management behavior among dual career married couples with preschool children? Each couple completed the Parenting and Household Management Survey (PHMS) developed by Cormier et al. (1988). The items on the PHMS are divided into two subscales—parenting behaviors and household management behaviors. The subscale scores on the PHMS were used to place couples in one of four lifestyle types based on the division of labor in the
home. The four lifestyle types developed by Cormier et al. (1988) are traditional, in which both the parenting and household management tasks are completed by only one spouse; shared, in which both spouses participate equally in parenting and household management tasks; participant-household, in which both spouses share household management but not parenting tasks; and participant-parenting, in which both spouses share parenting but not household management tasks. In order to place couples in a specific lifestyle type it was first necessary to subtract the male from the female scores for each subscale producing a "difference score" for each couple. These "difference scores" were then compared to the median "difference scores" for males and females in the overall sample to determine placement in one of the four lifestyle types. Median scores were computed by lifestyle type and gender and are presented in Table 2. Actual placement in specific lifestyle types was determined as follows: traditional (couples differing by more than the median scores on both scales), shared (couples differing by less than the median scores on both scales), participant-household (couples who differed less than the median score on household management tasks and more than the median score on parenting tasks), and participant-parenting (couples who differed less than the median score on parenting tasks and more than the
median score on household management tasks). The median difference scores for this sample were 6 for parenting behaviors and 16 for household management behaviors. These are similar to the median difference scores of 5 (parenting behaviors) and 16 (household management behaviors) reported by the authors of the PHMS (Cormier et al., 1988).

Couples were distributed among each of the four lifestyle types. Fifteen couples were classified as shared, 14 couples as traditional, 10 as participant-household, and 11 couples as participant-parenting. Among the four lifestyle types, 36 couples, or 72%, shared some aspect of parenting and household management tasks. The findings offer support for research by Leslie and Anderson (1988) who noted a trend toward more involvement of husbands in both parenting and household management tasks. The median scores for household management and parenting behaviors were computed by lifestyle type and are presented in Table 1. As can be noted from this table, there were few differences in median scores among lifestyle types. Median scores for household management and parenting behaviors were also computed by gender within lifestyle type. These scores are presented in Table 2 and were used to produce the "difference scores" for classifying couples in one of four lifestyle types.
### Table 1

**Median Scores on the Parenting (P) and Household Management (HM) Behavior Variables by Lifestyle Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifestyle Type</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-parenting</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-household management</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2

**Median Scores on the Parenting (P) and Household Management (HM) Behavior Variables by Lifestyle Type and Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifestyle Type</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM</td>
<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-parenting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-household management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question Two

How can dual career married couples with preschool children be described in terms of levels of family functioning? To measure family functioning couples completed the FAM III individually, then couple scores were produced by computing an average score for each couple for each scale. The couple's average scores were then converted to standardized scores of mean = 50, standard deviation = 10, based on normative data from normal, non-clinical families compiled by Skinner, Steinhauer, and Santa-Barbara (1984).

The FAM III contains nine subscales altogether, seven of which measure levels of family functioning. The additional two subscales, defensiveness and social desirability, measure response style. (It should be noted that in earlier versions of the FAM III, the defensiveness subscale was called the denial subscale). The response style subscales provide a measure of the validity of the other scales. On the defensiveness subscale, the couples reported a standardized score of 46 which falls within the average range of scores for normal, non-clinical families and supports the general overall validity of the responses on the FAM III. The social desirability subscale standardized score was 49. This also supports the general
validity of the responses and is well within the average range of scores for normal, non-clinical families.

Using each couple's standardized scores, a couple profile was produced for the sample which indicated relative states of family health/pathology on the seven individual FAM III subscales, the two social response subscales, and an overall rating. The overall rating for each couple was produced by computing an overall average using each of the seven subscale scores (excluding defensiveness and social desirability). The couple profiles are presented in Figure 1.

