WOMEN IN STUDENT AFFAIRS: NAVIGATING THE ROLES

OF MOTHER AND ADMINISTRATOR

A Dissertation

by

KRISTA JORGE BAILEY

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2011

Major Subject: Educational Human Resource Development

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ABSTRACT

Women in Student Affairs: Navigating the Roles of Mother and Administrator.

(December 2011)

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Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Jia Wang

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of women who have children and work in mid-level student affairs positions. The study of this phenomenon was driven by four problems: (a) women face barriers in rising to upper-level leadership positions, (b) women are more likely than men to leave the field of student affairs, (c) there is a dearth of research related to women who have children and work in student affairs, and (d) the mid level has received inadequate research attention. These issues for women in student affairs called for further examination of career development strategies and work-life balance support and initiatives. Without meaningful support for career development and work-life balance, women professionals may continue to leave the field at a higher rate than men. Within the naturalistic inquiry research paradigm, I adopted a phenomenological approach. Fifteen women at colleges and universities in Texas, who held mid-level student affairs administrator positions and were mothers, were interviewed. Data were analyzed using the content analysis method.

The findings indicated that the dual roles of being a mother and an administrator presented challenges and rewards for each participant. The women often experienced overlap or collision between the two roles and the navigation of the role collision prompted the women to develop strategies to address these challenges. The five most common strategies that participants used were (a) building support systems, (b) defining

boundaries, (c) managing time efficiently, (d) focusing on family, and (e) taking care of self. An analysis of the women's experiences related led to five major conclusions: (a) mother + administrator = a potentially rewarding challenge, (b) acknowledging role interconnectedness is important, (c) combining the two roles comes at a cost, (d) career path is shaped by dual identifies, and (e) personalized strategies are key to success. Based on the findings, a new conceptual framework was developed to capture the essence of women administrators in student affairs. Implications for human resource development were drawn to address career development and work-life balance issues in the field of student affairs.

DEDICATION

To Will: Thank you for reminding me what is most important in life

and for loving me unconditionally.

To Kayla: The love that you have added to my life is indescribable.

My wish for you is that you live your life fully and never stop learning.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Completing this dissertation while working full time and learning what it means to be a mother has been one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life, and making it to the finish line would have been much more challenging without the support and encouragement of countless people.

Dr. Jia Wang was my constant encourager. Her positive energy and belief in my abilities helped me to stay focused and on track to meet deadlines. Dr. Wang strives for excellence and does not settle for mediocrity. Her determination and high standards challenged me and enhanced my learning experience. She is one of the most driven and committed people I know and I appreciate all she did to support my success.

My committee members, Dr. Kelli Peck Parrott, Dr. Toby Egan, Dr. Elsa Gonzalez, and Dr. Manda Rosser, were a source of support, encouragement, and feedback. They helped me to stretch my abilities and challenged me to think beyond my limits and learn as much as possible throughout the process. They believed in me and my research, and their support allowed me to learn throughout this endeavor.

Many thanks go to my supervisor, Dr. Bill Stackman, and my colleagues in the Department of Student Activities. They provided support and encouragement that I needed to continue to make progress while balancing multiple demands. I am especially thankful to my "cheering squad," who believed in me always.

I am grateful for the support from my friends and family members. They encouraged me through good times and challenging times. They never let me lose sight of my goals, both personal and professional. Their faith in me was unwavering. My parents have always told me that I can do whatever I set my mind to do, and I appreciate

their continued love and support. I have learned from them that working hard and being committed to excellence can have positive results, but family should come first.

Most important, I thank my husband, Will, and daughter, Kayla. Their support was constant throughout all phases of this process. There were countless nights and weekends when Will and Kayla were at home while I was at class or writing. They never complained; instead they encouraged me to keep working and researching. I am grateful for the love and support that Will has given to me throughout this process. Starting the program, we knew that it would impact us both, but his selflessness over the past 4 years has been remarkable. He believed in me and supported me. Kayla has understood that Mommy had to work on her project, but her asking when I would be done helped me to stay focused on the finish line.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Women continue to face career barriers, regardless of their field. This chapter presents a brief description of the major challenges faced by women in the workforce, followed by an introduction to the research context for this study: student affairs. The chapter presents the research purpose and questions, as well as theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guided this research effort.

Women in the Workforce

Women experience life differently from men (Levinson & Levinson, 1996) and these differences influence their choices, experiences, and identity development. According to Josselson (1987), "Identity incorporates a woman's choices for herself, her priorities, and the guiding principles by which she makes decisions" (p. 3). Identity development consists of merging and navigation of multiple roles, identities, and responsibilities. Women serve in multiple roles over the course of a lifetime, including daughter, wife, career person, partner, mother, friend, sister, colleague, and many more.

Over the course of history, women's roles have changed and expanded and women have been awarded opportunities similar to those of men. Women have worked hard to secure equal access to education and careers, and the effort is beginning to be rewarded. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2011), women earned more associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees than men in 2007-2008 and earned an equal number of professional degrees. Considering the increased numbers of women college graduates, coupled with the high number of retiring Baby Boomers, women should be positioned to move into leadership roles (Valerio, 2009).

This dissertation follows the style of the *Human Resource Development Quarterly*.

However, due to a range of factors, women are not advancing into leadership roles at rates equal to those of men.

Women face challenges in the workforce, experience inequities with pay, face limited access to leadership positions, and are constantly struggling to move beyond the glass ceiling that is still prevalent in the male-constructed work environment. In addition to navigating multiple roles and responsibilities, women are facing barriers in the workforce that their male counterparts do not experience. Learning to navigate these roles can be challenging, regardless of the profession, and the challenges expand across professional fields, including institutions of higher education.

The profession of student affairs is a function of higher education designed to provide services and support to students. It is an arduous profession, requiring long hours and providing lower compensation than comparative fields (Nobbe & Manning, 1997). The demanding nature of the field of student affairs compounds the role navigation challenge for women who want to choose roles of career person and mother. "In spite of increased numbers of women in administration, little attention has been paid to how women manage the complexity of a career in higher education and a family" (Marshall, 2004, p. 91).

The number of women entering the profession of student services is high, but these women often do not see advancement opportunities. They look up the chain and see few women in the top administrative positions and see other women who have moved past the glass ceiling in positions that are typically described as feminine and nurturing in nature. They also see that many of the women who have achieved the highest rung have had to make choices between family/children and career.

The mid level of student services career is not well studied, and there is a paucity of research on women with children at this level—an organizational level at which

women choose to leave the profession. Without a change, it is likely that women will continue to leave the field and the profession will lose valuable talent. The needs of women must be acknowledged to avoid losing this talent (Nobbe & Manning, 1997). Such needs prompt research to understand the experience of mid-level women student affairs professionals with children and the strategies that they use to juggle work and family responsibilities. Such knowledge will provide a road map for other women, ultimately increasing retention of women in the field.

Research Context of the Study

The context for this study was the student affairs profession. Student affairs is a demanding profession. The nature of the profession creates a challenge for those in the field, especially for women in mid-level positions.

Overview of the Profession

Student affairs is a component of higher education institutions that provides critical support to the academic mission of the institution through student development, student services, and student learning (Manning, Kinzie, & Schuch, 2006). The field is committed to meeting the needs of students throughout their college career, which often requires long hours, including evening and weekend work (Nobbe & Manning, 1997). The profession is relational and caring and often requires an emotional investment from staff, who at times share a residence hall with students or support them through emergencies and crises. The culture of the profession has evolved over time. Many student affairs professionals struggle to find balance between their personal and professional lives (Houdyshell, 2007).

Issues Faced by Women

Women in student affairs face many challenges and barriers, as women do in other employment sectors. Similar to many other fields, including the corporate sector,

women are not equally represented in upper-level leadership positions (Dale, 2007; Jones & Komives, 2001; Manning, 2009). A majority of women comprise the entry-level and mid-level leadership positions in student affairs and many women are entering the graduate preparation programs (Jones & Komives, 2001). The women who are in the entry level and mid-level positions typically possess roles that are described as feminine (Spurlock, 2009), which reinforces the challenges for advancement because the upper-level leadership positions are defined through masculine constructs and expectations.

Similar to other work environments (O'Neil, Hopkins, & Bilimoria, 2008), student affairs is a male-constructed profession (Dale, 2007). As a result, women often have to conform to styles of leadership and management based on male constructs. Spurlock (2009) called for a reexamination of the male-constructed profession: "Most studies that point to differences in experiences of women reiterate the fact that women's experiences are different and the very nature of trying to conform to a single (male) standard adds to the negative experiences of women" (p. 115). Women who want to pursue families and children are disadvantaged in this male-constructed environment. Marshall and Jones (1990), in a study of childbearing sequence and career development, found that women administrators in higher education perceived childbearing to have a negative impact on their careers.

Although women are entering the field, they are more likely than their male counterparts to leave the field. In a research study on job satisfaction, Bender (1980) found that women were more likely to leave the field due to reasons such as lack of advancement opportunities. Women face different challenges and barriers than men and have multiple roles and responsibilities, some of which involve children. There is a dearth of research related to women in student affairs with children (Nobbe & Manning, 1997). In a study on stress and student affairs, Berwick (1992) found that women had

higher levels of stress than men. Houdyshell (2007) found that women in mid-career positions considered the impact of families on their advancement in the field.

Purpose and Problem of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of women in mid-level student affairs positions who had children. This population has not been studied extensively; therefore, findings of this study will provide much-needed insights. The study of this phenomenon was driven by four problems. First, women face barriers in rising to upper-level leadership positions. Second, women are more likely than men to leave the field of student affairs. Third, there is a dearth of research related to women in student affairs who have children. Fourth, the mid level has received inadequate research attention. Each of these problems is discussed in this section.

Leadership Barriers

Women student affairs professionals are not equally represented in upper-level leadership positions (Jones & Komives, 2001; Manning, 2009) and are more likely than their male counterparts to leave the field (Bender, 1980; Blackhurst, 2000). In a demanding field such as student affairs, it is not uncommon for job satisfaction to be low. In a study of job satisfaction in student affairs, Bender (1980) found that respondents 37 years old or older were more satisfied with their positions than those in the 23- to 36-year-old group. She also found that 43% of the men indicated that they would stay in student affairs, while only 28% of the women desired to do so.

Women's desire to leave the field is largely influenced by lack of advancement opportunities (Bender, 1980; Blackhurst, 2000). Although the number of women entering student affairs is high, there is a limited amount of recent literature on women in student affairs (Jones & Komives, 2001). The research is specifically scarce related to mid-level positions (Dale, 2007), the level that has witnessed more risk of losing women

professionals than any other levels. Women with children are a unique population of student affairs administrators, and there is even less literature focused on the experiences of this group. Therefore, researchers have called for more research to enhance understanding of the experiences of women in student affairs and to "explore the issues and dynamics of student affairs professionals whose career choices and paths are influenced significantly by the complexities of extended responsibilities and relationships" (Collins, 2009, p. 123).

Women's Retention Issues

Ample research evidence suggests that women are more likely than men to leave student affairs and are less satisfied with their positions, particularly at the mid level (Bender, 1980; Blackhurst, 2000; Dale, 2007; Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm, 1983). In a study of career satisfaction in women student affairs professionals, Blackhurst (2000) found that the satisfaction level for women varied with position and that those in mid-level positions were less satisfied than those in senior-level positions. The mid level is a critical area of concern for student affairs that has been overlooked in scholarship. Although some studies have focused on women in student affairs, many scholars have referenced the gap in the literature, specifically in recent literature (Blackhurst & Hubbard, 1997; Dale, 2007; Jones & Komives, 2001). In a study of persistence in student affairs, Holmes et al. (1983) found the attrition rate to be higher for women than for men. As more and more women leave the field, a valuable pool of talent is lost. "The strongest assets of the slowly maturing student personnel profession is its human resources, and the rate of attrition strongly suggests that we need to pay more attention to this critical factor" (Holmes et al., 1983, p. 442).

Women With Children

There is a very limited volume of literature to provide information on women in student affairs who are mothers or who are planning to raise a family. There are more women in administrative positions, but there has been little research on how women manage the complexities related to having a family and a career in higher education (Marshall, 2004).

Supple (2007) conducted a study to understand the development of a dual-focused outlook by upper-level women administrators in higher education with children.

> For all of the overlooked obligations that women face in the home and in the workplace, it is imperative that more be understood about how to support mothers who work so that women can remain in the workforce, can achieve career goals, and can attain family and life satisfaction outside of the workplace. (p. 10)

Her study resulted in a grounded theory model for full-time working mothers in higher education administration. Although the study provided a model to assist dual-focused women to understand how working mothers navigate their multiple roles, more research is needed to expand her findings and to create a road map for others to follow.

Fochtman (2010) conducted a study to explore the experiences of mid-career women in student affairs with young children. Findings presented information on how women negotiate their roles. Fochtman's research provided a glimpse into the experiences of women with children in student affairs, but she called for re-conceptualization of work-life balance within student affairs and for more research to understand how the profession can support women and maximize their talents and contributions.

Definition of Mid-Level Position

This study examined the strategies used by women who had children and served in mid-level positions to be effective in their professional roles. The mid-level

distinction is important to the research project. Mid-level managers are not the focus of comprehensive research in the field of student affairs (Young, R. B., 2007). Fochtman's (2010) study explored the experiences of women at mid career, but not at the mid level as defined by the institution and positional responsibilities. Middle management in general has not been studied extensively, which compounds the need to study women at the mid-level, specifically women with children.

Research Questions

As a mother and a mid-level student affairs administrator, I brought my own assumptions and biases to this study. I believe that women struggle to balance their roles of mother and administrator and that the strong ethic of care in the student affairs profession compounds that struggle. I believe that women's work and family domains often intersect and women spend a majority of time as a border-crosser, moving from one domain to the next (Clark, 2000). This study addressed two research questions:

1. What are the experiences of women who have children and serve in mid-level positions in the student affairs profession at higher education institutions in Texas?

2. What strategies do these women employ to navigate the roles of mother and administrator?

Significance of the Study

Career development and work-life balance have importance to the field of human resource development (HRD). The issues for women in student affairs described above call for an examination of career development strategies and work-life balance support and initiatives. Without meaningful support in career development and work-life balance, women may continue to leave the field at a higher rate than men. These issues reinforce the need to examine this research problem from the framework of HRD.

This study contributes to the literature on women's career development. Multiple career development models and definitions are available, but not all are applicable to the topic of this study. The majority of the models have been constructed from a White male experience, and women's career development "cannot be approached with a 'one size fits all' mentality" (Bierema, 1998, p. 97). The career development process is different for women than for men due to the diverse roles and expectations for women (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005; Schreiber, 1998). The intricacies found in women's careers support the difference between career paths and complexities for men and women (O'Neil et al., 2008). The need to develop specific strategies to overcome barriers can explain the differences in career paths. Women must make choices regarding their careers that men less likely need to make with regard to family, children, relationships, and career advancement. Findings of this study can enhance understanding of this group of people in the workplace.

First, there is a lack of staff development programs in student affairs (Bender, 1980) and there is a limited focus on career development. Career development in student affairs is related closely to professional development; a majority of professional development is coordinated through professional organizations and conferences. Houdyshell (2007) found that, although general professional development was available through professional associations, professional development for mid-level positions was not available. Findings generated by this study provide insights that can help to create meaningful professional development opportunities for women in the field of student affairs.

Second, this study contributes to the literature on work-life balance. Morris and Madsen (2007) called for HRD to explore work-life issues in order to positively impact the work environment. Compared to other fields, HRD has not given these issues

significant analytical attention, as evidenced by the lack of literature on the topic grounded in a HRD framework (Kahnweiler, 2008; Morris & Madsen, 2007). Performance, by organizations and individuals, is an important area of focus for HRD. Work-life balance impacts employee and organizational effectiveness (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007) and should be a concern of HRD. Identifying strategies that women use in balancing work-life issues will assist HRD practitioners to design targeted interventions for women with children.

Third, this study contributes to literature on women's leadership, particularly in student affairs. HRD has an obligation to assist women to overcome workplace barriers (McDonald & Hite, 1998). The field of student affairs is in need of assistance. The number of women in entry-level and mid-level positions continues to rise; however, women are still an underutilized resource, especially if they do not see a future in student affairs. Given the limited research on this topic, this study represents a timely effort and expands the current knowledge base.

Overview of Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework that guided the design of the study. It represents a synthesis of relevant literature identified in this review. Two theories are relevant to this study: (a) Gilligan's (1977, 1993) theory of women's moral development, and (b) Clark's (2000) work/family border theory.

Gilligan's Theory of Women's Moral Development

Gilligan's theory of women's moral development (Gilligan, 1977, 1993) was a result of her identification of the women's voice missing from previous work on moral development. Gilligan (2004) stated, "The theories of psychological development I had learned and was teaching—the theories of Freud and Erickson, Piaget and Kohlberg— were based on the assumption that man was the measure of all human things" (p. 132).

Figure 1. Guiding framework of the study.

Research Context:
Student Affairs

Purpose: Explore the experiences of mid-level women administrators with children in student affairs.

