

sensitivity of the job, compelling them to be present at work and to be work-focussed. The outcome of this study is also in agreement with the observation of Galvin & Schieman (2011) that the role expectations of the woman as a mother and a worker are so difficult (if not impossible) for employed mothers to successfully carry them out simultaneously. Knox (2010) had earlier reported that working-mothers who develop ability to integrate the two roles (of mothers and employees) found it difficult because their work did not offer any flexibility and permeability.

Result analysis in table also revealed that more than 50% of the respondents rarely satisfy their husbands' sexual needs (item 1.4; mean, 1.31); recreate with their husbands (item 1.6; mean, 1.17); interact with their children (item 2.9; mean 1.42); check children school work (item 2.4; mean 1.45); do the domestic work (item 3.1; mean 0.68) etc. These findings justify the report of Arendell (2000) & Gerson (2002) that focusing on the needs of children, husband and home, for a mother being employed was considered harmful to the children and family well-being. This study equally strengthened the observations of Bulanda (2007) that the child of a working mother is lacking in parental guidance; and as such, he/she may be unsure of how to interact in the world. Bulanda reiterated that delinquent youths are often reported of having unsupportive and uninvolved parents. The observation of this study also confirmed the reports of Roberts (2000) that most educated women do not see the need to bear the burden and responsibilities of housekeeping but require the assistance of house boys and girls.

The hypotheses tested showed significant differences in responses of employed mothers, based on the type of employment and the number of children. This implies that work-load, flexibility and work hours affect fulfilment of marital role expectations. Noonan, Estes & Glass (2007) expressed a contrary opinion to this finding. They reported that mothers whose work is characterized by inconsistent and unpredictable hours such as part-time services or private self-employed workers have greater work-family conflicts due to lack of spousal support in domestic responsibilities. The finding of this study however, agrees with that of Yang, Chen, Choi & Zou (2000) which revealed that spending less time at work helps to satisfy family demands and had a greater positive impact on work family conflicts in the United States. Likewise, researchers such as Kelly, Moen & Tranby (2011) have found that employees in self employed establishment with greater control of their work hours, work place and how of work had lower work-family conflicts than workers with less control on their work characteristics. This assertion is confirmed by the present finding.

This study also endorses the findings of Spector, Allen, Poelmans & Scooper (2005) who found a significant relationship between the number of hours spent at work and work family conflicts among the Anglos. The authors remarked that presumably, the Anglos view the idea of working extra hours as taking away the convenience from their families, which often results in the feeling of guilt, thereby causing conflicts within family members. The authors however, reiterated that the result was opposite in China because employed mothers and their families view working long hours as a sacrifice for the family. Thus, work-

load, job travel and job inflexibility are not being perceived as having negative effects on satisfying family responsibilities. In fact, spending less time in the family to satisfy work demands was perceived as a means of reducing conflicts. The authors opined that the disparity was mainly due to observable cultural differences regarding the value placed on family and work benefits. In effect cultural context moderates the relationship between demands in the family and work domains, vis a vis work-family conflicts.

The value placed on the family as compared with work in Nigeria urban settings like Abuja where this study was examined does not appear different from that of China. For instance, most respondents of the present study who are employees in the public sector most of who are confidential secretaries, lawyers, accountants as well as hospital staff, and administrative officers, etc. indicated that they resume work as early as 7:30 am and close from work after 4: 00 pm. Majority of them when interviewed acknowledged that they pick their children from school about 5:00 pm instead of at 2:00 pm having paid *after-school-extension* fee. As some of the children attend school during vacation, the parents equally pay for *holiday-care* fee. Parents also have to pay for *tutorial* fee as teachers guide children to do their take-home assignments. Moreover, on week-days, the children most often eat processed or fast foods. A majority of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the practice, but seems to be devoid of any alternative. This observation from the interview confirm the findings of Aycan & Eskin (2005) that employed mothers expressed guilt and anxiety as a result of perceived failure to fulfil prescribed gender and parental roles. The authors reiterated that because the family has a central importance in life, the possibility of harming the family because of work demands was more disturbing to dual earners families, than the possibility of harming the work due to family responsibilities. As a strategy for coping with the work-family demands, Babatunde Raji Fashola, Governor of Lagos State, Nigeria implemented a policy of six-months paid maternity leave, for female civil servants at the birth of their first two children. Also, a male civil servant employed in the State is entitled to a paternity leave of ten working days when his spouse has the first two children. At the delivery of subsequent babies, employed mothers will only enjoy the mandatory three months paid maternity leave. The State Government believes that this policy would advance a balanced family-work life, with the ultimate intent of having future leaders who enjoyed parental care and affection (Williams, 2014).

The test of the second null hypothesis revealed that the number of children is a significant factor of fulfilment of marital role expectations of employed mothers. This finding is in consonance with Grant-Vallone & Donaldson (2001) that mothers' perception of work-family conflict is influenced by the number of children in the household. They also discovered that mothers having many children experience more work-family conflicts than those who have few children due to the time spent on parenting. Researchers such as Zick, Bryant & Osterbacka (2001) found that as the number of the children in the household increases, so does the time, mothers spend on helping with homework, domestic and caring responsibilities. This finding however, contradicts that of Dilworth (2004) who observed that

mothers with more children had less work-family conflicts, possibly because the older siblings help in caring for the younger siblings and with domestic roles, thereby reducing the parenting responsibilities.