As can be noted from the couple profiles in Figure 1, the mean standardized scores for both the overall rating and each subscale of the FAM III were within the average range for normal, non-clinical families and all couple scores were within one standard deviation from the mean. On the FAM III, scores more than one standard deviation below the mean (below 40) are likely to indicate very healthy levels of family functioning and scores more than one standard deviation above the mean (over 60) are likely to indicate disturbance in family functioning. The relative homogeneity of the sample is reflected by the narrow range of responses and small standard deviations. Thus, as a whole, the dual career couple responses in this sample are similar to the responses of the normal, non-
Figure 1. FAM III General Scale couple profile by subscale and overall rating.
clinical sample of families used by Skinner et al. (1984) to produce their normative data.

Couple profiles were also plotted by lifestyle type and are presented in Figures 2 through 5. It can be noted from these figures that the standardized scores among lifestyle types in this sample all fell within the normal range for non-clinical families on the overall rating and on all subscales.

Question Three

Are there differences in levels of family functioning among the four dual career family lifestyle types? First, Pearson product-moment correlations were performed to determine intercorrelations in this sample among the nine scales of the FAM III General Scale. As can be seen in Table 3, there are many significant correlations among the seven scales, ranging from .22 to .72. This high level of correlation suggests that the subscales rest on an underlying general construct which could be called family health. These intercorrelations parallel findings reported by Skinner, Santa-Barbara, and Steinhauer (1981) in their statistical analyses of 182 clinical and non-clinical families. Skinner et al. reported intercorrelations among the seven content subscales which ranged from .55 to .79.

Correlations between the seven content subscales and the two response style subscales indicate a moderately
Figure 2. FAM III General Scale couple profile by subscale and overall rating for the shared lifestyle type.
Figure 3. FAM III General Scale couple profile by subscale and overall rating for the traditional lifestyle type.
Figure 4. FAM III General Scale couple profile by subscale and overall rating for the participant-household lifestyle type.
FAM GENERAL SCALE

Figure 5. FAM III General Scale couple profile by subscale and overall rating for the participant-parenting lifestyle type.
negative correlation with defensiveness \( (r = -0.30) \) and with social desirability \( (r = -28.6) \). This suggests that there was only a marginal tendency to deny or minimize problems among the respondents of this study. The correlation between the two response style subscales was 0.68. These results parallel findings by Skinner et al. (1983). In a sample of clinical families \( (n = 277) \), Skinner et al. reported a median correlation of the content subscales and defensiveness of -0.48 and a median correlation with social desirability of -0.53. The authors reported that non-clinical families have a greater tendency to have elevated social desirability and defensiveness scores but that this is generally representative of only minor difficulties.

In light of the intercorrelation of the seven subscales, use of a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was appropriate. Couples' scores on the seven subscales were used as dependent variables in a one-way MANOVA to test for significant differences among the four lifestyle types. Results of the MANOVA revealed there were no significant differences among lifestyle types with respect to the overall level of family health (all seven subscales, Wilk's Criterion \( F(27, 257.65) = 0.92, p = 0.5765 \).
### Table 3

**Intercorrelations Among FAM III General Scale Subscales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<th>SD</th>
<th>VN</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>INV</th>
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<tr>
<td>Defensive-ness</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.68*</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-.44*</td>
<td>-.38*</td>
<td>-.39*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values &amp; Norms</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.72*</td>
<td>.58*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.62*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Involvement</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p* < .05
Table 3—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>AE</th>
<th>COM</th>
<th>RP</th>
<th>TA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defensiveness</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>-.33*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.46*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>-.44</td>
<td>-.48*</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.58*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values &amp; Norms</td>
<td>.47*</td>
<td>.62*</td>
<td>.37*</td>
<td>.46*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>.58*</td>
<td>.66*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>.48*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Involvement</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.52*</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.44*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affective Expression</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.66*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Role Performance</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Task Accomplishment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
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Note: * p < .05
Table 4

FAM III General Scale Couple Profile Means and Standard Deviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defensiveness</td>
<td>8.81</td>
<td>2.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>9.61</td>
<td>2.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Values &amp; Norms</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Involvement</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.45</td>
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<td>Affective Expression</td>
<td>4.77</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>1.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role Performance</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Accomplishment</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.58</td>
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Table 5
FAM III General Scale Couple Profile Means and Standard Deviations for the Shared Lifestyle Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<td>8.50</td>
<td>1.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>9.83</td>
<td>2.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Values &amp; Norms</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>2.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>1.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affective Involvement</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affective Expression</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>4.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role Performance</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>1.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task Accomplishment</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>2.16</td>
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</table>
Table 6