Theoretical Framework:
Clark's Work/Family
Border Theory

Theoretical Framework:
Gilligan's Theory of
Moral Development

HRD Implications
Career Development
Work-Life Balance
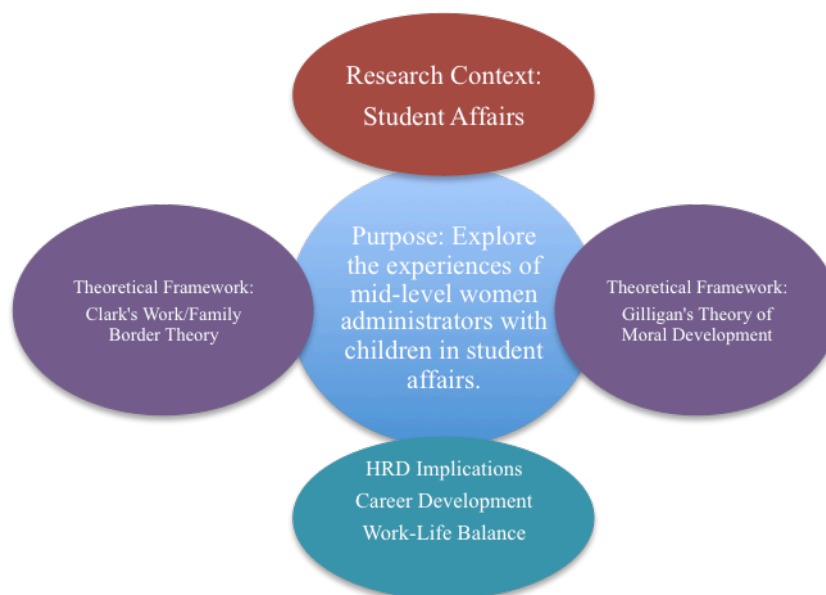
Her seminal work, *In a Different Voice* (Gilligan, 1977)*,* was written to respond to the gap in knowledge and to give voice to the missing perspectives of women. Gilligan challenged the work of Kohlberg and others methodologically because they had neglected to include women in their studies (Brabeck, 1983). She wrote the book "to show how the inclusion of women's voices changes the voices of psychological theory and also to explore the dilemma in women's development created by the opposition between selfishness and selflessness" (Gilligan, 2004, p. 132).

Gilligan's theory provided a theoretical framework to explore multiple roles, but this research problem was also a work-life balance issue. Working mothers are asked to balance multiple demands between work and home, which often causes stress and impacts both work and home domains. Kreiner, Hollensbe, and Sheep (2009) stated that many seek to find balance but are unsuccessful. Understanding the context of work and home in this study is critical because it provides the framework in which to understand

the experiences of the women. Work/family border theory was explored to understand

the expectations with which women struggle in the domains of work and home.

Clark's Work/Family Border Theory

For many years, scholars have studied work-life balance, producing multiple

theories and explanations for the concept that lack consistency (Grzywacz & Carlson,

2007). Theoretical approaches have included spillover, compensation, resource drain,

enrichment, congruence, interrole conflict, segmentation, facilitation, and integration

(Morris & Madsen, 2007). Work-family border theory provides a description of the work

and family domains (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004) and would be categorized as an

integration approach (Morris & Madsen, 2007). The basic premise of the theory is that

people cross from one domain (work) to another domain (family) on a regular basis; the

connection between the two is not based on emotions but on the transition, and the

person's experience in each domain has an impact on experiences in the other domain

(Clark, 2000).

Work-family border theory was important to this study because it provided a

mechanism to explain the two domains that women administrators are navigating.

"Border theory can both describe why conflict exists and provide a framework for

individuals and organizations encourage better balance between work and families"

(Clark, 2000, p. 764). Women administrators who are mothers are forced to be border

crossers on a regular basis, moving back and forth between domains. Work-family

border theory provided a framework to examine their navigation of these transitions.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions

All research is limited by many factors, regardless of the methodologies and

methods used. This study was delimited by the boundaries and constraints that framed

the study. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument; as the researcher, I brought my own set of assumptions to this research (Merriam, 2009).

Limitations

This study has methodological limitations. While a naturalistic, particularly phenomenological research approach allowed generation of rich, descriptive data, it made generalization of findings to a large population impossible (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). Further, participants were purposefully selected based on a set of criteria (Merriam, 2009). These conditions limited the extent to which the findings could be generalized.

Delimitations

Due to time and financial restraints, the study was bounded to specific criteria. First, the study focused on women but not men. By no means does this delimitation indicate or imply that men do not face challenges in navigating the role of father and administrator or face work-life balance issues. The population for this study was defined specifically to examine the experiences of women.

Second, this study focused on mid-level management positions in the organizational hierarchy. This focus was chosen in response to current research findings that the mid level is an area of concern and attention for student affairs and that women at this management level are more likely to leave the field than women at other levels (Bender, 1980; Blackhurst, 2000). One reason for their attrition is that this is a time in their lives when they may be making decisions regarding family (Marshall, 2002).

Third, this study focused on a specific geographical region. Due to time and financial constraints, participants were recruited from public and private colleges and universities in Texas. Although this narrowed the diversity of participants, it assisted in

reducing geographical cultural differences that would be present in a study that utilized participants from across the nation.

Researcher's Positionality

I am in the population of women who were studied in this project. I am a mid-level student affairs professional, as well as a mother. I have worked in student affairs for the past 10 years and I have been very fortunate to have had several opportunities for advancement. I am now in a position that affords me supervision and access to decision making for a department, but I report to the Director of a department, and there are two layers between my position and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

I define myself through achievements in my various roles, which are often conflicting and challenging to navigate. I struggle with work-life balance and leveraging the dual roles of mother and administrator; as a result I carry an assumption that women in similar situations in the field of student affairs experience the same challenges. I value achievement and consider the mid-level position as a stepping stone, rather than an ultimate goal. I do not aspire to hold a chief student affairs position but I identify that position as the top of the career track. I bring with me an assumption that the career path and trajectory for student affairs involves achieving the top position, which could be defined in many ways.

As the research instrument in this qualitative study (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009), I played a vital role in the research process. Therefore, it was important for me to continually acknowledge and reflect on my biases and assumptions. To do so, I used a variety of strategies, including keeping a reflexive journal and using a peer debriefer.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation contains five chapters. Chapter I introduces the topic, identifies the problem, describes the significance of the study, and presents the conceptual and theoretical frameworks for the study. Chapter II reviews literature relevant to the research topic, including student affairs and women's issues, women's career development, and the theories informing the study: Gilligan's theory of women's moral development and Clark's work/family border theory. Chapter III describes the research methodology used for the study, including the research design, participant selection, data collection, and data analysis procedures. Chapter IV reports the findings of the study. Chapter V discusses significant findings in relation to extant literature, draws conclusions based on the findings, and offers recommendations for future research and practice.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature related to women who have children and work in mid-level student affairs positions. The chapter is organized into five sections. The first section provides an overview of the current status of women in the workforce. The second section describes student affairs, the research context. The third section reviews women's career development and the relationship of career development with HRD. The fourth section reviews work-life balance literature from student affairs and HRD perspectives. The fifth section provides a review of the two key guiding theoretical frameworks for this study: Gilligan's theory of moral development and Clark's work/family border theory.

Women in the Workforce

Women serve in multiple roles over the course of a lifetime, including daughter, wife, career person, partner, mother, friend, sister, colleague, and many more. Learning to navigate these roles can be challenging, regardless of the profession in which they work. Student affairs is an arduous profession, requiring long hours yet providing lower compensation than comparative fields (Nobbe & Manning, 1997). The demanding nature of the field of student affairs compounds this dilemma for women who want to fulfill the roles of career person and mother. Women in student affairs face challenges similar to whose faced by women in other professional sectors. An introduction to the current issues that women face in the workforce in general will provide a useful framework to understand women in student affairs.

Challenges Facing Women in the Workforce

Organizations may claim that women are considered equals in the workforce, but ample evidence suggests that this is not the case. While women accounted for 47% of the total U.S. labor force in 2010, they consistently encounter major obstacles in their career development and are challenged by issues that their male counterparts have not experienced (U.S. Department of Labor, 2010). In a review of the articles that received the Rosabeth Moss Kanter Award for Excellence in Work-Family Research, MacDermid and Wittenborn (2007) concluded that gender inequities were still prevalent in the workforce and that these challenges were magnified for working mothers. They cautioned organizations to consider how policies and procedures impacting working mothers may also negatively impact their return on investment. Two prominent issues exist for women in the workforce: (a) Women are not represented equally in upper level leadership, and (b) women do not earn as much as men in comparable positions (Kottke & Agars, 2005; Lien, 2005; Wentling, 1996).

Access to leadership. The first issue is that women are not equally represented in leadership positions in the workforce. In other words, men continue to hold the majority of executive leadership positions, and women have not been able to rise above the level of middle management (Lien, 2005). A small 2.4% of the top 500 corporations are led by women and only 12 of the Fortune 500 chief executive officers are women (CNNMoney, 2011). The women who are in middle management positions often do not have decision-making authority (Kottke & Agars, 2005; Wentling, 1996). Women's difficulty in reaching senior-level positions is commonly understood as the "the glass ceiling" phenomenon: "an invisible barrier that confronts women and people of color as they approach of the top of the corporate hierarchy" (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009, p. 462). The "glass ceiling" phenomenon has been studied in a variety of contexts and

has been shown to impact higher education in the following ways: (a) disproportionate representation; (b) disparities in compensation, rank, and position; and (c) implementation of support efforts (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). The field of student affairs is not exempt from this phenomenon. In this regard, Jones and Komives (2001) stated, "Questions necessarily emerge about the existence of a glass ceiling phenomenon in student affairs administration or the constriction of the leadership pipeline with fewer women advancing to senior-level position than numbers in the pipeline warrant" (p. 235).

Unequal earnings. In addition to not being represented in upper-level leadership positions, women consistently earn less than men. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2010), the median weekly earnings of women in 2010 who were full-time wage and salary workers was $669, or 81% of men's $824. When comparing the median weekly earnings of persons ages 16 to 24, young women earned 95% of what young men earned ($422 and $443, respectively).

Factors Contributing to Gender Inequity in the Workplace

The number of women at the top of organizations is limited due to the barriers that reinforce the gender gap, which expands at each higher organizational level (Schein, 2007). Three critical factors have been shown to contribute to the inequality between men and women in the workforce: different career path, gender stereotyping, and systemic challenges. These barriers are representative of the barriers and challenges that face women in higher education and student affairs as they aspire to senior-level leadership positions.

Career paths. Women often embark on nontraditional or nonlinear career paths and have multiple responsibilities and roles to balance throughout the course of their careers, creating paths that are different from those taken by men (Bierema, 1998;

O'Neil et al., 2008). In a matched-sample study of male and female executives, Lyness and Thompson (2000) found that career strategies differed by gender and that there were more advancement barriers for women than for men. The differences in career paths are related to the need to develop specific strategies to overcome the barriers. Career development interventions and career strategies are often designed from a male construct, and the career differences that women experience require a more customized approach to be effective.

Gender stereotyping. The public generally has different perceptions of men and women (Chemers, 2000), resulting in gender stereotyping within organizations. Schein (2007) noted, "All else being equal, a male appears more qualified, by virtue of his gender alone, than does a female to enter and advance in management" (p. 7). Gender stereotyping creates a cycle of inequity, organizationally reinforcing the barriers that women face and impacting the evaluation of women's performance (Kottke & Agars, 2005). The stereotyping creates specific expectations for women and their performance in an organization, often precluding acknowledgment of women's true accomplishments.

Systemic challenges. Compounding the issue of gender stereotyping are systemic challenges for women embedded within the structure and operation of an organization. These challenges may be so embedded that they are difficult to identify as impediments to women's success. The constructs of work and success have been developed, designed, and implemented through a male lens (O'Neil et al., 2008). Regardless of an individual's commitment to creating an equitable workplace, this construction reinforces unseen biases throughout the organization and disadvantages women. Higher education institutions are no different from the corporate sector in that they were designed and created from a male perspective (Dale, 2007). Many organizations are unaware of these systemic challenges and contend that they have an

equitable workplace. These factors, coupled with the complexities involved in women's careers, inhibit women from rising to the top of organizations.

Student Affairs: The Research Context

Student affairs is a profession dedicated to students, student learning, and student services. It is a demanding field committed to meeting the needs of students throughout their college career. The profession emerged in response to the changing needs of institutions of higher education, as well as the evolving and expanded role of the university in relation to its students. In defining the purpose of this profession, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (1987) stated, "Student affairs assists institutions in responding to changing conditions by providing services and programs consistent with students' needs and the institutional mission" (p. 8). Nuss (1996) identified two critical concepts to the inception of this field. First, "the profession has demonstrated a consistent and persistent emphasis on and commitment to the development of the whole person" (p. 23). Second, the field was founded to "support the academic mission of the college, and one of the characteristic strengths of American higher education is the diversity among the missions of these institutions" (p. 23). As the profession has advanced, these two concepts have been integral to its development. In today's society, student affairs continues to meet the changing needs and demands of students. A focus on student learning and the development of the whole person is still the guiding principle for the profession, which continues to explore new and innovative approaches to meet these goals (Dungy & Gordon, 2011).

The culture of student affairs has evolved over time, and history has shaped it into a field that proves to be a challenging environment in which to find work-life balance. The organizational culture of student affairs supports long hours and evening and weekend work (Nobbe & Manning, 1997; Padulo, 2001). Houdyshell (2007) stated,

"Unfortunately for many, the culture of student affairs does not encourage professionals to be balanced in their professional or personal lives" (p. 191). The demanding nature of the field necessitates a focus on the professional and career development of staff in order to increase retention, satisfaction, and morale in an effort to reduce attrition. As a result of a study on the factors impacting the affective commitment of student affairs professionals, Boehman (2007) called for a shift in the cultural norms of the profession, specifically identifying work-life balance as an area of focus.

Caring Profession

Student affairs is a caring profession. Boehman (2007) described student affairs as a profession in which people feel that they are called to the profession to promote "student learning and development" (p. 307). The calling that student affairs administrators feel related to their work enhances the ethic of care and emotional connection to their professional roles. Manning (2001) described student affairs as a human services profession in which people easily develop "codependent interactions" with others, often put the needs of others ahead of their own needs.

The profession is guided by a set of principles and values that assist in building relationships with students and other staff members, including autonomy, doing no harm, benefiting others, being just, being faithful, and veracity or truth telling (Fried, 2011). All of these principles reinforce the concept of helping others. "For most student affairs professionals, the ethic of care is embedded within their personal value system and translated daily into professional practice" (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010, p. 115). Student affairs professionals embrace the ethic of care and demonstrate it in their work with students, community building activities, and relationships with multiple stakeholders (Manning, 2007).

Women who have children and work in student affairs are constantly pulled in two directions: the professional role and the role of mother. This situation demands their care and attention. The continual tension can create challenges for women to navigate because, as Gilligan (1993) reasoned, "Women not only define themselves in a context of human relationship but also judge themselves in terms of their ability to care" (p. 17).

Demanding Profession

Entry-level professionals in student affairs are likely to work long hours, including evenings and weekends. Barr (1990) noted, "The typical entry-level generalist position in student affairs presents less than ideal working conditions" (p. 169). People enter the field and begin by working in stressful and demanding roles; they soon see that the intensity only strengthens as they move into progressively more responsible positions. In Randall, Daugherty, and Globetti's (1995) study of Senior Student Affairs Officers (SSAO), the participants indicated that the chief administrative position often requires a 24-hour-a-day/7-day-a-week commitment. This intensity causes burnout, high attrition rates, and reluctance to pursue career advancement in student affairs. This is particularly true for female student affairs professionals, who, in addition to making career decisions, may also be making decisions about children and family (Dale, 2007).

Male-Constructed Profession

The profession of student affairs is a male-constructed profession (Dale, 2007). Women in student affairs often are forced to conform to acceptable styles of leadership and management based on the male perspective. Spurlock (2009) called for a reexamination of the male-constructed profession: "Most of the studies that point to differences in experiences of women reiterate the fact that women's experiences are different and the very nature of trying to conform to a single (male) standard adds to the negative experiences of women" (p. 115). Women who want to pursue families and

children are disadvantaged in this male-constructed environment. In a study of childbearing sequence and career development, Marshall and Jones (1990) found that women administrators in higher education perceived childbearing to have a negative impact on their careers.

Challenges of the Profession

The unique culture and nature of student affairs have implications for the administrators in the field. In a field that is mentally, physically, and emotionally demanding, it is not surprising that job satisfaction and retention have been major concerns and have received ample research attention. Barbara Bender conducted one of the first studies on job satisfaction in student affairs in 1980. Her findings indicated a higher degree of job satisfaction in her sample than some would have predicted, but there were areas of concern with some subpopulations. Specifically, Bender found that women and staff younger than 37 years old were more likely to be less satisfied with their positions and more likely to leave the field. Both of these groups perceived fewer opportunities for advancement, which impacted their commitment to stay in the field. Employees younger than 37 years old were less likely to be in Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAO) roles; persons in CSAO positions were more satisfied than were those in other roles (Bender, 1980). Bender called for an examination of productivity and satisfaction due to decreasing resources and encouraged CSAOs to consider career planning for their staff.

Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, and Morrell (2000) conducted a literature review on research related to job satisfaction in higher education. They found that the increased education and experience were related to greater job satisfaction. In a study of mid-level student affairs leaders' intentions to leave, Rosser and Javinar (2003) found that perceptions of their position influenced workers' satisfaction with the position.

Blackhurst (2000) surveyed women student affairs administrators to explore their satisfaction with the profession. The findings indicated that, overall, women's satisfaction was high but that women in mid-level positions reported less satisfaction and less commitment than women in other positions. Lower salaries and less advancement opportunities were perceptions that influenced their desire to leave the field (Blackhurst, 2000).

Hebreard (2010) studied the decision-making process of women who left the field of student affairs. Participants were mothers of young children who were working in mid-level student affairs positions at the time they opted out. Some of the participants had returned to the field, some had chosen to stay out permanently, and others were undecided on their career paths. Hebreard concluded that the following five themes represented the women's desire to leave the field:

> (1) participants exhibited a strong ambition and drive to achieve their aspirations whether professional or personal, but the demands of student affairs were too inflexible; (2) family support and sacrifice made the decision-making process easier to navigate, but all still consider the ability to opt out a privilege; (3) many of the participants expressed feeling emotionally torn between work and mother-hood; (4) mentoring and supervision were critical for women making career decisions; and (5) finding self-worth and fulfillment was the key for participants' professional growth. (pp. 189-190)

Hebreard's study reinforced Bender's (1980) finding that women were more likely to leave the field than men; however she did not find that job satisfaction played a key role in the decision-making process. She called for an examination of the inherent challenges in student affairs and noted the need for changes in order to retain talented staff.