7. Counselling Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for counselling services to couples on work issues that could affect the family adversely. The tension between work and family demands is real. The ideal worker norm says that superior workers (men and women alike) concentrate exclusively on work. The intensive mothering ideology says, to be an excellent mother and wife, requires a singular focus on child care and domestic responsibilities. Both have risks and advantages. Mothers who concentrate on work strive to derive maximum benefits from work, have financial capacity to maintain themselves, satisfy economic needs of their home and children. They are recognised in the society for their intelligent contributions as career women and resource persons. However, such laudable achievements could be to the detriment of their families as maternal employment is linked with delayed cognitive development and delinquency in children as well as divorce (Baydar & Brooks-Gunn, 1991; Furdyna, Tucker & James, 2008). Mothers who are self-employed or part-time workers or are engaged in less paying jobs, such as teaching, could have more time for children and home care. Their work is more flexible as they could attend to family demands during work hours. However motherhood today, includes offering regular emotional and financial supports to the children, as well as complementing the husband in his bread-winning responsibilities and children's education. Also, a mother is a model who should teach her children by instructions, training and examples. Therefore, to be a better caretaker and a resource to her children, as well as one who is able to maintain quality mother-child relationship, the woman/mother should have adequate self-care and knowledge of current issues in her environment which makes it necessary for her to work.

Mothers at work are in a dilemma because work interferes or intrudes into family life and there is family interferences with work. This leads to work-family conflict and it has negative effects on mothers, the children and the home. Conflict arises between family and work because the roles or the set of expected behaviour patterns, obligations and privileges attached to work are incompatible with the major expected roles of motherhood. For example, work requires employed mother's access and time while motherly dedication requires maternal access and time. Hence, work-family conflict is perpetual and the major concern of counselling is to keep functional, the techniques of balancing the commitments to work and family roles. From this study, counsellors should note that resolving work-family conflict is racial and tribal sensitive because mothers face different societal assumptions, regarding the appropriate ways of managing home and work. For instance, the identified marital roles seem normative and to maintain social order, everybody is required to fit within the designated or prescribed behaviours, irrespective of socio economic class or work demands, otherwise the individual is perceived as being deviant. Added to the cultural dictate, the principle of life adopted by the individual couple, their value

clarification plays important roles in resolving work-family conflicts. Problems may arise in the family if there is a value conflict between the couple. A counsellor must not impose his/her value on clients but allow the couple to decide on way of resolving the conflicts. Ideally, the ability of a working mother to carry out her work and family roles successfully can only exist on a continuum of complete segmentation (separation) from work or family, to complete integration (merging) of the two roles. This implies that the mother will either quit her job or family or integrate the two roles. Peradventure the last option is taken; the following steps can help to balance the commitments between work and family demands.

1. Dual earner couples should endeavour to live together, so that as women employment increases men could be more involved in possible child care and training as well as house-hold chores.
2. Employers should not ignore the personal lives of employees especially wives and mothers being involved in child care, house work, shopping and family health care. The government should enforce the eight hour work day in private and public establishments for women. This will help employers to recognize that women have family lives and outside interests.
3. The government should implement all that constitute a work-family balance which include the following: organizational support for dependent care, flexible work options, family or personal leave, flexible work hours (flexitime, which permits workers to vary their start and finish times provided a certain number of hours is worked; compressed work week, in which employees work a full week's worth of hours in four days and take the fifth day off), working from home (telework), sharing a full-time job between two employees (job-sharing), family leave programmes e.g. (parental-leave, compassionate leave), access to high quality childcare centres and informational assistance with childcare and eldercare services.
4. Employed mothers should trade off the benefits of extra work hours for happy family life. This may be in the form of minimising excess hours of work and work travels to devote more time to care for their families.
5. Leverage on the assistance of friends, relations and child-care service agents to reduce work-family conflicts.
6. Both parents should be united in nurturing the high expectation of their children performance. They should endeavour to monitor their children expectations to fulfilment either through paid assistance or reduction of work benefit. Parents should follow the norms for appropriate behaviour expectations, give prompt response to the needs of their children, accept and encourage them.
7. Parents should be involved in the lives of their children, interact with them to give them warmth and inculcate in them godliness and cultural virtues.

In conclusion working mothers should put the family well-being above their work benefits. Also they should structure their weekend hours to enable them to be actively engaged with their children in either play, reading a book, discussing family issues or training them to do domestic work. When they are not physically present with their children and

spouses, they may use telephone, text messages or internet conversations as means of being accessible to provide love and care to their children and husbands. The number, timing and spacing of children could also help in balancing the commitment to work and family roles. Also, the ability of the couple to examine family life satisfaction, maternal health outcomes and children success could help to stabilize the demands of work and family life.

The government should make work place to be more family friendly because it has potential benefit for both employers and employees. If possible, employed mothers having young children should be excluded from unpredictable work hours and excess work load because of childcare needs. Lastly, for work-life policies to be truly effective they must be accepted and integrated into the mainstream for all workers-not simply as a special consideration for working mothers. A multi-faceted policy approach is required that will set the foundation for a meaningful change. More inclusive employment regulation, better quality part-time work and greater policy focus on men's uptake of flexible work are likely to alleviate some of the burdens and causes of work-life conflicts across industry and alongside cultural shifts in workplace gender norms. Such policies should focus on how working mothers can be supported in positions that suit their career preferences. Ideally, a functional society relies on families to produce workers and support the paid labour force. The well being of a country's manpower (including the working mothers) is central to effective productivity which stimulates business growth in any sector of a nation's economy. To maintain a balance between paid work and family responsibilities, what the working mothers need most is to have some measure of control over the length and schedule of their working hours. If it is possible, then the benefits are likely to extend not only to women's perceptions of work-family balance, but also to their families, children and employees.

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