FAM III General Scale Couple Profile Means and Standard Deviations for the Traditional Lifestyle Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defensiveness</td>
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<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>3.37</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Affective Involvement</td>
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<td>Affective Expression</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
<td>4.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role Performance</td>
<td>6.25</td>
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<td>Task Accomplishment</td>
<td>5.11</td>
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<td>Variable</td>
<td>Means</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Defensiveness</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Expression</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Performance</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Accomplishment</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8

**FAM III General Scale Couple Profile Means and Standard Deviations for the Participant-Parenting Lifestyle Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defensiveness</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>9.73</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values &amp; Norms</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Involvement</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Expression</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Performance</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Accomplishment</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Results**

Couples participating in this study were distributed among the four lifestyle types with 72% sharing some aspect of parenting and household management tasks. All couples reported scores on the FAM III which indicated normal levels of family functioning in all areas. Finally, for the dual career couples in this study, no significant differences were reported among lifestyle types with regard to levels of family functioning.
The purpose of this study was twofold. First, levels of family functioning in dual career families with preschool children were explored. Second, using a lifestyle type measure based on division of labor in the home, couples were placed in one of four lifestyle types. The effect of these lifestyle types on family functioning was then explored. This chapter contains a discussion of the results of each research question, the limitations of the study, and the implications of these results.

Discussion of Results

To answer the first research question, the distribution of dual career couples among lifestyle types was examined. Prior researchers have suggested that in dual career families the wife assumes greater responsibility for household and parenting responsibilities than the husband, with these responsibilities being in addition to her career responsibilities (Baruch et al., 1987; Benin & Agostinelli, 1988; Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987; Leslie & Anderson, 1988). Researchers have predicted that, as the numbers of dual career families increase, changes toward more equality regarding the division of labor in the
home will occur. However, Gilbert and Rachlin (1987) reported that, although dual career married couples stated a preference for equality in the division of labor, in fact, the actual division of labor has changed little, with the division of labor closely resembling the traditional lifestyle type. Leslie and Anderson (1988), although confirming such inequality, noted that the gap in equality regarding division of labor in the home is actually narrowing, with men increasingly assuming more responsibility in both household and parenting areas.

Thus, based on these prior research findings, it was expected that the bulk of the families in this sample would be placed in the traditional lifestyle type, with few couples involved in a shared lifestyle type. In fact, 72% of the couples in this sample reported sharing either household management or parenting responsibilities or both. These results tend to contradict the findings of Gilbert and Rachlin (1987) and confirm the existence of a general trend toward more equality in couples performance of household and parenting tasks (Leslie & Anderson, 1988).

Researchers have examined many characteristics of the dual career family lifestyle including stress and strain (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987), marital satisfaction (Rice, 1979), career salience (Sekaran, 1986), and coping strategies (Skinner, 1980). The dual career family
lifestyle is considered by some researchers to be harmful. In order to answer the second research question, levels of family functioning were measured. Due to the higher levels of stress and strain generally associated with dual career families, it was anticipated that the responses of this sample would more closely parallel those of clinical rather than non-clinical families.

A review of the results of this study revealed that the couples in this sample gave responses on the FAM III which were well within the normal range for non-clinical families on all family functioning subscales. Their responses on the two social response scales, defensiveness and social desirability, were also well within the normal ranges for non-clinical families, which add additional validity to these results as accurate reflections of family functioning.

With growing numbers of dual career families, these findings take on special significance. In terms of level of functioning, these findings do not support the literature which suggests that the dual career family lifestyle is harmful to families. Although the negative characteristics of this lifestyle have been well documented (i.e. high stress, lowered marital satisfaction), in this sample, these negative effects, if present, did not have a negative impact on level of family functioning. The
strength of this finding is that these volunteer dual career married couples appear to be not only managing the dual career family lifestyle but also achieving a level of functioning which clearly indicates overall family health.