Mid-Level Student Affairs Professionals

Mid-level student affairs positions have distinct characteristics, and women who serve at this level are more inclined to choose to leave the profession than are women at other levels. This section describes the nature of administration at this level to provide insights into the experiences and challenges facing women student affairs administrators.

Mid-Level Defined

The term *mid-level* can be defined in many ways based on a plethora of criteria. Some have defined the term based on competencies (Young, W. W., 2007); others have defined the term based on the person's position at the university, such as faculty position versus administration, and the responsibilities inherent in those positions (Scott, 1980). R. B. Young (1990) defined mid-level position responsibilities as supervising professional staff and programs, which parameters are used as a framework to define and understand the constructs of mid-level position for this study. Although this definition is broad, it provides flexibility for the array of titles and position descriptions that are found across higher education institutions.

Mid-level professionals serve as the communicators between the top and bottom of the organization; they constantly balance the needs from both ends (Young, R. B., 2007). The mid-level student affairs professional has often been referred to as the "bottleneck," because "there is not enough room at the top for all of the talented people" (Carpenter, Guido-DiBrito, & Kelly, 1987, p. 13). Consequently, the mid-level position becomes a critical level in the profession, with talented professionals often stopped there, with limited opportunities for career advancement.

Challenges at Mid Level

Mid-level leaders are critical to the success and goal attainment of student affairs programs and departments (Rosser & Javinar, 2003; Young, R. B., 2007); therefore, efforts should be made to retain them. "Mid-career professionals in student affairs are the backbone of the field, and a significant decrease in the numbers would create a potential vacuum of talent in higher education" (Houdyshell, 2007, p. 133). Although the mid-level professional is critical to the success of the organization, the position can be a place of role ambiguity. In a study of mid-level student affairs professionals, Belch and

Strange (1995) found that varied parameters were used to define middle management, depending on the organizational context or framework for the individual positions. They also found that staff struggled with duality: "being charged with implementing a program or policy yet not always having the power to make decisions regarding its direction or scope" (p. 212).

Women in Student Affairs

Women in student affairs face many of the same challenges described above that are faced by women leaders in the general workforce. While an increasing number of women are entering student affairs graduate preparation programs (Jones & Komives, 2001; Manning, 2009), they are not equally represented in upper-level leadership positions as their male counterparts (Dale, 2007; Jones & Komives, 2001; Manning, 2009). A majority of women in student affairs hold entry- and mid-level leadership positions (Jones & Komives, 2001), which are typically perceived as feminine roles (Spurlock, 2009). This condition creates a barrier for women to advance to executive positions, which are often viewed as requiring masculine competencies and characteristics. Women in student affairs battle systemic barriers in a male-constructed profession, have a high attrition rate, and experience high levels of stress, specifically at mid level.

High attrition rate. Women in student affairs are more likely to leave the field than their male counterparts. Bender (1980) attributed the decision to leave to lack of opportunities for career advancement. In a study of persistence in student affairs, Holmes et al. (1983) found that the attrition rate was higher for women than for men, reinforcing Bender's findings. As more and more women leave the field, a great pool of talent is being lost. "The strongest assets of the slowly maturing student personnel

profession is its human resources, and the rate of attrition strongly suggests that we need to pay more attention to this critical factor" (Holmes et al., 1983, p. 442).

Because mid-level positions often coincide with a time in a woman's life when she is making decisions about a family, women in the mid-level management positions have a high tendency to leave the field (Dale, 2007). Houdyshell (2007) found that women in mid career consider the impact of families on their advancement in the field. As described above, women face challenges and barriers that are different from those faced by men. They undertake multiple roles and responsibilities that may involve child care. There is limited research related to women who work in student affairs and who have children (Nobbe & Manning, 1997). Without timely and effective interventions to address these challenges, it is likely that women will continue to leave the field at a higher rate than their male counterparts.

High level of stress. Berwick (1992) found that women in student affairs positions had higher levels of stress than men and were less satisfied with their jobs. In a study on career satisfaction in women student affairs professionals, Blackhurst (2000) found that "women in the mid-level positions were significantly less satisfied with and committed to the student affairs profession than women in senior administrative positions" (p. 409). The mid level is a critical area of concern for student affairs that has been overlooked in scholarship. The mid level is a place of role ambiguity, lower job satisfaction, high stress, and attrition, specifically among women. Although some studies have focused on women in student affairs, many scholars have noted a gap in the literature, specifically in recent literature (Blackhurst & Hubbard, 1997; Collins, 2009; Dale, 2007; Jones & Komives, 2001).

Women's Career Development

The issues described above point to a need for career development for women in general and specifically for women in student affairs. Women's career development is explored in this section, addressing the relationship of career development to HRD, current issues for women's career development, and career development in student affairs. In this section, career development as a core domain of HRD is defined, followed by a description of women's career development in general and specifically career development in student affairs.

Career Development as a Core Domain of HRD

Swanson and Holton (2001) defined HRD as "a process for developing and unleashing human expertise through organizational development and personnel training and development for the purpose of improving performance" (p. 304). An underlying theme in this definition is improved performance and positive development of both organizations and individuals. HRD consists of three core domains: training and development, organization development, and career development. Career development has had a debated role and focus in HRD research; as a result, there are multiple definitions, theories, and approaches to career development (Egan, Upton, & Lynham, 2006). In an analysis of career development theories and definitions, Egan et al. (2006) identified 19 theories of career development and 30 definitions of career development. The term was defined broadly by Reardon, Lenz, Sampson, and Peterson (2005) as "the total constellation of economic, sociological, psychological, education, physical, and chance factors that combine to shape one's career" (p. 6).

Career development can be a useful tool to enhance the knowledge and skills of workers and to increase the performance of an organization. Different levels of the organization have different views of the mission and purpose of career development, but

all levels can benefit from a well-established career development plan (Knowdell, 1996). Specifically, career development interventions can be useful in assisting student affairs women professionals to remove some workplace barriers to career advancement (McDonald & Hite, 2005). However, as Jo (2008) noted, "To date, not much attention has been given to personnel and human resource management issues in the higher education sector, even though it is one of the major employment sectors in the United States (p. 566).

Research on Women's Career Development

Women's career development has been a debated topic since women began to have a more active role in the workforce. Multiple career development models and definitions are available, but not all are applicable to women's career development. Most models have been constructed based on White males' experiences. Since the career development process is different for women than for men due to the diverse roles and expectations for women (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005; Schreiber, 1998), women's career development "cannot be approached with a 'one size fits all' mentality" (Bierema, 1998, p. 97).

Several studies have explored components of women's career development, including topics such as the career psychology of women (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987), the phases of women's career development (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005), career patterns (Schreiber, 1998), work and family issues (Wentling, 1998), career aspirations (Wentling, 1996), and the impact of family on career development (Farber, 1996). Astin (1984) proposed a model of women's career development. Despite this range of studies, there is no clearly defined theory of career development for women (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Shreiber, 1998).

Different career paths. The intricacies found in women's careers support the difference between the career paths and complexities of men and women (O'Neil et al., 2008). The differences in career paths are related to the need to develop specific strategies to overcome barriers. Women must make choices regarding their careers that men are less likely to need to make with regard to family, relationships, children, and career advancement. "Women's career development is characterized by issues related to work-family balance, career interruptions, and diverse career patterns, all intimately associated with their socialization as females in a male-dominated work world" (Schreiber, 1998, p. 10).

Women's career paths are also influenced by their domestic responsibilities. Women are still responsible for the majority of family duties, which can impact their ability to advance in leadership positions (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Women with children have additional challenges to overcome when developing a career path. Women are more likely than men to take time away from their jobs to care for their children, which impacts their career trajectory (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Juggling such responsibilities influences how women approach their career paths. In a study of men and women's career paths, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) found that women "rejected the concept of a linear career progression instead to cerate non-traditional, self-crafted careers that suited their objectives needs, and life criteria" (p. 109).

Theory of women's career development. There are conflicting arguments regarding whether there should be a specific theory of career development for women or whether it is more effective to have a theory that can meet the needs of both genders (Patton & McMahon, 2006). In a review of women's career development issues, Bierema (1998) called for creation of a model of career development for women: "A comprehensive theory of women's career development that accounts for race, gender,

and class is needed" (p. 102). Although there is a gap in the literature related to theories of women's career development, some career development theories and models reflect attempts to incorporate the roles and experiences of women (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987). The Kaleidoscope career model (KCM) and Super's (1980) life-span, life-space approach to career development are two examples of these models. Each of these models is described to demonstrate its application to women's career development.

Kaleidoscope career model. The KCM is an attempt to provide a career development model that moves beyond the traditional linear model to describe the career development process for women (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). The KCM focuses on three key constructs: authenticity, balance, and challenge. These three constructs rotate in and out of importance for the individual, depending on the individual's current life stage. *Authenticity* defines the alignment of values in the work and nonwork parts of an individual's life. *Balance* is defined by considering the decisions of both work and nonwork as a complete picture. *Challenge* is defined as the continued ability to learn and grow. These three components become larger or smaller depending on the context of the situation, as do the pictures in a kaleidoscope, and allow for an ever-changing approach to understanding women's career development (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). This model provides a mechanism to account for the intricacies of a woman's career.

Super's life-span, life-space approach. Super's life-span, life-space approach to career development was published in 1980 and was later refined into the life-span, life-space theory (Savickas, 1997). The approach embraced the concept that people have multiple roles in which they live, including roles related to family, work, education, and community (Herr, 1997). This approach is focused on four basic components: self-concept, life space, life span, and role changes in life (Swanson & Holton, 2001). Super (1980) identified nine roles through which people progress over the course of a lifetime

and stated that the roles were operationalized in four domains or theaters. Career development was seen as "a life-span process consisting of multiple transitions and shifting needs for information and reassessment of roles, commitments, and identity as new dilemmas and questions unfold" (Herr, 1997, p. 239). Although the application of Super's theory to women has been questioned, the life-span, life-space approach provides recognition of the multiple roles in which people act over the course of a lifetime. When considering the experiences of women who have children and who work mid-level positions, the recognition and identification of their multiple roles is critical to developing a thorough understanding of how those roles are navigated.

Existing research on women's career development. Although there is no specific theory or model for women's career development, several empirical studies have been related to the topic. Findings from these studies shed light on the complexities of women's career development. For example, Wentling (1996) identified four key factors that obstruct women's career development: lack of guide or encouragement from the supervisor, gender discrimination, women's lack of political savvy, and women's lack of career strategy. These four factors are interrelated. Gender discrimination results in lack of encouragement from supervisors, which causes lack of political savvy and career strategy. Furthermore, women have to make choices regarding their career that men may not have to make with regard to family, relationships, children, and career advancement. These choices impact a woman's ability to design and implement a specific career strategy, sometimes resulting in a lack of strategy. The lack of career strategy hinders women's advancement (Wentling, 1996), which reinforces the need for a plan to overcome the obstacles that are unique to women.

Sterrett (1999) explored the difference between men and women with regard to radical job transitions, support for job transitions, and perceived career barriers. The

survey results indicated that women experienced more radical job transitions than men. The radical job transitions support the notion that women had different career paths and could be classified using the same career development models as those that were used for men. The results also indicated that women and men did not differ in perceived support related to job transitions and the genders did not discern differences in the barriers to career advancement. The fact that women participants did not perceive more career barriers is an interesting finding and may suggest that women are not aware of the structural barriers that can impede their career advancement (Sterrett, 1999).

Networks have been used to assist in advancement of women (Baumgartner & Schneider, 2010). In a case study of the impact of an in-company women's executive network on women's careers, Bierema (2005) found that the network was not a positive tool for women's career development. She drew three conclusions from the findings: (a) Networks may serve to reproduce patriarchy, not erode it; (b) the level of gender consciousness impacts network participation and commitment; and (c) network success is influenced by organization culture (Bierema, 2005).

Shapiro, Ingols, O'Neill, and Blake-Beard (2009) surveyed more than 300 women to understand their goals, career management decisions, and career management tools and practices. They found that, instead of opting out of work, women participants acted as "career self-agents" and used flexible work arrangements to assist in managing their careers. In addition, these women were trying to find tools to help them to stay employed full time. These findings also indicated that women had three types of career goals: contemporary career goals, balance goals, and conventional measures of success goals. The study contributed to the career development literature, specifically related to flexible work arrangements, and provided a new paradigm by which to view women's career development: Women are pursuing success and excellence related to all three

career goal factors. This new career paradigm is focused on both the organizational and individual levels and has significant implications for HRD (Shapiro et al., 2009).

Baumgartner and Schneider (2010) performed thematic analysis of qualitative interviews to explore the issues that women face when breaking through the glass ceiling. The purpose of their study was to acknowledge that women are still challenged to reach upper-level management positions and to identify strategies used by women who were successful in the endeavor. Six themes related to the glass ceiling were examined: (a) the old boys/new boys network, (b) sacrifices required to get to the top, (c) the role of mentors, (d) support from other women, (e) effective leadership styles, and (f) the choice to forego upper management (Baumgartner & Schneider, 2010). One finding of the study was that the women identified family as a limit to a career and that motherhood could impact the ability to be perceived as a hard worker and devoted employee.

In addition to studying the career development patterns of women, research efforts have been made to explore the impact of utilizing career management strategies on women's careers. For example, Rogier and Padgett (2004), applying hypothetical scenarios, assessed the consequences of women using a flexible work schedule. Their findings revealed that the potential for career advancement was directly related to a flexible work schedule. In other words, women who were on a flexible work schedule had lower potential for career advancement than those who were not, even if there was no difference in individual performance in the hypothetical scenario. Potential for career advancement was influenced by the schedule but career ability was not influenced. The results of the study raise concerns about women who may be trying to navigate the roles of mother and administrator. Although organizations may provide for and support

initiatives to support balancing the two roles, the organizational culture and perception may prevent women from taking advantage of these opportunities.

The extant literature documents several prominent themes on the topic of women's career development. First, the career paths of women differ from those of men (O'Neil et al., 2008). Second, women experience barriers to advancement and are underrepresented in leadership positions (Wentling, 1996). Third, there is no clearly defined notion of women's career development (Bierema, 1998). Fourth, family has been identified as a barrier to career success (Baumgartner & Schneider, 2010). Fifth, when women attempt to utilize resources to manage their roles, they are perceived as less capable than their male colleagues (Rogier & Padgett, 2004). All of these issues signal a need for HRD interventions to support women's career development.

HRD professionals can play a critical role in helping women identify strategies, which will help break the glass ceiling and realize career aspirations. Further, as defined above, women have distinct needs with regard to career development (Lyness & Thompson, 2000; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005; Wentling, 1996), as well as distinct career development phases. Yet, organizations often do not provide the resources, including leadership development, to support these different needs and phases (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005). HRD professionals can play an active part in assisting organizational leaders to establish a sound organizational support system.

Women's Career Development in Student Affairs

The profession of student affairs would benefit from interventions by HRD professionals. There are limited opportunities available to support women's career development in the profession. Janosik, Carpenter, and Creamer (2006) found women to be the most receptive to the creation of a professional development curriculum for student affairs practitioners. However, staff development programs are often lacking in

student affairs (Bender, 1980). A majority of professional development is coordinated through professional organizations and conferences. Programs have been designed specifically for women and women who aspire to senior-level positions. However, it is worth noting that, although professional development is available through professional associations, professional development specific to mid-level positions is limited (Houdyshell, 2007). This offers an opportunity for HRD professionals who can be charged to design professional development programs for mid-level female administrators.

There is little empirical research related to career development in the context of student affairs. One study on career development in student affairs was conducted by Blackhurst, Brandt and Kalinowski (1998a) to examine "the relationship between career development variables and the organizational commitment and life satisfaction of women in the student affairs profession" (p. 21). A quantitative design was used to collect data; findings indicated that organizational commitment and life satisfaction was influenced by career development variables. Position title and organizational level impacted organizational commitment and life satisfaction: the lower the level, the less commitment. Mid-level women who held doctorates, were in associate or assistant SSAO positions, and had more than 5 years of experience in their positions were also less committed to their organizations; those who had been in their positions for more than 20 years had lower levels of life satisfaction (Blackhurst et al., 1998a). The study supported the results reported by Bender (1980) that women in mid-level and lower-level positions were less satisfied.

There are professional development opportunities focused on the mid-level professional, including regional conferences and institutes and national mid-level institutes such as the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Donna M.

Bourassa Mid-Level Management Institute (Segawa & Carroll, 2007). There are also professional development opportunities for women such as the Women's Leadership Institute and Alice Manicur Symposium for aspiring CSAOs. However, there are no programs designed specifically for women in mid-level positions to address their unique needs at this point in their careers.

In sum, career planning/development has been an area of opportunity for student affairs for many years. In 1980, Bender issued a charge to CSAOs to focus on career planning. Since 1980, not much change has occurred. In 1998 Lorden stated, "Administrators should seek out innovative ways of providing formal opportunities for advancement" (p. 213). Based on a study of professionals at mid career, Houdyshell (2007) recommended research on the professional development opportunities that are available for supervisors. Career development continues to be an area of need for focus in the field. "Chief student affairs officers, human resources professionals and presidents of colleges and universities should revisit their preconceived ideas about career profession in order to offer alternatives that will be more attractive to women in the field" (Spurlock, 2009, p. 155).

Work-Life Balance

One of the challenges faced by women administrators in a highly demanding field such as student affairs is how to juggle the dual roles of professional and mother. This challenge points directly to the issue of work-life balance, one of the emerging concerns for HRD researchers and practitioners. This section draws on literature on work-life balance, with a specific focus on women administrators in student affairs. The issue described above for women in mid-level student affairs positions provides an opportunity for HRD to explore the work-life balance issues that these women face.

Work-Life Balance in HRD

Morris and Madsen (2007) called for HRD professionals to explore work-life issues in order to positively impact the work environment. Compared with other fields, HRD has not given these issues significant analytical attention, as evidenced by the lack of literature on the topic grounded in a HRD framework (Kahnweiler, 2008; Morris & Madsen, 2007). Work-life issues are experienced by the majority of people in the American workforce, and it is critical that HRD become more actively involved in developing interventions to assist with the management of these challenges (Kahnweiler, 2008). Polach (2003) urged HRD professionals to move the work-life balance conversation from a series of policies and procedures to a "way of thinking" in order to maximize the experience not only of workers with families but also of workers with outside responsibilities and commitments that must be balanced with the demands of work. Crooker, Smith, and Tabak (2002) conducted a literature review of streams of scholarship related to work-life balance and developed a theoretical framework to describe work-life balance and work-life imbalance. Their model considered factors beyond typical family structure and work demands. They argued that the majority of the research on work-life balance was focused on work and family, which limited the ability of researchers to explore other contexts and factors related to achieving balance.

Hill et al. (2007) examined the positive influences on work-life balance among employees at a large corporation in order to move beyond the conflict perspective, which has dominated work-life scholarship. Using qualitative methods, the research team sought to understand how family life positively impacted work life and how work life positively impacted family life. The findings indicated that work positively impacted home and vice versa. The study has major implications for HRD professionals, including a shift in the paradigm of how this issue is discussed. Hill et al. (2007) provided a new

metaphor to describe the interface between work and family, shifting from the idea of balance to the idea of positive interface.

"Work-family balance is at the core of issues central to human resource development (HRD)" (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007, p. 456). Although these authors noted that work-family balance is a core issue for HRD, they also acknowledged that HRD has not engaged in significant research related to the topic. To move the profession forward in scholarship related to work/family balance, they chose to define the issue from a social construct, defining *balance* as "an accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his or her role-related partners in the work and family domains" (p. 458).

As evidenced by the research cited above, the challenge of managing multiple roles is a situation in which working adults may find themselves, regardless of the field or profession. HRD has not fully engaged in research related to this topic and there is a demand for a more sophisticated understanding of the issues and challenges related to work-life balance in order to maximize performance by individuals and organizations.

Work-Life Balance Issues for Women in Student Affairs

Women face unique work-life balance issues due to their multiple roles. This is not to imply that men do not struggle with work-life balance or competing demands in their roles. However, the focus of this study is on women and consequently, this section is focused on women.

Women's dual roles of mother and administrator can cause conflict and stress, resulting in mixed feelings and emotions. Guilt has been reported by women who are trying to balance demands of career and motherhood (Collins, 2009; Guendouzi, 2006: Marshall, 2002; Spurlock, 2009; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). To understand the experiences of working mothers, Guendouzi (2006) interviewed mothers who worked

full time as teachers. Her findings indicated that managing both a career and motherhood created stress for the women (Guendouzi, 2006). Guendouzi also found that working created a place for women to develop their own identity. Based on these findings, she called for more research on working mothers to understand modern motherhood and the guilt that is often associated with balancing roles of motherhood and work. The study supported findings reported by Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004) on tenure-track faculty members who were also mothers. The participants in their study reported a feeling of constantly being torn between work and home responsibilities.

Student affairs is a profession that challenges work-life balance issues, a challenge that is particularly faced by women with children. Student affairs has been described as a helping profession or a profession with a high ethic of care, which makes it difficult for employees to create boundaries, resulting in imbalance (Guthrie, Woods, Cusker, & Gregory, 2005). In a study of the factors related to burnout of student affairs professionals, Howard-Hamilton, Palmer, Johnson, and Kicklighter (1998) reported that women with children were more likely to be emotionally exhausted than men or women without children. These findings reinforce that the work-life balance challenge for women is multifaceted. Despite this well-recognized concern, work-life balance in student affairs has been rarely addressed in research (Beeny, Guthrie, Rhodes, & Terrell, 2005). Reisser (2002) highlighted the importance of self-renewal and personal development in developing student affairs leadership to avoid imbalance.

Guthrie et al. (2005) conducted a qualitative study of student affairs practitioners who had been identified by their colleagues as demonstrating exceptional work-life balance. Eleven participants were interviewed and a model of balance was developed. The model had four key components: (a) self-knowledge, (b) intentionality, (c) commitment to self-care, and (d) reflection. The researchers identified these four

keys as the "foundation for attaining and maintaining a sense of personal and professional balance" (p. 121).

A search of the literature related to women's work-life balance issues, both in student affairs and in higher education, using keywords such as *student affairs, work-life balance, work*, and *family*, produced limited results. One issue of the *College Student Affairs Journal* in 2005 focused on the topic of balancing professional and personal lives. Two articles were focused on women, and both were personal reflections (Taylor, 2005; Terrell & Gifford, 2005). Current studies focus mainly on job satisfaction or life satisfaction (e.g., Blackhurst, 2000; Blackhurst, Brandt, & Kalinowski, 1998b) and women in the profession (e.g., Collins, 2009; Fochtman, 2010; Marshall, 2002; Spurlock, 2009; Supple, 2007).

Padulo (2001) analyzed environmental factors that influenced the experience in student affairs reported by women with children. Using the Delphi method, Padulo identified three environmental factors that enhanced the experience for women: (a) a flexible work schedule, (b) a supportive supervisor, and (c) a manageable job description. It is interesting that one third of the 34 participants in that study had plans to leave the field. The study supported findings reported by Nobbe and Manning (1997) that the organizational culture in student affairs supports and rewards long hours, resulting in an unhealthy balance (Padulo, 2001).

The following paragraphs review relevant studies conducted in the higher education context. There have been studies of balance and the relationship between work and nonwork in higher education settings. Havice and Williams (2005) studied balance strategies used by university presidents. Their findings emphasized the importance for student affairs staff to understand the various settings and components of their life, including the professional setting, the family setting, and the self-orientated setting.

Beeny et al. (2005) examined SSAOs' perceptions of professional/personal balance. They found that the SSAO position is demanding and that (a) holders of the position varied in their self-evaluation of their own balance, (b) their actions were not always consistent with what they espoused, and (c) there were statistically significant differences between men's and women's perceptions of balance: Women reported feeling less able to find balance than did their male counterparts.

Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004) studied the strategies used by women who were both mothers and tenure-track faculty to manage their dual roles. The study reinforced the position that managing dual roles is challenging and creates conflict in a woman's life. Although the study was conducted in the academic context of the institution, the recommendations for institutions to reconsider policies and systems that create barriers for women who want to be both a professional and a mother is applicable to the work in student affairs.

Marshall (2002) studied the experiences of women who had children and who held senior-level higher education administration positions. The findings indicated that many of the women participants were the first administrator to maintain the position and manage the responsibilities of being a mother, giving them the responsibility not only to manage their own roles but also to set the trend for women who followed them. The women found great passion in their work and appreciated their dual identities. The results reinforced that balance is complex and individual and that success is possible but requires both personal and professional sacrifice, as well as supportive institutional culture.

Spurlock (2009) examined the experiences of women CSAOs and the relationships among career progression, balance, and relationships. She found that (a) gender impacted their careers, (b) work and nonwork were interrelated, and

(c) climbing the career ladder entailed personal costs. Using naturalistic inquiry and a semistructured interview, Spurlock interviewed nine women who currently held the position of CSAO. The findings indicated a distinct intersection between work and nonwork. The women reported stress and guilt associated with balancing multiple components of their roles and identified negative consequences of their career success. Spurlock called for more research in student affairs related to the experiences of women who had children and women who did not have children.

In contrast to Spurlock (2009), who studied women who progressed to senior-level positions, Collins (2009) studied women who had declined to assume senior-level positions, despite the fact that they had the educational and professional experience and expertise to be successful in the role. These women, who had been offered the position of vice president, had chosen to decline in order to have a balanced life. Collins encouraged the student affairs profession to revisit the culture of the profession, the standard career progression, and the traditional work model, and called for more research on women who had children and worked in student affairs.

Supple (2007) conducted a study to understand the development of a dual-focused outlook by women who had children and worked in the upper levels of higher education administration.

> For all of the overlooked obligations that women face in the home and in the workplace, it is imperative that more be understood about how to support mothers who work so that women can remain in the workforce, can achieve career goals, and can attain family and life satisfaction outside of the workplace. (p. 10)

Her study resulted in a grounded theory model for full-time working mothers in higher education administration. Although the study provided a model to assist dual-focused women to understand how working mothers navigate their multiple roles, more research is needed to validate her findings and to create a road map for others to follow.

Fochtman (2010) explored the experiences of mid-career women in student affairs who had young children, seeking to identify how mid-career student affairs professionals negotiated their lives. Findings presented information on how the women negotiated their roles and identified mid-career status as a positive contribution to their success. Fochtman called for a reconceptualization of work-life balance in student affairs. Fochtman's research provided a glimpse into the experiences of women with children in student affairs, but she called for more research to continue to understand how the profession can support women and maximize their talents and contributions.

There has been a range of approaches to the study of work-life balance. Some take the form of self-help and efficiency, such as Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (Covey, 2004); others provide a model for understanding the constructs of work and home (Clark, 2000). Caproni (2004) argued that the concept of balance should be critically examined to ensure that the basic premise of trying to find balance is not, in fact, making the balance impossible to achieve. Using critical theory, Caproni challenged the current approaches to work-life balance and identified the need to continue systemic review of the concept. Women in upper-level positions in higher education and in faculty positions have been studied; however, overall, there is a dearth of research on women who have children and work in student affairs. The literature review reinforces the need to study the experiences of women who are managing the dual roles of mother and administrator. With this knowledge, the profession can critically analyze current strategies and create best practices for women to employ as they attempt to create balance between the roles.

Theoretical Framework

The women's issues described above span multiple areas of scholarship. Two theories represent bodies of literature that inform this research topic: (a) Gilligan's

theory of women's moral development, and (b) Clark's work/family border theory. Each theory is discussed in terms of its origin, related research and findings, and the relevancy of the theory to this study of the experiences of women who have children and work in mid-level student affairs positions.

Gilligan's Theory of Women's Moral Development

Gilligan's theory of women's moral development resulted from her identification of the women's voice that was missing from previous work on moral development. "The theories of psychological development I had learned and was teaching—the theories of Freud and Erickson, Piaget and Kohlberg—were all based on the assumption that *man* was the measure of all human things" (Gilligan, 2004, p. 132). Her seminal work, *In a Different Voice* (1977)*,* was written to respond to the gap in knowledge and to give voice to the missing perspectives of women. Gilligan challenged the work of Kohlberg and others methodologically, claiming that they had neglected to include women in their studies (Brabeck, 1983). Gilligan stated that she wrote the book "to show how the inclusion of women's voices changes the voices of psychological theory and also to explore the dilemma in women's development created by the opposition between selfishness and selflessness" (2004, p. 132).

When previous theories of moral development were applied to women, women often did not progress through all of the stages and were labeled as deficient or unable to develop fully (Gilligan, 1977, 1993). Gilligan (1977) sought to understand how a different voice may emerge and be understood to have a different "social and moral understanding" (p. 482). Gilligan's model has been described as one "of structural progression of increasingly complex, differentiated, and integrated views of the morality of care, in which one is responsible for self and others" (Brabeck, 1983, p. 276).

The model considers and accepts the social constructions of gender and asserts that women operate from an ethic of care, as opposed to an ethic of justice that Kohlberg prescribed (Gilligan, 1977). The model involves three progressive levels of moral development: (a) orientation to individual self, (b) goodness as self-sacrifice, and (c) the morality of nonviolence. Two transitions occur between the levels. The individual progresses from a focus of individual self to a focus and ethic of care between self and other (Gilligan, 1977). Table 1 describes the moral development levels and transitions (Evans et al., 2010; Gilligan, 1977).

Table 1

Levels of Development in Gilligan's Theory of Moral Development

Level	Description
Level 1: Orientation to individual self	Primary sense of concern is for self. Relationships are often unsuccessful and force a focus on self and survival.
First transition: From selfishness to responsibility	The transition to a connection with others begins to develop, and selfishness and responsibility have conflicting roles in decision making.
Level 2: Goodness as self-sacrifice	Social connection and acceptance become important. Caring becomes an important part of decision making.
Second transition: From goodness to truth	Women begin to consider their own voice and what role that has in relation to others. Their needs as individuals become important to the decision-making process.
Level 3: The morality of nonviolence	Care becomes central to decision making, both care for self and care for others.

Origin of the theory. Kolhberg's theory of moral development and research conducted by others identified women as incapable of fully developing moral aptitude

(Gilligan, 1977, 1993). Gilligan, who had studied with Erickson and Kohlberg, began to question the comprehensiveness of their studies as she heard different voices and development emerging from her studies with women (Gilligan, 1993, 2004). Her work was informed by three studies: a college student study, the abortion decision study, and the rights and responsibilities study (Gilligan, 1993).

The college student study (Gilligan, 1993) involved 25 students who were taking a class on moral and political choice. The students were interviewed as seniors and again 5 years after graduation. The abortion decision study (Gilligan, 1993) involved 29 women who were contemplating having an abortion and had been referred by a counseling service or abortion clinic (Gilligan, 1977, 1993). The rights and responsibility study (Gilligan, 1993) involved 144 male and female students who were "matched for age, intelligence, education, occupation, and social class at nine points across the life cycle" (Gilligan, 1993, p. 3). All three studies were naturalistic inquiries, seeking to understand the experiences of the participants. The same interview protocol was used across all three studies, posing questions about "conceptions of self and morality, about experiences of conflict and choice" (Gilligan, 1993, p. 2).

Gilligan's theory evolved out of a desire to examine women's moral development independent of men's moral development. Throughout the course of her study and development of the model, she studied both men and women. She sought to describe the ethic of care as a voice distinct from the ethic of justice. Although women were the subject of the majority of Gilligan's studies, she was "careful to describe the ethic of care as voice that is 'different' from the one found in the universalist theories such as Kohlberg's but not as a 'woman's voice'" (Moore, 1999, p. 4).

Gilligan's work has been challenged. For example, scholars have questioned the applicability of her qualitative study findings because they are not generalizable to a

large population (Brabeck, 1983). Her abortion decision study was limited to women who had sought counseling, which may infer a greater propensity of a relational perspective because those women already valued the role of relationship (Moore, 1999). Critiques of Gilligan's work also include her identification of distinctness between men and women. "Gilligan permits her readers to conclude that women's alleged affinity for 'relationships of care' is both biologically natural and a good thing" (Kerber, 1986, p. 309). Yeh and Creamer (1995) conducted a study on the moral reasoning orientations of Taiwanese men and women leaders; the data did not support findings from Gilligan's studies. They did not find any evidence of difference of orientation between men and women, although they found that the type of dilemma influenced the orientation that was used. Despite these criticisms, Gilligan's theory has provided a framework for numerous empirical studies.

Research based on Gilligan's theory. Gilligan's work has been used as a theoretical framework for many studies, including moral orientation (Yeh & Creamer, 1995), career decision making (Stonewater, 1988), and leadership propensity (Simola, Barling, & Turner, 2010). Forrest and Mikolaitis (1986) used Gilligan's work to propose a relational component of identity in career development. "Because the relational component of identity is central to self-definition for both sexes, the next step in theory development is to incorporate the construct into existing theories of vocational development" (p. 83). Lyons (1983) empirically tested the hypotheses presented in Gilligan's theory. Lyons explored 36 individuals' conceptions of self and orientation to morality; findings supported Gilligan's (1977, 1993) claim that moral development should include a consideration of care. Stiller and Forrest (1990) tested the work of Gilligan and Lyons to address their methodological concerns about the previous research. They examined differences in self-identity and moral reasoning in

undergraduate residence hall students at a large Midwestern university. Overall, their findings supported the work of Gilligan and Lyons, but they also discovered that women had more diversity in their modes of self-description and models of moral reasoning and that there were differences between women's and men's choice of modes.

Gilligan's work has extended academic boundaries and has been used to inform leadership research. Simola et al. (2010) examined the impact of ethics of care and ethics of justice on a leader's propensity for transformational or transactional leadership. They found that those who demonstrated transformational leadership showed a propensity toward an ethic of care, while those who demonstrated transactional leadership showed a propensity toward an ethic of justice.

Gilligan's (1977, 1993) work has given a voice to the experiences of women in multiple fields in many research studies. Her theory of moral development can be useful in understanding the experiences of women who are navigating the roles of mother and mid-level administrator in student affairs.

Relevance to this study. For many women, the choice between work and mothering can be considered a moral decision that creates a personal challenge and tension between competing roles due to a strong ethic of care. "The day-to-day reality of mothering entails a persistent and often painful juggling of warring emotions and the capacity to care is developed strongly when one becomes a mother" (Oberman & Josselson, 1996, p. 343). The model described by Gilligan (1977, 1993) assists in understanding how a woman navigates the roles, as well as the challenges, and obstacles presented in each role and in combining the roles.

Using Gilligan's theory of moral development as a framework to understand the experiences of women with children can shed light on the question, *does moral development impact a woman's ability to navigate multiple roles*? Depending on the

answer to the question, HRD professionals could design career development

interventions to support development and growth of women professionals that would

lead them to success in student affairs. In a literature review aimed at providing a

conceptual framework of social networks for working mothers, Schultz and Higbee

(2010) concluded,

> Any research related to the effectiveness of support networks of working mothers, whether from the point of view of the participants or the employer, must be grounded in a theoretical perspective that considers women's values and ways of knowing and making meaning of their life experience. (p. 93)

Although not limited to support network, there is merit in considering women's values

and ways of knowing when exploring their experience with multiple roles. Gilligan's

theory provides a useful guide in this endeavor.