The traditional lifestyle type has been associated with higher levels of stress and lower levels of marital satisfaction than other lifestyle types (Cormier et al., 1988). It was expected in this study that couples in the traditional lifestyle type would report lower levels of family functioning than the participant-household and participant-parenting lifestyle types and significantly lower levels of family functioning than the shared type.

In answering research question three, after placing couples in one of the four lifestyle types based on the division of labor in the home, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was computed to determine if there were significant differences in levels of family functioning among these lifestyle types. There were no significant differences among lifestyle types in this sample. Although stress and marital satisfaction levels were not measured in this sample, it is notable that the findings of this study do not support prior research findings that negative outcomes are associated with the traditional lifestyle type. Dual career families have long been considered a distinct family type, although some researchers question
the continued relevance of this assumption (Pleck, 1987; Tinsley, 1987). Interestingly, there were no detectable differences in responses on the FAM III between this sample of dual career couples and the non-clinical sample used in developing the norms for the FAM III. This suggests that the dual career family may no longer be or never was unique among family types and should not be considered to represent a variant pattern in the culture.

Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) described the uniqueness of this family type in terms of the substantial differences in norms and values between dual career and traditional family types (normative dilemmas) and between dual career family members themselves (identity dilemmas). A significant finding in this study was the congruency of the family and cultural values and norms reported on the values and norms subscale on the FAM III. This finding provides further support that the dual career family may not be a variant pattern in the culture but may actually be more closely aligned with the dual earner family type than has previously been considered.

**Limitations**

Descriptive studies, including this one, must be interpreted with caution because of the limitations in generalizability. In this study, a group of volunteer dual career couples in the Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida
area was obtained. Participation in this study was primarily solicited from parents of children in day care centers. Of all the potential participants only a very small proportion actually responded and some who responded declined to participate. Several day care center directors stated that some parents reported being reluctant to participate in this study due to time constraints or overload dilemmas. Thus, a sampling bias due to self-selection may be present. It is not known exactly how many of those who responded but declined to participate actually fit the criteria for inclusion in the study. Additionally, some children do not attend day care centers but are cared for by a caretaker who comes to their home or in small, family day care homes. The proportion of children in these various settings is not known. Thus, the results of this study may not generalize to dual career families with children in other than day care centers and to couples in other regions of the country.

Another potential limitation of this study may be the instruments used. Both instruments are self-report questionnaires which are inherently limited by the ability and desire of the participants to answer them truthfully and accurately. In addition, both instruments used are at the experimental stage and have limited data available on reliability and validity. Although considered a valid
measure of overall family functioning, the FAM III subscales are all highly correlated thus making the drawing of conclusions regarding any one specific subscale extremely tentative.

Finally, definitions of dual career families are broad and diverse in nature. Caution should be used in comparing the results of this study with other studies using different definitions or interpretations of the term dual career family.

Implications

There are several implications which can be drawn from the results of this study. There are implications for counseling dual career families, for research studying the interaction of key variables in dual career families, and for further research in the development of models of family functioning.

In light of prior research, which often focused only on the negative or harmful effects of the dual career family lifestyle, this study examined levels of family functioning, which range from healthy to dysfunctional. Future studies should include both positive and negative outcomes, with researchers directing more attention to the rewards as well as the deficits of the dual career family type.
Overall levels of family functioning for the sample were all within the normal range for non-clinical families, suggesting more congruency between the dual career family lifestyle and other family types. This challenges our current beliefs about dual career families. Comparative research is needed to test our assumptions about the similarities and differences between dual career and other family types.

The families in the sample were classified into one of four lifestyle types according to division of labor in the home. Because of the multiple roles of dual career married couples, equity in the division of labor has been reported to be associated with increased marital satisfaction and lowered stress levels (Cormier et al., 1988). Researchers also noted that actual equity in the division of labor may be more of a stated preference than a reality for many dual career married couples (Gilbert & Rachlin, 1987). In this study no significant differences in level of family functioning across lifestyle types were found, which was contrary to expectations. It has been suggested in the literature that the dual career family pattern is associated with higher levels of stress and strain than the traditional family pattern. It has also been reported that the addition of children in dual career marriages exacerbates these stresses and strains, especially during
the preschool years. In this study, although the sample
criteria were designed to include couples at this most
stressful point in their lives, the scores reported by the
respondents indicated a healthy level of family
functioning. It is not known how the respondents in this
study manage these well documented stresses and strains or
whether or not these stresses and strains are even present
in this group. Additional exploration is needed to answer
these questions. Further research is also needed to
determine the relationship between family functioning and
key variables, such as stress, coping styles, and division
of labor, which have been identified with dual career
families.