Women in student affairs must find their voice and hear the voice of others who

are successful so they can find power and move beyond mid-level positions.

> It is precisely this dilemma – the conflict between compassion and autonomy, between virtue and power – which the feminine voice struggles to resolve in its effort to reclaim the self and to solve the moral problem in such a way that no one is hurt. (Gilligan, 1977, p. 491)

To be career orientated and career driven may be perceived by some as neglecting the

role of the mother to care for her children. Gilligan's model of moral development can

provide a framework to examine the moral decisions involved in the navigation of these

roles.

> Because the acquisition of adult power is seen to entail the loss of feminine sensitivity and compassion, the conflict between femininity and adulthood becomes construed as a moral problem. The discovery of the principle of nonviolence begins to direct attention to the moral dilemma itself and initiates the search for a resolution that can encompass both femininity and adulthood. (Gilligan, 1977, p. 509)

> Gilligan's theory provides a theoretical framework to explore these dual roles,

but this research problem also points to the work-life balance issue. Working mothers

are expected to balance multiple demands between work and home, which expectation

often causes stress and impacts both work and home domains. Kreiner et al. (2009) stated that balance is something that many seek to find but are unsuccessful in their search.

Clark's Work/Family Border Theory

Understanding the context of work and home in this study is critical because it provides the framework by which to understand the experiences of the participating women. Work/family border theory is explored to understand the expectations with which women struggle in the domains of work and home.

For many years, scholars have been studying work-life balance, resulting in multiple theories and explanations (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). Theoretical approaches have included spillover, compensation, resource drain, enrichment, congruence, interrole conflict, segmentation, facilitation, and integration (Morris & Madsen, 2007). Work/family border theory provides a description of the work and family domains (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004) and can be categorized as an integration approach (Morris & Madsen, 2007). The basic premise of this theory is that people cross from one domain (work) to the other (family) on a daily basis. People tailor their focus, goals, and interpersonal style to fit the individual demands of the two domains (Clark, 2000). Each domain has a distinct culture that influences the context of the domain.

The work/family border theory utilizes Nippert-Eng's (1996) description of boundaries along a continuum of segmentation and integration. The boundaries separate the domains; they can be segmented, creating a distinct barrier between domains, or they can be integrated, allowing easy overlap between domains. People choose how to relate the two domains somewhere along the continuum between segmented and integrated (Clark, 2000). The work/family border theory consists of four major components:

borders, permeations, border-keepers/domain members, and border-crossers (Clark, 2000). Each of these components is described.

Borders. "Borders are lines of demarcation between domains, defining the point at which domain-relevant behavior begins or ends" (Clark, 2000, p. 756). Three types of borders can be created: temporal, physical, and psychological. Temporal borders determine when time is spent in each domain. Physical borders are the actual physical boundaries between the domains, such as the walls of a work building. Psychological borders are the rules and guidelines for appropriate behavior and thinking within each domain. The permeability of a border describes the ability for elements to enter and exit the domain (Clark, 2000).

Permeations. Permeations are elements in one domain that are present from the other domain. For example, pictures of family in an office may be a permeation of the family domain in the work domain. Borders can also be defined by their flexibility, or ability for one domain to enter the other. When borders have a high degree of permeability and flexibility, blending can occur. "Permeability, flexibility and blending combine to determine the strength of the border" and "borders will be stronger in the direction of the more powerful domain, and weaker in the direction of the less powerful domain" (Clark, 2000, p. 758).

Border crossers. Border crossers are persons who move between the two domains. "Attributes of border-crossers which are most relevant are those which contribute to their ability to alter the domains and borders to fit their needs" (Clark, 2000, p. 759). Border crossers have the ability to be central participants or peripheral participants, related to their level of influence within the domain (Clark, 2000).

Border keepers and domain members. Border keepers and domain members are persons who either maintain borders or have roles within the domain. Border keepers

and domain members have an impact on work/family balance because they influence the flexibility and permeability of the borders. Clark (2000) defined *balance* as "satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict" (p. 751). The degree to which the components described above interact influences the level of balance that can be realized.

Origin of the theory. The theory was developed by Clark because the theories that were available at the time were limited, did not provide actionable solutions, and were primarily focused on the emotional component of work-life balance. Clark used a personal journal, interviews, and a focus group to explore the issues related to work and family balance and to develop the theory. The interviews were conducted with a diverse group of people but were limited to a small population. A multidiscipline literature review also informed development of the theory, which was heavily influenced by the work of Kurt Lewin (Clark, 2000).

Research based on Clark's theory. Work/family border theory (Clark, 2000) and boundary theory (Nippert-Eng (1996) are closely aligned. Work/family border theory examines only the domains of work and family, whereas boundary theory can be applied more broadly (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004). Work/family border theory is influenced by research on boundary theory. Research has been conducted using Clark's work/family border theory; a description of a sample of the research findings follows.

Singh (2011) explored work-life balance in men in student affairs, utilizing Clark's work/family border theory as the theoretical framework. Using a case study approach, he interviewed seven men in various student affairs positions. The men ranged in type of position, level within the organization, and number of years in the profession. His research led to a new paradigm of conceptualizing balance for men. He concluded, "Men experience an evolving definition of work/family balance, depending on a variety

of personal factors, including marital/parental status and work environment" (p. 106). He determined that boundaries are not rigid but are constantly evolving and being redefined based on the situation. He presented the model as cyclical: Men develop boundaries, violate those boundaries, face emotional consequences for violating the boundaries, and, as a result, redefine their boundaries. Singh urged HRD and student affairs personnel to move beyond understanding individual definitions of balance and focus to understanding how individual definitions are developed and what those definitions mean to individuals.

Matthews, Barnes-Farrell, and Bulger (2010) conducted two studies to define the "boundary flexibility measures" (p. 447). The studies resulted in development of "two internally reliable and valued measures assessing inter-domain transitions" (p. 458). The measures allow quantitative measurement of Clark's work/family border theory.

Using work/family border theory, Myrie and Daly (2009) studied self-employed home-based employees in Canada to understand how they used boundaries to manage the balance between work and home. The study employed the grounded theory approach and resulted in a theory to explain how these workers developed, maintained, and navigated boundaries. Myrie and Daly's theory boundaries were used to help people find their own level of integration or segmentation of the demands of work and family.

Voydanoff (2005) used work/family border theory in a quantitative study to examine work-to-family conflict and perceived stress. She reported that the work/family border theory was useful in her examination. "This application of work/family border theory has yielded useful findings regarding the consequences of boundary-spanning demands and resources for work-to-family conflict and perceived stress" (p. 501).

Lambert, Kass, Piotrowski, and Vodanovich (2006) used the work/family border theory as a component of their theoretical framework in an empirical study of participation, communication, and satisfaction. The results of their study supported the

propositions of the work/family border theory (Clark, 2000). The findings suggested that communication plays a role in the work domain but not in the home domain. These finding support the propositions of Clark's work/family border theory.

Donald and Linington (2008) used work/family border theory's concept of centrality (Clark, 2000) in conjunction with gender role orientation to examine work-life family conflict and life satisfaction in male managers in South Africa. The results supported components of the work/family border theory: "Moderate levels of work/family conflict, relatively high life satisfaction and less traditional gender role orientation" (p. 669).

Relevance to this study. Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) stated that work-life balance is a critical issue for HRD due to its overarching impact on employee and organizational effectiveness. Both men and women are confronted with the challenge of finding work/family balance, but research has shown that women are more consistently and more seriously challenged than men. In a study of work-life balance of men and women at midlife, Emslie and Hunt (2009) found that "almost all of the women had experienced difficulties in coordinating different areas of their lives and most of their accounts of these difficulties related to the present or the very recent past" (p. 159).

Academic institutions, specifically divisions of student affairs, are not exempt from the need to find strategies to assist women. Jo (2008) urged academic institutions to seek means to address retention of women and to remove barriers that prevent them from meeting the demands of work and family responsibilities. Polach (2003) identified the issue as one of the major concerns for HRD and called for the profession to take action because work-life integration impacts not only human resources but also organizational effectiveness.

Work/family border theory contributes to this study for several reasons. Work/family border theory provides a means to examine navigation of transitions between domains. First, women administrators who are mothers are forced to be border crossers on a regular basis, moving between domains. Second, border theory can help to explain why conflicts exist and can identify strategies that encourage balance between work and family (Clark, 2000). Third, Desrochers and Sargent (2004) argued that, if work and family life become so highly integrated that the work/family boundary is blurred, negative consequences such as work/family conflict, stress, depression and dissatisfaction with both work and family life are possible. In a highly emotional and taxing field such as student affairs, it is easy for the boundaries to become blurred; many women administrators seek balance by integrating their children into their university role and life. Work/family border theory provides a tool for HRD professionals to design meaningful career development interventions to assist women in navigating their roles.

Chapter Summary

This review of the literature points to glaring gaps in current knowledge about the topic under study. Women are an underused resource in the field of student affairs. They are entering the field in large numbers but are not persisting to attain senior-level positions. Further research is needed to understand the experiences of women and to provide tools for women who want to fulfill the roles of administrator and mother when navigating their career paths. Very few studies in higher education have embraced the HRD perspective and work-life issues. While HRD scholars have recognized the issue as important, they have not adequately examined this topic. This study is an attempt to fill these voids.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Methodology involves analyzing "assumptions, principles, and procedures in a particular approach to inquiry" that informs the methods used in research (Schwandt, 2001, p. 161). This chapter addresses the purpose of the study, the research paradigm and design, and the methods used for data collection and analysis. Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness of the findings are described.

Restatement of the Purpose and Research Questions

The primary purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of women working in mid-level student affairs positions who had children. Studying this topic was significant for two reasons. First, little literature is available about women in student affairs who have children or who are planning to raise a family (Collins, 2009; Nobbe & Manning, 1997; Supple, 2007). Second, in spite of increased numbers of women in administrative positions, "little attention has been paid to how women manage the complexity of a career in higher education and a family" (Marshall, 2004, p. 91). With regard to student affairs in particular, while the number of women entering this field is high, research focused on this group of population is scarce (Blackhurst & Hubbard, 1997; Dale, 2007; Jones & Komives, 2001). Therefore, this study was a timely effort to fill knowledge gaps regarding professional women administrators in student affairs.

This study was designed to address these issues by exploring the experiences focusing on women in mid-level student affairs positions who have children. The study was delimited to women serving at higher education institutions in Texas. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the experiences of women who have children and serve in mid-level positions in the student affairs profession at higher education institutions in Texas?

2. What strategies do these women employ to navigate the roles of mother and administrator?

Research Paradigm

A researcher's philosophical assumptions guide the research approach and design. Creswell (2007) described five philosophical assumptions that influence a researcher's choice of research: ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (the nature of knowledge), axiology (role of values), rhetoric (the language of research) and methodology (the research process). The researcher chooses a stance on each of the five assumptions and those stances influence how the research is conducted as they inform the research paradigm (Creswell, 2007). This section presents my philosophical assumptions as a researcher related to ontology, epistemology, and methodology.

Social Constructivism

My ontological and epistemological assumption is that reality is subjective and constructed by individuals. This research was conducted through a social constructivist lens. Social constructivism is a worldview that holds that the social, political and psychological realities of individuals are socially constructed (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). Social constructivism seeks to answer the question of how people have constructed their individual reality (Patton, 2002).

The research questions of this study focused on the lived experiences of women with children. I sought to understand the participants' views of their experience of the phenomenon being studied. Creswell (2007) described the social constructivist research process as "researchers make an interpretation of what they find, an interpretation, and they 'position themselves' in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows

from their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences" (p. 21). Research using a subjectivist ontology relies on the use of "quotes and themes in words of participants" to generate data (Creswell, 2007, p. 17). The qualitative research method was most appropriate for this study because it allows the researcher to "understand the meaning people have constructed" (Merriam, 2009, p. 13).

Overview of Naturalistic Study

A naturalistic inquiry approach to qualitative research was utilized in this study. A naturalistic study is an approach to research that falls within the paradigm of naturalistic inquiry. A paradigm is a model or perspective by which to view the world (Kuhn, 1996). Within this paradigm the researcher seeks to understand the experience being studied. The naturalistic paradigm expands knowledge, regardless of whether it conflicts with knowledge previously understood. The paradigm of naturalistic inquiry assumes that there are many truths that cannot be understood with rational processes or more data (Erlandson et al., 1993).

Different from the positivistic paradigm or quantitative research, which seeks to identify a single truth, a naturalistic study attempts to describe an event, phenomenon, or experience. Unlike quantitative research, which is prescriptive and planned, naturalistic inquiry is continually evolving until the conclusion of the study. A naturalistic inquiry relies on an emergent research process; all of the details cannot be determined in advance. The emersion occurs as data are collected and analyzed. Each step of the process may lead to new information that influences the emerging research design and requires the researcher to make changes and adaptations (Erlandson et al., 1993).

A naturalistic study allows the researcher to seek answers to the research questions through connections, relationships, and information sharing with others. Describing a naturalistic study, Erlandson et al. (1993) stated, "The purpose of a

research inquiry is to seek to resolve the problem by accumulating pertinent knowledge and information and, in collaboration with the various stakeholders in the social context being studied, construct meaning directed toward that end" (p. 49). Naturalistic inquiry enables an understanding of the real world without the constraints of a rigid research design (Patton, 2002).

A naturalistic study is unique in that the researcher plays a vital role in information or data collection; in other words, the researcher serves as the primary research instrument (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002) and the researcher's senses guide the data collection and construction of reality (Erlandson et al., 1993). The data are collected not only via a survey or assessment tool but from the lived experiences of the researcher with the study participants through interviews and observation.

A naturalistic study is designed to understand a phenomenon or experience and can employ the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Due to the nature of a naturalistic study, there is a desire to have a rich description of the experience under study, which often requires qualitative approaches to "facilitate study of issues in depth and detail" (Patton, 2002, p. 14). Some use the term *qualitative* to describe a naturalistic study. Qualitative researchers are interested in "understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). A naturalistic study cannot be developed from a rigid, linear plan. It calls for flexibility and emergence in the design but it requires certain components and elements to be included in the design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985): identification of a problem, sample selection, data collection, data analysis, study quality, and reporting (Erlandson et al., 1993).

Merriam (2009) stated that the purpose of qualitative research is to understand how people construct their worlds through experience and meaning. The current research problem required a deep understanding of the women's experiences in order to describe the strategies that they use to manage their multiple roles; this called for qualitative data collection tools and warranted the use of naturalistic inquiry. Naturalistic inquiry provided a general framework or approach to the qualitative research process; phenomenology was used as the research design.

Phenomenology

Creswell (2007) described five major approaches to qualitative inquiry: narrative research, grounded theory, ethnography, case study, and phenomenology. Phenomenology seeks to understand the "essence of the experience" (Creswell, p. 78). The intent of this study was to explore the experience of being a mother and an administrator; such central phenomena warranted a phenomenological approach.

Within the naturalistic inquiry research framework, a phenomenological approach was adapted to this study. This approach was appropriate because it aims to provide a process for examining human experiences (Creswell, 1994, 2007) and allows the researcher to construct a question or set of questions to collect data based on the experience being studied (Moustakas, 1994). The overall purpose of a phenomenological study is to "determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). Phenomenology studies the lived experience of several individuals (Creswell, 2007; van Manan, 1990). The research questions of this study focused on the lived experiences of women who have children and who hold mid-level positions in student affairs.

Approaches to Phenomenology

Creswell (2007) described two approaches to phenomenology: hermeneutic phenomenology and transcendental or psychological phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology is an "attempt to uncover and describe the structures, the internal meaning structures, of lived experiences" (van Manan, 1990, p. 10). Hermeneutic phenomenology does not provide a structured process for gathering data and exploring the lived experiences. Transcendental phenomenology, on the other hand, provides tools and steps to describe the experiences of participants (Creswell, 2007). Moustakas (1994) described transcendental or empirical phenomenology as an approach that "involves a return to the experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflexive structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experiences" (p. 13). Whereas hermeneutic phenomenology has a strong focus on the researcher's interpretation of the lived experience, transcendental phenomenology provides for a description of the lived experiences (Creswell, 2007). This distinction aligns transcendental phenomenology with the purpose of this research study.

Transcendental Phenomenology

Phenomenology is the study of the lived experiences of several individuals related to a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Phenomenology focuses on the "appearance of things" and describes the appearance from a whole perspective. Meaning is sought from appearance, intuition, and experience. Findings are shared as rich, accurate descriptions of experiences, not explanations or analyses. The phenomenological researcher is invested in and has a personal interest in the experience being studied. Subject and object cannot be disconnected; they are interwoven within the process. Primary data come from an individual's experience, and therefore interviews and observation are used to collect data. The research question is integral to the

phenomenological study and must be crafted carefully because it guides every step of the study.

Research Design of the Study

Creswell (2007) described eight procedures for conducting phenomenological research.

Step 1: *The research problem is examined to determine whether this approach is appropriate.* "The type of problem best suited for this form of research is one in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon" (Creswell, 2007, p. 60). The research questions for this study were developed to understand the common experiences of women who have children and who serve in mid-level student affairs positions, reinforcing that a phenomenological approach was appropriate.

Step 2: *The phenomenon is identified.* The phenomenon studied in this research was the experiences of women who have children and who serve in mid-level student affairs positions.