In this study the level of functioning in dual career
families was the research focus, which provided a complex
and comprehensive look at this family type. The results of
this study contradicted previous research which focused on
only one or more aspects of the family, (i.e. the couple
relationship, the effect on the children). Little is
currently known about family functioning in dual career
families. More dual career family studies incorporating a
family functioning focus will add to professional knowledge
and aid in the empirical and theoretical development of
models of family functioning, such as the Process Model of
Family Functioning (Steinhauer et al., 1984).
Further work is needed in developing and refining measures of family functioning. The FAM III, based on the Process Model of Family Functioning, is currently considered a valid measure of family functioning which can be used to differentiate clinical from non-clinical families. The FAM III, however, is not sufficiently developed to discriminate among the seven subscales which are purported to be specific variables within the Process Model of Family Functioning. Further work is needed to more clearly define these variables and to develop methods of measuring them as distinct parts of a family functioning schema. Definitions of dual career families vary, with many based on initial exploratory studies and reflecting a specific and narrow viewpoint. As a result, the literature lacks uniformity and a firm foundation with which to guide researchers. An important factor in the efficacy of future research will be the adoption of a more standardized definition of dual career families.

The results of this study also have clear implication for counseling dual career families. The complexity of variables in dual career families makes a thorough initial assessment essential. Practitioners need to fully explore the family as a whole, particularly the levels of family functioning. To do otherwise is to form clinical impressions and make treatment plans without adequate
information. Innovative treatment strategies may need to be developed which assist dual career families in achieving higher levels of family functioning. Counselors should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of various family types to assist clients in making more informed decisions, feeling more in control of life choices, and becoming aware of and providing greater understanding of other's chosen lifestyles.

Cormier et al. (1988) reported significant differences in stress levels and marital satisfaction among lifestyle types based on division of labor. Their findings support the general assumption that an inequitable division of labor in the home has a negative impact on the couple. In this study, no significant differences were found among lifestyle types based on division of labor. If the findings of this study are supported by further research with different samples of dual career families, there would be evidence that division of labor may not be a problem for every couple, or may be a problem for one spouse but not the other. Counselors must not mistakenly assume that a given lifestyle type based on division of labor is automatically problematic for a couple. If both partners are satisfied with the division of labor, then lifestyle type may not be a factor in resolving issues for the couple.
Finally, professionals need to be educated concerning the characteristics of the dual career family. They have a responsibility to be knowledgeable of this family type and to advocate for institutional changes designed to enhance the competence of this lifestyle type. High school and college level courses on the family need to include information on the dual career family to better prepare individuals who may be considering this lifestyle. Similarly, graduate counselor preparation programs must include family studies courses to adequately train professionals.

The results of this study support the need for researchers to integrate key variables associated with the dual career family. Research is needed to clearly establish relationships between key variables, to explore other variables such as levels of parenting skills, and to replicate these results with dual career couples who have children of various ages.
REFERENCE LIST

(Available from James F. Alexander, PhD, Dept. of Psychology, SBS 502, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112)


Dear Parents,

I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Florida, Department of Counselor Education. I am conducting a research study on dual career families and parenting. A dual career parent myself, I am interested in learning more about this family lifestyle which is complex and at times very stressful.

If you are a married dual career couple with a preschool child between 2 and 5, your input is needed to help add to our understanding of this new and unique family lifestyle. At the completion of the study, participants will be invited to a program on dual career families and parenting.