Step 3: *The researcher identifies his or her own philosophical assumptions and biases related to the experience being studied.* Bracketing is referred to as the epoche process, "in which investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination" (Creswell, 2007, pp. 59–60). In order to bracket my own experiences, my dissertation chair interviewed me in an attempt to identify assumptions related to the research. I maintained a reflexive journal and utilized a peer debriefer to continue the bracketing process. These procedures are explained in depth in a later section.

Step 4: *Data collection occurs, typically through an interview*. The data collection procedures use in this study are discussed in the next section. I conducted semistructured interviews with the participants.

Step 5: *Open-ended interview questions are utilized to gather data from the participants about their experience with the phenomenon*. I used a semistructured interview protocol to guide interviews with each participant.

Step 6: *The data are analyzed.* Content analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was used to analyze the collected data. Content analysis allowed for the horizontalization process described by Moustakas (1994), which calls for each statement of data to be treated equally and then grouped into clusters of meaning.

Step 7: *The significant statements and themes are used to write a description of what the participants experienced,* a process called *textual description* (Creswell, 2007). A structural description was also written, which uses a process called imaginative variation to describe the context in which the phenomenon was experienced (Creswell, 2007). Imaginative variation allows the researcher to consider various alternatives in which the phenomenon could be experienced (Moustakas, 1994).

Step 8: *The findings are reported using the textual and structural descriptions.* This is a composite descriptive of the common experiences surrounding the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). The steps described above were used to guide the research design of this study.

Phenomenological studies are derived from the researcher's interest and investment in the topic (Moustakas, 1994). In this case, I was the researcher, a mother, and a mid-level administrator in student affairs. I am constantly challenged to navigate the roles of mother and administrator; therefore, I am deeply interested in and excited about learning the experiences of other mothers/female professionals in similar

situations. As the primary research instrument, I needed to be aware of my assumptions, biases, and lens that I brought to the study, which are articulated in this chapter.

As described above, a phenomenological study requires specific processes and procedures for data collection and analysis. The methods for sampling, data collection, and data analysis are described in the following section.

Methods

This section describes methods for conducting and reporting a phenomenological research design, including sampling, data collection, and data analysis. These research methods are informed by both the naturalistic inquiry (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and the phenomenological approach (Moustakas, 1994). The steps outlined above were followed to describe the methods. Prior to conducting the research, approval for the design was obtained from the university's Institutional Review Board (Appendix A).

Steps 1, 2 and 3: Problem, Phenomenon, and Assumptions

As identified by Creswell (2007), the first step in conducting phenomenological research is to determine whether the research problem warrants a phenomenological approach. The purpose of this research was to understand the experiences of women who had children and who worked in mid-level positions in student affairs. The second step is to identify the specific phenomenon to be studied. The experience being a mother and an administrator was the phenomenon that was examined in this research. In order to articulate my own assumptions and biases, I went through the epoche process as described in the Researcher's Positionality section. As described above, I began working on the third step when I identified my philosophical assumptions and approach to research. I continued the epoche process, evaluating my own assumptions and biases, throughout the research study.

Step 4: Sample Selection

The site and sample are important components of a naturalistic study. "The selection of a suitable site is a critical decision in naturalistic research, because the inquirer will conduct his or her study in a particular native setting to observe and record the day-to-day operations of the environment" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 53). The site must be accessible to the researcher and must provide an opportunity for the identified problem to be studied. The site for this study was student affairs divisions in colleges and universities in Texas. As a student affairs professional, I had access to other divisions and staff members on campuses other than my own, through my personal contacts and professional networks.

A naturalistic study employs purposeful sampling to define the parameters of the population. Patton (2002) described purposeful sampling as "studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations" (p. 230). Merriam (2009) stated that the purpose of qualitative research is to understand how people construct their worlds through experience and meaning. Purposeful sampling provides a tool to examine deeply the experiences of a specific population. Purposeful sampling also ensures that the participants have experienced the phenomenon that is being studied (Moustakas, 1994).

Several sampling strategies are available for a naturalistic study, for example, extreme or deviant case (outlier) sampling, intensity sampling, maximum variation sampling, homogenous sampling, typical case sampling, critical case sampling, snowball or chain sampling, criterion sampling, and theory-based sampling (Patton, 2002, p. 243). This study employed criterion sampling and snowball sampling to identify participants in the population of women who had children and who held mid-level positions in student affairs organizations. The sampling process consisted of two phases:

Phase 1: I used my student affairs colleagues as a network to assist with identification of potential participants based on three criteria: (a) Participants must be a mother of at least one dependent child who shares the same residence, (b) participants must hold a mid-level position, as defined by the institution's organizational structure, and (c) participants must have served in a mid-level student affairs position for at least 3 years. Three years provided ample time for the participant to have experienced the demands associated with the mid-level position. Someone who had recently been promoted into the role may or may not have had the depth of understanding or sufficient experience of the complexities and nuances of the mid-level position.

Phase 2: After this initial selection, I used a snowball sampling technique to identify additional participants. "Snowball, chain, or network sampling is perhaps the most common form of purposeful sampling" (Merriam, 2009, p. 79). Snowball sampling utilizes the current study participants to identify additional potential participants. When talking with each participant, I asked her to identify other potential participants. Once those names were shared with me, I contacted them for participation in the study. The intent of the purposeful sampling was to identify a diverse group of women to study, as "the object of the game is not to focus on the similarities that can be developed into generalizations, but to detail the many specifics that give the context its unique flavor" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 201).

Participants

As described above, potential participants were identified by student affairs colleagues. Initial requests to participate in the project were delivered via email (Appendices B and C), outlining the purpose of the study and participation requirements. An information sheet (Appendix D) was attached to the email. Once the participants agreed to participate in the study, follow-up phone calls were made to determine that the

participant met the study criteria and to arrange the time and place for the interview. The Participant Demographic Information Sheet (Appendix E) was used to collect this information. All of the interviews were conducted face-to-face to provide an opportunity for observation of the participant's environment.

The sample size in a naturalistic study is almost impossible to define in advance of the study and is determined by the research problem and what the researcher is hoping to find (Patton, 2002). The sample size may ebb and flow depending on the emergence of findings as the researcher embarks on the research. Data collection ends when saturation in information collection is reached (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I interviewed 15 participants in this study and reached saturation.

Steps 4 and 5: Data Collection Method

The primary purpose of gathering data in naturalistic inquiry is to "gain the ability to construct reality in ways that are consistent and compatible with the constructions of a setting's inhabitants" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 81). As Patton (2002) noted, "Qualitative data describe. They take us, as readers, into the time and place of the observation so that we know what it was like to have been there" (p. 47). Forms of data collection in a naturalistic study include interviews, observation, document review, and artifact review (Erlandson et al., 1993). Creswell (2007) described the fourth step in phenomenological procedure as data collection, which typically occurs through interviews. For this study, the primary data collection was interviews, as informed by the phenomenological design. For the purpose of data triangulation, observations were used to a limited extent to provide complementary information.

Interviews. Interviewing is the major source of the qualitative data in a phenomenological study (Patton, 2002) and is the fifth procedural step defined by Creswell (2007). Purposive phenomenological interviewing allows the researcher to

capture how those being interviewed view their world, their perceptions, and experiences. Interviews allow for deep and rich exploration of the phenomenon being studied (van Manan, 1990).

In this study I employed interviewing, specifically individual, semistructured, open-ended interviews, as the primary source of data because it provided flexibility in the interview (Merriam, 2009). An interview protocol was developed. The interviews were designed to be semistructured to provide flexibility in the interview, resulting in an increased richness of the data. Merriam (2009) described semistructured interviews as a combination of structured and unstructured questions. Interviewing allows for understanding of the experience and to begin to see the world through the lens of the participant. Erlandson et al. (1993) stated, "Interviews also help the researcher to understand and put into a larger context the interpersonal, social, and cultural aspects of the environment" (p. 85).

Each interview began with a review of the purpose of the interview and a review of the consent form (Appendix F). The interview protocol (Appendix G) was used as a guide for the conversation but did not dictate the conversation. The interview questions were designed to be informal and open-ended to permit interviewees to take their own direction and to use whatever words they wanted to express whatever they wanted to say (Patton, 2002). They allowed me to gain the deepest understanding of the individual's experience (Moustakas, 1994). Following each interview, I wrote memos capturing my observations, feelings, hunches, impressions, speculations, and ideas regarding the interview process and shared them with my peer debriefer (Appendix H). This reflection provided a basis to determine whether follow-up was needed with each participant. Interviews ranged 45 to 75 minutes in length.

Upon completion of each interview, the tape was transcribed verbatim by a professional transcriptionist and sent to the participant for member checking. Member checking allows the participant to review the interview content for accuracy and make necessary changes (Erlandson et al., 1993). If additional information was needed, questions were embedded in the transcript and participants were asked to answer the questions. The majority of the participants responded to the request for member checking and provided an updated copy of their transcripts; a few participants did not respond to this request. Appendix I is a sample transcript member check.

Observations. Observation, like interviews, is equally important to the data collection process and can be used in combination with interviews as a powerful research tool. "The interaction of the two sources of data [interviews and observations] not only enriches them both, but also provides a basis for analysis that would be impossible with only one source" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 99). Interviews create an opportunity for an exchange of information; they "take more of the form of a dialogue or an interaction" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 85). Observation provides the researcher an opportunity to construct a context in which the participants function, which adds to the richness of the data collection. In this research study there were limited opportunities for observation; I used active observation before, during, and after each interview. Depending on the participant's interview site selection, this included observing her office space and general campus environment. I arrived early to each interview to spend time observing the office dynamics. In many cases, the office was small and there was not an opportunity to observe office dynamics.

Document analysis. Documents and records are useful sources of information for triangulation. Documents include "a wide range of written, visual, and physical material relevant to the study at hand" (Merriam, 2009, p. 112). Three major types of

documents are usually available to researchers for analysis: public records, personal documents, and physical materials. For this study, once the participants were identified, I conducted research on each of their institutions. I reviewed each institution's websites to gain insight into the organization, including policies related to employees with children. Due to significant differences between institutions, the document review provided a framework for understanding the organizational context for each interview. I asked participants to provide a copy of their personal and professional calendars for the months of June, September, and April, in order to review the responsibilities of the participant. These three months were selected to determine whether there were differences between summer months (June), the start of a semester (September), and the end of a semester (April). Each of these months represented a different "season" of the student affairs work.

Merriam (2009) identified "researcher-generated documents": documents are prepared by the researcher or by the participants for the researcher after the study has begun. These could include items such as documents, photographs, and diaries or logs. The purpose for the researcher to generate documents is to learn more about the situation, person, or event under study. In this study, I kept a reflexive journal and wrote memos to a peer debriefer. Appendix J contains an excerpt from the reflexive journal. Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined a reflexive journal as "a kind of diary in which the investigator on a daily basis, or as needed, records a variety of information about self (hence the term 'reflexive') and method" (p. 327). I used the reflexive journal to further examine myself as the research instrument. This examination assisted with the epoche process, which is an important aspect of data analysis in a phenomenological study. Epoche is the process of identifying and attempting to remove biases or prejudices regarding the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). The reflexive journal provided a venue for

me to explore my biases, prejudices, thoughts and assumptions throughout the data collection and analysis process.

Step 6: Data Analysis Process

Data analysis is a multistep procedure that occurs continuously throughout the research process and is the sixth step in the phenomenological procedure defined by Creswell (2007). Data collection and data analysis are concurrent processes that do not occur in isolation from one another (Erlandson et al., 1993). Strategies for analyzing data in naturalistic studies include phenomenological analysis, grounded theory, ethnographic analysis, narrative analysis, case studies, and content analysis (Merriam, 2009). I utilized content analysis as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985). "Data analysis involves taking constructions gathered from the context and reconstructing them into meaningful wholes" (p. 333).

All of the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Once the transcriptions were complete and participants were given an opportunity to review the transcript, the data analysis process began. Erlandson et al. (1993) described four stages in the data analysis process "(a) unitizing data, (b) emergent category designation, (c) negative case analysis, and (d) bridging, extending, and surfacing data" (p. 116). Each of these four stages is described below.

Stage 1: Data unitization. Unitizing the data involves breaking the data down into the smallest pieces that can stand alone. "Unitizing data may be defined as disaggregating data into the smallest pieces of information that may stand alone as independent thoughts in the absence of additional information other than a broad understanding of the context" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 117). Each interview transcription was converted to a word document. There were 327 pages of data from the interview transcripts. Data were reviewed line by line to identify each independent

thought. Each thought had an individual line in the word document. Following unitization, each unit of data was printed on an index card with a corresponding data code for reference purposes. The data unitization produced 3,984 units of data. Sample index cards are shown in Appendix K.

Stage 2: Emergent category designation. Emergent category designation is the process of identifying themes and categories that are emerging in the review of the data. The emerging categories of ideas represent what the researcher is learning about the experience being studied. The categories were determined through a card sort process. Each index card with the individual unit of data was reviewed and categorized. Erlandson et al. (1993) described the steps as follows:

1. Read the first card and unit of data and identify a category.

2. Read the second card. Either add it to the first category or create another category based on the unit of data on the card.

3. Continue the process above until all of the cards have been designated a category. If no category is identified, a miscellaneous group is created and reexamined following the process.

4. Determine a category name or descriptive title for each stack of cards.

5. Start the process over again. All of the cards will be reviewed and re-categorized if needed.

As categories emerged, I discussed them with my peer debriefer to assist in identifying my assumptions as a researcher. The cards were categorized and coded and resorted until the themes emerged and data collected reached emersion.

Stage 3: Negative case analysis. Negative case analysis is the process of testing hypotheses. Erlandson et al. (1993) described it as "addressing and considering alternative interpretations of the data, particularly noting pieces of data that would tend

to refute the researcher's reconstructions of reality" (p. 121). In this stage of the process I analyzed the emerging categories and looked for alternative interpretations. Moustakas (1994) called for phenomenological researchers to conduct imaginative variation, which "enables the researcher to derive structural themes from the textural descriptions that have been obtained" (p. 99). I looked for the different meanings in the data by viewing the data through "divergent perspectives, different positions, roles, or functions" (Merriam, 2009, p. 199).

Stage 4: Bridging, extending, and surfacing data. Bridging, extending, and surfacing data is the process of looking for connections between the data and where there are data that should be studied further (Erlandson et al., 1993). I reviewed the categories to determine whether any of the data units should be linked (bridging); to determine whether any of the categories appeared incomplete and, if so, looked for supplemental information (extending); and to identify areas of unexplored data (surfacing).

Step 7: Textual Description and Imaginative Variation

The four steps described above satisfied Creswell's (2007) seventh step in the phenomenological procedure, which includes textual description and imaginative variation. Once the data had been thoroughly analyzed and the phenomenon explored from multiple perspectives (the final step in the procedure), findings could be reported. The textual and structural descriptions identified in the steps above created the foundation for reporting the findings (Creswell, 2007).

Step 8: Reporting the Findings

Reporting the data from a naturalistic inquiry is an important step in the process. The study demands a thorough examination of a phenomenon or experience and the report is used to share the results of that examination with others. Without a report to

share the data, others will not be able to learn from or use the findings (Merriam, 2009).

There is not one standard form to report naturalistic studies, although Lincoln and Guba

(1985) recommended the case study. When considering the reporting of naturalistic

studies, Erlandson et al. (1993) stated, "The principal task of the researcher is to

communicate a setting with its complex interrelationships and multiple realities to the

intended audience in a way that enables and requires that audiences interact cognitively

and emotionally with the setting" (p. 163).

Moustakas (1994) provided a framework for reporting the findings of a

phenomenological study that included the following components: introduction and

statement of the topic, review of relevant literature, conceptual and theoretical

framework for the study, research methodology, presentation of data and a conclusion

including summary, implications, and outcomes. The framework provided by Moustakas

was used to structure the report findings in this study. The reported of findings included

a profile for each participant, which was sent to the participant for another member

check, as suggested by Erlandson et al. (1993).

<div align="center">**Trustworthiness**</div>

In a quantitative research design, the effectiveness of a study is measured through

reliability and validity; in the qualitative or a naturalistic study, the concept of

trustworthiness is used. The extent to which the results of a study can be trusted and used

by others is an important component of research (Merriam, 2009). *Trustworthiness* refers

to the ability of a study to produce meaningful results (Merriam, 2009). "It [valid

research] must demonstrate it's truth value, provide the basis for applying it, and allow

for external judgments to be made about the consistency of its procedures and the

neutrality of its findings or decisions" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 29). Lincoln and Guba

(1985) described four components to establish trustworthiness in a study: credibility,

transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These components are based on four criteria from traditional inquiry: truth-value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. Each of the four components is discussed below.

Credibility

Credibility refers to the truth-value of the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and describes the accuracy of the participant experience descriptions (Erlandson et al., 1993). When collecting data in a qualitative study, the researcher is the instrument, and personal basis creates a lens through which all data are collected and reported. Measures to improve credibility assist the researcher in reporting findings that accurately reflect the experiences of the participants (Merriam, 2009). Multiple tools are available to increase the credibility of a study, including prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, referential adequacy materials, peer debriefing, and member checks (Erlandson et al., 1993). Each of these tools was utilized in this study.

Erlandson et al. (1993) stated that *prolonged engagement* allows the researcher to be fully immersed in the context being studied. "The researcher must spend enough time in the context being studied to overcome the distortions that are due to his or her impact on the context, his or her own biases, and the effect of unusual or seasonal events" (p. 30). Prolonged engagement aids in ensuring that the researcher fully understands the context but also explores personal biases and implications to the research. Prolonged engagement also aids in establishing trust and rapport with participants and helps to minimize the participants' desire to please the researchers, resulting in distorted data (Erlandson et al., 1993). Lincoln and Guba (1985) cautioned the researcher to balance prolonged engagement with "going native" (becoming one of the group). In this study the participants were given an opportunity to be interviewed in their office or in a

location of their choice. All interviews but one were scheduled in the participant's office, which allowed for observation of the environment in which the participant worked.