If you are willing to participate in such a study, please complete the information on the back of this letter and return it to your child's day care center.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 378-5506. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

David A. Spruill, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate

Margaret L. Fong, Ph.D.
Doctoral Committee Chairperson
## DEMOGRAPHIC AND CRITERIA QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Husband's WK HM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wife's WK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Age</td>
<td>Wife Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime</td>
<td>Fulltime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halftime</td>
<td>Halftime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Category</td>
<td>Employee Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Categories:</td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng./Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees Held</td>
<td>Degrees Held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Current Marriage</td>
<td>Years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Pre School Aged Child

**Male** | **Female**
---|---
**Name**

**Age** (2-5 years old) (If you have more than one pre school aged child, choose the oldest within this age range)

**Is child the product of current marriage or adopted?** Yes No

"Employment can be grouped into two categories, careers and jobs. Careers are defined as involving a large investment of time, energy, and job training and a high level of personal commitment. It is also the type of employment in which it is expected that advances in responsibility, power, pay, and status accrue over time.

In contrast, jobs are defined as having limited advancement opportunities, hourly wages, and few significant pay raises based on achievement or length of employment.

Which category do you feel your employment fits best in: career or job?"  
Husband  
Wife  

(IF UNTIL CERTAIN WHICH CATEGORY, CHOOSE THE ONE THAT BEST FITS)
APPENDIX B
PARENTING AND HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT SURVEY

Indicate the frequency you do the following parenting and household management behaviors by circling (0) one of the following numbers:

4 = Always
3 = Frequently
2 = Sometimes
1 = Rarely
0 = Never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Grocery shopping</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prepare meals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Set table for meals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do dishes after meals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Clear table and put food away after meals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Clean up after meals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do laundry every week (wash &amp; dry clothes)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Straighten up house</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Sweep, dust or do light cleaning</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Clean bathroom(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Clean kitchen floor, stove and refrigerator</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Vacuum house</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Turn lights off, etc. before going to bed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run errands</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty trash and take out garbage</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay bills</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep the checkbook balanced</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do or arrange for repairs or maintenance in and outside of house</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put gas in car</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrange for or wash and clean car</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do or arrange for repairs or car maintenance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep records for income taxes, etc.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed pet</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care for and clean up after pet</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare meals for child or children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with child or children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help (bath, feeding, put to bed, dressing, etc.) with child or children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Take child or children on outing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Arrange for babysitting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Discipline child or children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Help child or children with school work</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Play with child or children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Spend time with each child individually</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Resolve conflicts between children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Enforce rules with child or children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C
COVER LETTER

Dear Parents,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study on family functioning and lifestyle type in dual career families. Enclosed you will find two questionnaires and an informed consent form. Please complete the questionnaires individually and don't collaborate with your spouse. Answer all the questions yourself.

When you have completed the questionnaires and form, return all materials to your child's day care center in the brown envelope. Please complete and return your questionnaires and the informed consent form as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please call me at 378-5506.

Thank you again for your interest and participation. You will be notified at a later date regarding scheduling of the dual career families and parenting workshop.

Sincerely,

David A. Spruill, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate

I WILL PICK UP THE COMPLETED MATERIALS ON ___________
BIографICAL SKETCH

David A. Spruill was born on November 16, 1950, in Heidelberg, Germany. He is the son of Victor and Harriet Spruill.

In 1968 he graduated from Alva High School in Alva, Florida. He attended Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida, and graduated in 1973 with a degree in sociology. In 1979 he completed his Master of Education in guidance and counseling from the University of Central Florida. In 1985 he received his Specialist in Education degree from the University of Florida with a sub-specialization in marriage and family therapy. In 1986 he re-enrolled at the University of Florida where he continued study toward the doctoral degree in counselor education.

David has been active in a variety of professional organizations including Chi Sigma Iota, American Association for Counseling and Development, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, American Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, and American Mental Health Counselors Association. He has made numerous presentations at the local, regional, and national
levels and co-authored an article published in the American Mental Health Counselors Association Journal.

David's professional interests include counseling children and families, professional identity issues, and the dual career family. He is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in the State of Florida. His personal hobbies include sailing, guitar, and gardening.
I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Margaret L. Fong, Chair
Associate Professor of Counselor Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Paul J. Wittmer
Professor of Counselor Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Sandra Damico
Professor of Foundations of Education
This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Education and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August 1990

[Signature]
Dean, College of Education

[Signature]
Dean, Graduate School