Persistent observation contributes to the depth of the data collected and allows the researcher to focus on the most relevant observations related to the research problem (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Persistent observation is active on the part of the researcher and aids in determining the relevancy of information collected (Erlandson et al., 1993). This technique can also assist the researcher to determine the appropriate length of the study to avoid concluding the study prematurely; the researcher should seek the right balance between seeing the whole picture and focusing on the most relevant details (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I made an intentional effort in interviews to review and process the data received to determine which information was most relevant to the questions being studied.

Triangulation involves the use of multiple data sources to inform the results of the study (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). Patton (2002) stated that it is important not to use triangulation to ensure the same results but to explore any inconsistencies in the data because "understanding inconsistencies in findings across different kinds of data can be illuminative and important" (p. 556). Erlandson et al. (1993) stated, "The greater the convergence attained through the triangulation of multiple data sources, methods, investigators, or theories, the greater the confidence in the observed findings" (p. 139). In this study, interview data were triangulated by collecting observational data, reviewing documents, and writing in my reflexive journal. All of these data sources were analyzed to explore inconsistencies in the collected data.

Referential adequacy materials are data collected throughout the study to serve as a reference to the researcher; these materials could include video or audiotapes,

photographs, brochures, newspapers, or other obtainable information (Erlandson et al., 1993). These materials serve as a reference to the researcher and then are used to support the audit trail findings; they are not a part of the formal analysis process. Prior to visiting each of the campuses where the participants worked, I reviewed the institution's website for referential adequacy materials, which contributed to the data and an understanding the phenomenon being studied.

Peer debriefing is a strategy used to establish credibility in a study as it provides the researcher a professional colleague to analyze the emerging research process. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described four benefits of peer debriefing. First, a peer debriefer allows the researcher to reflect on how he or she is personally experiencing the research process and what biases or limitations may be present. Second, the peer debriefer helps the researcher to consider working hypotheses as they are developing. Third, the peer debriefer assists the researcher in exploring the methodological process as it emerges throughout the research. Fourth, the "debriefing sessions provide the inquirer an opportunity for catharsis, thereby clearing the mind of emotions and feelings that may be clouding good judgment or preventing emergence of sensible next steps" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308). The peer debriefer should be selected carefully because that person must have knowledge of the research process, be a peer of the researcher, and be prepared to ask thoughtful and challenging questions throughout the debriefing process (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). "Peer debriefing helps build credibility by allowing a peer who is a professional outside the context and who has some general understanding of the study to analyze materials, test working hypotheses and emerging designs, and listen to the researcher's ideas and concerns" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 140). My dissertation chair served as peer debriefer to assist with the

analysis of the data. We utilized research memos as a strategy for collecting and sharing data related to the research study. Appendix H is a sample peer debriefer memo.

Member checking contributes to the credibility of the study because it provides participants the opportunity to review emerging themes and findings for recognizability. Member checking is different from triangulation, which tests findings against other data sources; this process uses information constructed from triangulation. Member checking occurs throughout a study and can take on many forms, including summarizing interviews immediately following the interview, using interviews to confirm information collected from previous interviews, informal conversations, asking for feedback on the report from participants and/or stakeholders, and having the final report reviewed by a group of stakeholders (Erlandson et al., 1993). The researcher must be cognizant throughout the member checking process to ensure that legitimate and credible feedback is being received (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, some organizations may not be open to criticism, which could impact the participants' involvement or contribution to the member checking process (Erlandson et al., 1993). Regardless of the risks with member checking, it is an important step in establishing the credibility of a naturalistic study. Member checks were conducted throughout this study. I sent transcripts of the interviews to the participants to verify accuracy (Appendix I). I also sent the participant profiles to the participants for review and feedback to ensure that their voices and experiences were accurately represented (Erlandson, et al., 1993).

The final tool for establishing credibility is the *reflexive journal*, which contributes to transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study (Erlandson et al., 1993). Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the reflexive journal as a "kind of diary in which the investigator on a daily basis or as needed, records a variety of information about self (hence the term "reflexive") and method" (p. 327). According to these

authors, the reflexive journal should contain a daily log and logistics, personal reflections and self-discoveries, and the methodological process. I maintained a reflexive journal, which provided a place for me to record my reactions, personal feelings and emotions, and emerging findings (Erlandson, et al., 1993).

Transferability

In a quantitative study, "external validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations" (Merriam, 2009, p. 223). In a naturalistic study the concept of generalizability and external validity does not transfer. The naturalistic researcher is not concerned with conducting a study that can be generalized to a larger population; the intent is to have a deep understanding of the experience being studied. In a naturalistic study the findings may be transferred to another context; the responsibility for transfer of information falls with both the original researcher and the person trying to make the application (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The naturalistic study relies on thick descriptions to provide the reader information needed to transfer the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thick description, purposive sampling and a reflexive journal are tools that will be used in this study to enhance the transferability of a naturalistic study (Erlandson et al., 1993).

The reflexive journal aids in the transferability of a study because it assists the researcher to record the experience. "Thick description provides for transferability by describing in multiple low-level abstractions the data base from which transferability judgments may be made by potential appliers" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 145). Thick descriptions utilize all of the senses of the researcher to describe the context of the findings and to include descriptions of the physical location and people via quotes from the participants to support the descriptions (Erlandson et al., 1993).

The goal of transferability is for another person to be able to transfer the naturalistic inquiry to another context. Purposeful or purposive sampling aids in transferability.

> Purposive sampling requires a procedure that is governed by emerging insights about what is relevant to the study based on the focus determined by the problem and purposively seeks both the typical and divergent data to maximize the range of information obtained about the context. (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 148)

Dependability

Dependability aids in meeting the criterion of consistency or, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) asked, "How can one determine whether the findings of an inquiry would be repeated if the inquiry were replicated with the same (or similar) subjects (respondents) in the same (or similar) context?" (p. 290). The dependability audit and the reflexive journal are used to establish dependability in a naturalistic study (Erlandson et al., 1993).

A dependability audit allows an external person to review the steps of a study and to replicate the study. The key to the audit trail is "reporting no "fact" without noting its source and making no assertions without supporting data" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 150). Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified six categories of materials needed for an audit: (a) raw data, (b) data reduction and analysis products, (c) data reconstruction and synthesis products, (d) process notes, (e) materials relating to intentions and dispositions, and (f) instrument development information. The audit trail allows the external auditor in the dependability audit to understand the steps and processes in the study. Members of the dissertation committee served as auditors of this research process to ensure the dependability of the study.

Confirmability

In a traditional inquiry the researcher strives for an objective study; in a naturalistic study the researcher embraces subjectiveness, with the researcher serving as

the primary research instrument, and instead seeks to confirm that the data collected are an accurate reflection of reality (Erlandson et al., 1993). The tools for ensuring confirmability are a confirmability audit and the reflexive journal. The confirmability audit is similar to the dependability audit; "An adequate trail should be left to enable the auditor to determine if the conclusions, interpretations, and recommendations can be traced to their sources and if they are supported by the inquiry" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 35). All of the factors described above to establish trustworthiness of a naturalistic study are intertwined, and the audit trail provides the mechanism for them to come together.

In addition to ensuring trustworthiness, the study's quality is also dependent on the authenticity of the research (Erlandson et al., 1993). Trustworthiness of the study is related to the methodological approach. "Methodological adequacy is not sufficient because it cannot by itself guarantee that these basic tenets of the naturalistic paradigm will be served" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 151). Authenticity is achieved when the separate realities from the participants are represented and presented in the findings. Authenticity involves five criteria: fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity (Erlandson et al., 1993).

Fairness is achieved when the process remains open throughout the study and all stakeholders have an opportunity to influence the direction of the study, including their consent to participate in the study. *Ontological authenticity* is demonstrated when study participants are impacted by the process and have an expanded understanding of the world around them. *Educative authenticity* occurs when the participants demonstrate growth in understanding and appreciating the views around them as a result of participating in the study. *Catalytic authenticity* is related to stakeholders' and respondents' ability to act on the knowledge that they gained through study participation.

Tactical authenticity is measured based on the participants' and stakeholders' ability to act within their environment (Erlandson, et al., 1993). The authenticity and trustworthiness of a study contribute to the quality of the study and should be important factors throughout the continual emergence of the research design, process, and facilitation.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research the research instrument is the researcher (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009). As the researcher in this study, it was important that I understand my impact on the data collection and analysis processes.

Author's Positionality: My Experiences, Education, and Career Life

As the primary instrument for data collection, it was important for me to recognize and state my own biases, which served as limitations to the study. I was raised in a traditional American family. My father worked and my mother was a homemaker. I was encouraged from a young age to pursue a career and demonstrate excellence in all of my endeavors. Although I was encouraged to pursue a career, my mother and role model was a homemaker. My expectations of myself as a mother have been shaped by my observations as a child, which conflict with my current roles of administrator and mother.

I have worked in the field of student affairs for the past 10 years. I currently serve in a mid-level position, supervising programs and staff. I am also a mother of a 4-year-old child. I am the demographic that this study was designed to understand. I work in the Department of Student Activities at Texas A&M University (TAMU) and a large part of my educational and career experience was at TAMU. I attended TAMU as an undergraduate, majoring in biomedical science and agricultural development. Following graduation, I worked for a consulting firm and returned to TAMU for a master's degree

in higher education administration. My first student affairs position was in student activities at an institution outside of Texas. I returned to TAMU in 2005 and have been here since, working in student activities. Student activities responsibilities tend to require night and weekend work at all levels of the organization, and that has been my experience. Not only have I worked in the field of student affairs; I have also worked in one of the very taxing (physically and emotionally) areas of the field.

Recognizing my own lenses and biases throughout the course of the study was important. Moustakas (1994) described the process of identifying biases as the epoche process to "set aside prejudgments, biases, and preconceived ideas about things" (p. 85). In order to identify my own assumptions, I was interviewed by my chair and I wrote a self-reflection after listening to the recording of the session. The process allowed me to examine critically the assumptions and biases that I brought to the research process.

In order to continually examine my own biases and details of the research process, I maintained a reflexive journal and shared memos with a peer debriefer. Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined a reflexive journal as "a kind of diary in which the investigator on a daily basis, or as needed, records a variety of information about self (hence the term 'reflexive') and method" (p. 327). I used the reflexive journal to examine myself as the research instrument.

My Philosophical Assumptions

I view the world through a social constructivist perspective and I believe that people shape or construct their individual experiences. This perspective influenced how I received and made meaning of the information collected in this study. I had an interest in understanding the individual experiences of the participants, without intent to generalize these experiences to a larger population. My philosophical orientation influenced my methodological choice and influenced data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Chapter Summary

A naturalistic study provides a depth of information about a particular phenomenon. This type of study cannot be generalized to large populations but it can be very useful in understanding the experiences of individuals or groups of people. Given the nature of the research questions, a naturalistic study (particularly the phenomenological methodology) provided the depth of understanding needed to fill in the gaps in the current literature related to women who have children and who hold mid-level positions in student affairs.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of women who had children and worked in mid-level student affairs positions. The study used a phenomenological approach within a naturalistic inquiry framework (Creswell, 1994, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). The study was designed to address two research questions:

1. What are the experiences of women who have children and serve in mid-level positions in the student affairs profession at higher education institutions in Texas?

2. What strategies do these women employ to navigate the roles of mother and administrator?

To address these questions, I interviewed 15 women who were currently employed in mid-level positions in student affairs divisions at higher education institutions in Texas. The interviews generated 327 pages of data, which were transcribed verbatim by a professional transcriptionist and me.

This chapter presents major findings related to the two research questions. The chapter begins with descriptions of the participants. For the purpose of confidentiality, each participant was assigned a pseudonym. The participant profiles provide the context in which major themes emerged through the data analysis process. Direct quotes from the interviews are included to understand each participant. Each quote is identified by a code (e.g., Veronica, ID152), indicating the index card where the direct quote is located. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis, as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985). This technique involves "taking constructions gathers from the context and reconstructing them into meaningful whole" (p. 333). Following the participant profiles is the report of major themes that emerged from the collected data. These themes

focused on "what people experience and how it is that they experience what they experience" (Patton, 2002, p.107).

Participant Profiles

Fifteen women were interviewed in this study. All of these women held mid-level positions in Student Affairs divisions at higher education institutions in Texas. The women worked in a variety of functional areas, ranging from business administration, residence life, and student activities to new student orientation. The majority of the women's mid-level positions involved both staff and program supervision. None of the women reported directly to the CSAO, although one had previously reported to that position prior to a division reorganization. Two participants did not directly supervise full-time staff but oversaw large-scale programmatic areas and were designated by their institutions as holding mid-level positions. All of the women were mothers of at least one child who shared the same residence. All but one of the women were married. Six were pursuing doctoral degrees, one had recently completed a second master's degree, and one had obtained her terminal degree. Table 2 provides a snapshot of the participants.

Amy

Amy was 38 years old, married, and the mother of two children. She was an associate director for the student center at a small private institution. Amy was also a doctoral student. She did not describe navigating the roles of mother and professional as easy but she identified several effective tools and strategies that made it work for her. Amy had been in her current position for 7 years and had established routines that helped her to balance the demands of working, being the mother of two children, and being a doctoral student. Amy considered herself to be efficient and her role to be very intense, with no "down time."

Table 2

Profiles of Participants

Name	Race ethnicity[a]	Age	Title	Experience[b]	Relationship status	Ages of children (years)
Amy	White	38	Assoc Dir	7	Married	4, 1.5
Jody	Caucasian	33	Director	6	Married	7, 4, 1
Kristin	White	36	Assoc Dir	8	Single	8
Kylie	White/Caucasian	41	Director	11	Married	8
Lynn	White	38	Director	10	Married	7, 4
McKenna	Caucasian	48	Director	20	Married	10, 9
Michelle	White	42	Director	4	Married	14, 11, 8
Nicole	Caucasian	36	Coordinator	7.5	Married	7, 3
Savannah	Caucasian	36	Asst Dir	3	Married	8, 4
Sloane	Afr Amer	35	Director	7	Married	6, 1.5
Sophie	White	29	Asst Dir	3	Married	2, infant
Sue	Caucasian	41	Asst Dir	11	Married	4, 2
Tina	Caucasian	31	Coordinator	2.5	Married	3, 1
Veronica	Caucasian	32	Coordinator	3	Married	3, 1
Victoria	Asian Amer	32	Director	5	Married	2

Note. Afr Amer = African American, Assoc Dir = Associate Director, Asst Dir = Assistant Director.

[a]Self-report. [b]Experience = number of years as a mid-level administrator.

> I think because of moving into mid-level administration, you end up with a lot more of the administrative work as well. And somehow they plan the fiscal cycles such that the end of the fiscal cycle [is] when the students aren't here. Which is great, except that requires a lot more things to be finished and done. So there's never that break. when you're kind of dealing mostly with the student issues, your cycle does change when you're not dealing with the students. (Amy, ID6)

Amy had established effective boundaries between work and family responsibilities, although she described the two roles as "very blended." From her description of her strategies, it was clear that she uses compartmentalization to keep home at home and work at work.

> I think that whenever you're . . . like I'm here at work, like they don't see the student side or they don't see the parental side unless it like directly affects them. So if one of my kids is sick and I don't have backup care and I have to leave, and then they needed me here for something, then they realize, "Oh, yeah, you are a mom." (Amy, ID16)

Amy brought her children to campus for events and activities, but overall she tried to keep the two worlds separate. She even mentioned that when her students saw her in the community with her family would be the first time that they realized that she had a family.

Regardless of the strategies that she used to balance the demands, Amy had a very demanding work role. "I almost never have a lunch break that's not a working meeting, so I kind of work straight through" (Amy, ID41). Her day was filled with administrative tasks, meetings, and students dropping by her office with questions. Amy was lucky that she worked in a very supportive department. "Our expectation is that people don't have to take over their personal lives in order to make work happen" (Amy, ID98). Within the division of student affairs at her institution not many staff members had children and not all areas were as supportive as her department.

When her second child was born, the challenge to navigate all roles increased.

Having the 2 kids now, I even have to do like double some of those things when I'm at work, so I have to use my working time even that much more efficiently, because I can't work more than 9-5." (Amy, ID142)

Amy worked hard both at work and at home, but she still felt guilty when she was asked to make a choice between the two because it felt like "you're missing out either way" (Amy, ID103). When articulating her feelings about making the choice to attend a professional development function for work, Amy commented,

Selfish isn't the right word . . . I don't know if there's a good word for it. But it's definitely like you . . . like how it's hard to ask for help, like also taking advantage of the resources you have also kinda feels self-indulgent or I don't know, some other word that's kinda close, but there's probably not a good word for it. (Amy, ID203)

Amy depended on her husband and her extended family for support. She and her husband had been married for several years before they had children and had established a good relationship and formed a good team. She attributed their ability to manage all of the demands to their partnership. Amy also recognized that at times the team approach was more difficult to maintain with two children, which could be taxing. Her husband was an equal parent and shared responsibility for child care. They also relied on outside services for lawn care, house cleaning, and pool care so they could spend time with their children. Amy was very appreciative that she had the resources to support these services.

Amy was one of a few participants who was striving to become a dean of students or to attain a similar position in higher education administration. She was concerned that her personal life would impact her ability to be perceived as a candidate for these types of positions. "It's harder for people to perceive you as a professional when you have that kind of blurred line between knowing people's professional and personal lives" (Amy, ID 79). She noted that the challenge to be viewed as a professional can translate into a perception of an inability for advancement. "It's harder to move around as a professional because people think that you kinda need to stay where you are in order to be stable" (Amy, ID 80).

As Amy described her experience, she seemed to be in control of her choices, her priorities, and her boundaries. A colleague of Amy described her as "superwoman" because she manages all of these roles and makes it look easy. Amy had a good perspective on the reality of her situation and her roles. When discussing the changes that occur when someone becomes a parent, Amy recalled,

> My initial reaction is, if it doesn't change, then you've obviously been doing something wrong either way–you weren't doing what you were supposed to do when you didn't have kids, or you're not doing the things you're supposed to do when you do." (Amy, ID171)

Amy understood the demands and expectations of her roles and was willing to make the choices that were needed to be successful in those roles.

Jody

Jody was 33 years old, married, and the mother of three young children. She was the director of the apartment life program in a large regional university. Her husband also worked at the university as director of the student center. Having a dual career in higher education afforded the couple the luxury of carpooling to work, sharing lunch together regularly, and being able to relate to each other's work issues. It also meant that when one of them was called to the office, the other might be called as well.

> I think of this winter when we had the really bad ice for a couple of days. Of course, all the schools were closed, so we're home with the kids, but then there's potential for a lot of frozen pipes . . . . Last year we had 32 apartments flood because the sprinklers in the ceilings froze and busted. The units were completely flooded, residents had to be relocated, and we basically had to tear the inside of the building out and redo it. So that took a lot of days of being here, reassigning people and all that. (Jody, ID46)

Although her husband may not have been directly impacted by the burst pipes, the cafeterias are in his building, which had to remain open even when the rest of the university was closed. Navigating these types of on-call situations meant relying on friends, family, and neighbors to take care of their three children when they had to go back to the office.

Balancing the demands of work and three children can be challenging. Jody felt the demands increased with each child added to her family. Only one of her children is old enough to be involved with sports, but she has already felt the tension created by trying to get him to and from practice and games while still preparing dinner for the rest of the family. She noted spending more time in the doctor's office with three children than she did with just one or two. With three children, there was a greater chance of someone being sick. All of this tension created guilt that Jody dealt with on a regular basis. When asked about the experience of being a working mother in student affairs, she responded, "I think there is some guilt that goes with that because you feel you want to be committed to your job but also committed to your children" (Jody, ID1). She wanted to be a great mother and a great administrator, and there were always moments when she felt that she might not be meeting the expectations that others have of her.

Jody was very fortunate to work in a supportive environment, drawing support from her supervisor, her staff, and the institutional culture. Jody had worked at her current institution for more than a decade, so she had built relationships across the university that may have contributed to the support that she felt for putting family first. Describing the family friendly environment, Jody said, "I've had three or four different bosses as I've worked here over the last 11 years, and every one of them has had their own kids, and was so supportive of family first" (Jody, ID52). The supportive work environment allowed Jody to make decisions that put her family first, even if it meant leaving a project unfinished or cancelling a meeting. The support was reinforced because of the number of families who had children. Different from some of the other institutions in this study, this university employed a large number of staff with children.

> If you count just my supervisor (Assistant Vice President), she was wanting to do a group picture of all the kids, because, when you add them all up, there's like 20 children between all of her staff. And so we were all at an event one night and she was trying to lump everybody together. We're all sort of in the same boat, so

it's nice, we're all in our 30s and trying to manage family and work. So it's a good environment because everybody knows where you're coming from for the most part. (Jody, ID152)

Family first was important to Jody. She worked hard and wanted to achieve in her professional role; on the other hand, "I don't want my job to define me–I'd rather have my family define me" (Jody, ID17). Jody attributed her strong work ethic to the influence of her working parents while growing up:

I think it's part of the reason I have the work ethic that I do, is that my mom took her job . . . both my parents—my dad was a teacher—took their jobs very seriously, always went above and beyond. And so I think that was a good modeling. (Jody, ID 250)

Although her mother enjoyed working and her job, she also felt that it defined her. Reflecting on her mother's comments, Jody shared, "Hearing the way she described how that defined her, I was like 'I don't wanna be that person either'" (Jody, ID241).

Making decisions to put her family first required Jody to utilize strategies to fulfill the responsibilities related to both roles. She used a calendar for both home and work, employed services to help with household chores, and (most important) established personal boundaries that guide her time at work. She is a supportive supervisor and is invested in her work, but she also knows when it is time to leave the office. She has a realistic view of her work. When asked what advice she would give to a new mother, Jody said, "Don't take your job too seriously. Leave when you're ready to leave. . . . Go home; your job will always be there the next day" (Jody, ID310, ID311).

Kristin

Kristin was 36 years old, the mother of one child, and a single parent. She served as the associate director for student activities at a large regional university. In addition, she was pursuing a doctoral degree and was actively involved in a community service organization, from which she had just taken a sabbatical to focus on studies. As a single mother, Kristin's experience was unique. Many of the other participants relied on their

partners for support and shared parenting, but Kristin was doing this alone. She commented, "There are times that it's really hard to know that I'm doing this all by myself, and I don't have somebody to lean on" (Kristin, ID163).

Kristin was grateful to work on a campus where her child was welcome. She knew that she was fortunate because not all campuses are supportive. "But here they are, and she is [welcome], and so I feel like I'm really blessed to be able to bring her into the environment and have her kinda be a part of it as well" (Kristin, ID10). It was common for her daughter to attend events, functions, and meetings with Kristin. Kristin described her daughter as a "major fixture on this campus" (Kristin, ID7). Not only does her campus support her family life, so does her supervisor. Kristin's supervisor had always been supportive of her need to care for her child but she saw his understanding of the parent role expand when he had children of his own. "He was understanding before, but now I think he truly understands and gets it, that need to be there" (Kristin, ID114).

Kristin was loyal to her role: "I mentioned that sense of loyalty, so it's like I feel like I need to give to my job, but I need to give to my child, and in my case also school. I'm being pulled in a lot of different directions" (Kristin, ID142). Kristin developed strategies to manage her multiple roles and to overcome the constant tug of war that she experiences. To minimize the directions in which she is pulled, she relied on her core values to guide her decisions, which helped her to establish boundaries. "It took me a long time to get there, but I finally realized what my core values are . . . God, family, and balance, and balance is a big one" (Kristin, ID98). She does not bring work home because it conflicts with her values. "I made that personal choice a number of years ago, that I rarely bring work home" (Kristin, ID93).

Kristin cited that she was able to balance her priorities now that she was in a mid-level position. "I would say it was more challenging, or it would have been more

challenging if I would've had my child at the beginning of my career" (Kristin, ID1). As

she described, entry-level positions, especially in student activities, require late night and

weekend commitments. She valued balances and strived for it.

> I have strived—I would say the last 4-5 years now, I'm trying to have that
> balance. And part of that is taking lunch every day. Part of it is leaving here at
> 5:00 or as close to 5:00 as possible. Part of that is not taking work home, and part
> of that is saying Friday nights I'm gonna spend with [child], and Saturday is her
> day, too." (Kristin, ID99)

Kristin was smart and efficient with her time and used delegation effectively. She

maintained that it was her responsibility to make meaningful contributions to her

organization.

> I need to spend my time doing things that no one else can do. I don't need to
> spend my time doing something that a student can do or a support staff member
> can do or someone else in the office can do. (Kristin, ID108)

Kristin had mapped a career plan and aspired to be a dean of students at a small

to mid-size university because she valued student interaction. These career goals had led

her to the doctoral program; she knew that she needed the degree to move up.

> That's one of the things about this field: If you want to move up, you have to
> have the degree, and you have to allow time to move on. It's rare that someone
> gets to stay at the institution and move up in that institution. (Kristin, ID32)

Despite her well-developed career plans and ambitions, ultimately Kristin would

like to be a stay-at-home mother. When asked whether she would consider the role, she

shared, "Honestly, I'd leave and be done, if I could. I am one of those people that I

always have a plan, but my plan is always changing" (Kristin, ID150). She had a career

plan because she was realistic and knew that she needed to provide for family; at the

same time, she

> would love to be a stay-at-home mom. And people laugh, "Well, you're getting
> your PhD." [My response is that] I can be the highest-educated mom on the
> block, I'm fine with that. Yeah, I would stay home in a heartbeat. I'd have to
> volunteer and be involved in things, don't get me wrong. I mean, I think I would
> pull out my hair if I couldn't have more than just caring for my family. (Kristin,
> ID152)

Kristin was ambitious, achievement oriented, focused, and realistic. She used her core values to guide her decisions and her time management. She tried to spend quality time with her daughter and still excel in her other roles. She has been required to make sacrifices to make this happen, one of which is allowing time for herself. Kristin would like to meet someone to share her life, but there just is not time in the day for it. "I would love to meet somebody and have him be a part of my life. I just honestly don't know how I would do it" (Kristin, ID169).

Kylie

Kylie was 41 years old, married, and the mother of an 8-year-old child. Kylie served as the director for new student programs at a mid-size private institution that had an institutional culture centered on hard work, regardless of the hours involved. Kylie had been in student affairs for 19 years. She was married and had worked as a professional for several years before her daughter was born. Her husband was a youth minister, so they are always prepared for life changes as his job calls for them. Kylie had been in her current position for over 8 years, much longer than either of them had anticipated. Her husband provided positive support to Kylie. He encouraged her to be her best self, even if that meant holding up a mirror from time to time and challenging her on her work habits.

Kylie was achievement oriented and wanted to meet others' expectations. She cared deeply about all of the people in her life. She wanted to be a great mother, a great administrator, a great wife, and a great supervisor. Although she was cognizant that being "great" in one of the roles may take a toll on another, her deep care and compassion for others drove her to want to meet their expectations and serve their needs. Kylie put her faith in God and looked to Him for direction, encouragement, and support when she was navigating the multiple demands.

Kylie worked in a very demanding environment. There was an expectation from the top that staff were available and would respond quickly to requests. She had been known to start working on a project from home after her daughter went to bed into the wee hours of the morning. In order to stay up to date on her tasks, this type of after-hours work was a requirement. Kylie used her smart phone as a strategy to stay connected and respond quickly to requests; however, she also tried to ensure that she maintained some boundaries, since the telephone could keep her connected at all hours of every day.

Becoming a mother was life changing for Kylie. She had been in the field for several years before her daughter was born and she had grown accustomed to a certain work style and work ethic. When asked about how the role of administrator impacted her, Kylie said, " I can say that before having my daughter, where I would put all my energy, maybe more energy into caring about my work and what other people thought of me" (Kylie, ID 273). Becoming a mother forced Kylie to re-evaluate her work style and establish boundaries for herself. "It took me years to get to the point where I realized I need to set boundaries for myself" (Kylie, ID16). Her daughter was instrumental in Kylie's reframing of her work.

> There was a time when my daughter was around 4 or 5, and she was able to talk. I was coming home late, she had already gone to bed, it was during orientation. And there was a point where she said, "I hate orientation." And I don't want my daughter to see what I do as keeping me from being attentive to her. (Kylie, ID 23)

Kylie looked for other women to serve as role models and could not identify any at her institution.

> I've looked for and wanted to have someone I could look to who was making it as a married woman with children. And there are lots of single women who are doing great things and are role models to me. But I haven't been able to find someone that maybe was going through the exact same challenges. (Kylie, ID18)

Kylie was fortunate to have a very supportive male supervisor who created an environment in which she felt supported both personally and professionally. She described her supervisor as someone who "allowed that space for me to feel like I could talk openly about the challenges—not just professionally, but just this conflict" (Kylie, ID 35). With encouragement and role modeling by her supervisor, Kylie established boundaries to make her work more manageable.

Kylie still struggled with role collision that pulled her between her roles as mother and administrator. "That experience pulls at each other sometimes. And when I step onto campus, when I step into my office, I can't turn off that I'm also a mom and a wife" (Kyle, ID6). When she was in the office, her daughter was always at the forefront of her thinking and, when she was at home, there were times when work crept into her thoughts and she intentionally pushed it out so she could focus on her time at home.

Kylie has considered leaving the field of student affairs for a role that is more manageable between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. When asked what she would do if she left student affairs, Kylie said, "I don't know what else I would do" (Kylie, ID196). She did know that she did not want to advance in the student affairs career ladder. She has not found many women role models who can balance the demands of upper-level administration with a family. When discussing her current director position, Kylie stated, "I felt like I've got a lot. But I can still have that time and care for my family" (Kylie, ID 225).

Kylie valued her professional role and did not aspire to be a stay-at-home mother. She had once defined her identity through her professional position. She wanted to be sure that she was now defining herself from multiple dimensions, but she still valued highly her career and her influence on the lives of college students.

Lynn

Lynn was 38 years old, married, and the mother of two children. She was the director of a multicultural services department at a large research university. She had been in the director role for the past year and had spent the previous year as the interim director. Lynn's husband worked for a university affiliate; his position required significant travel, leaving Lynn as a single parent on a fairly regular basis. On the days when her husband was out of town, Lynn coordinated the pick-up and drop-off, meals, after-school activities, and sick days, all of which were done while she served in a major leadership role on campus. Lynn developed boundaries and priorities for herself without sacrificing her high-achieving work ethic.

Lynn was achievement oriented and had a high sense of responsibility for all of her roles. She wanted to do things well and to be perceived as a high performer by colleagues and family. As the youngest director in a large division of student affairs, Lynn occasionally felt that she had to "prove" her seat at the table and had been very careful not to be perceived as lacking capability or commitment due to her role as a mother. She tried to compartmentalize and focus on work at work and home at home, but sometimes it was just not possible. "Because as much as I want to compartmentalize things, there are just things that need to overlap" (Lynn, ID244).

Lynn felt the most stress when work and family roles overlapped. She described it as trying to operate in two competing worlds. She described the best times: "When things go right, when I don't feel like I'm being pulled in two different directions, when I feel like everybody gets the attention that they need" (Lynn, ID87). The tug between the two worlds created guilt and a sense that she was failing someone. "Most of the time, you feel like you're deficient in one area or another" (Lynn, ID7); if she was giving what was needed at work, it was negatively affecting home and vice versa.

Lynn was very strategic and utilized a range of strategies to combat the back-and-forth pull between the two worlds. She was very organized by maintaining to-do lists to stay in control of situations. Lynn explained her need to stay in control: "I recognize the fact that there's a whole lot that's out of my control. So [I do] whatever I can do to put things in place" (Lynn, ID252). In addition to being organized, Lynn was not afraid to ask for help or to hire services. She hired a student to transport her daughter to after-school activities. The additional support allowed her daughter to be involved but did not require Lynn to be in multiple places at one time. She also had a cleaning service to allow her to spend time with her family when she was at home at night and on weekends.

Lynn strived to be a role model for fellow staff members (both male and female). She held herself to a high standard and was willing to prioritize as necessary to be successful in her role as a mother and in her role as a professional. Not only was she serving as a role model for staff; she was also setting an example for her daughter. Lynn debated about taking the position as director; she was concerned that the position would negatively impact her family. When she accepted the position,

> I told her [daughter] that I got that job, and she said to her friends, "My mommy is gonna be president of an entire building." It wasn't a big deal to her, but that moment told me, "Okay, this may be hard, and this is going to be stressful and all that," but to hear her say that (and I know that she didn't fully understand), and to be proud of me, I just thought, "Okay; it's okay that I work, because of that. (Lynn, ID333)

Lynn felt the tug of guilt from time to time, but it was evident that her daughter and family saw value in her work contributions.

McKenna

McKenna was 48 years old, married, the mother of two children, and the director of a campus housing program at a mid-size private institution. McKenna was the most seasoned professional in the study. She had been in the field of student affairs for 25

years and in a mid-level position for 20 years. McKenna had married later in life, had a strong professional identify, and felt a strong connection to her work in student affairs. She described it as giving her life purpose: "I feel like I know what I'm called to do" (McKenna, ID4).

McKenna's life situation was different from many other participants in the study. She was the mother of two children who both had special needs. Due to the special needs, one of her children lived with another family in the same town. Despite the different residence, McKenna was still very involved in the child's life. She served as an advocate for him and made sure that his needs were met, including his educational needs. This involved meetings, discussions, and planning, which was often very challenging. "We're continually fighting with this school district" (McKenna, ID134). Not everyone understood her situation or the strategies that she employed to serve her children. She described herself as blessed and she knew that what she had in place was best for both children.

McKenna's work environment was intense. The institutional culture supported and expected late nights, immediate access, and long hours. She and her husband shared parenting responsibilities, but McKenna was responsible for picking up her child from school every day, so she had to leave the office by 5:00 p.m. to be there on time. It was evident that McKenna had concerns about having to leave precisely at 5:00 p.m., because the majority of the staff continued to work well into the evening; she did not want to send the wrong message to her staff. "Not that we're trying to promote workaholism by any means, but at the same time, the real perception is that people who work a lot get a lot" (McKenna, ID18). In order not to lose credibility and to stay on top of her work, McKenna spent at least a few hours working at home after her child had gone to sleep.

Continuing education was very important to McKenna; she recently started a doctoral program. The program was blended and virtual, so she would have to spend some time at the institution, but the majority of her work would be from home. She made the decision for doctoral school based on the impact that it would have on her family and work situation. The doctoral work required her to use her evenings for school work, which was impacting her ability to work from home.

Seeing the demands of her director position, her doctoral program, and her home life, McKenna made the decision to step into another position. It was a role that she designed for herself, based on work that she had done when she started at the institution. She was excited about the change and anticipated that the new role would allow her to capitalize on her strengths. After reflection, McKenna realized that her previous leadership position might not have been the best role for her. Not only did the role not take advantage of her skill set; it also took an emotional toll. "It's taken a lot out of me the last 5 years" (McKenna, ID72). Her new position combined her passions with her skill set and she was excited about how she would be able to continue to serve students at her institution in a new way.

McKenna was a very structured and disciplined person who utilized compartmentalization to balance the roles of mother and administrator. She defined space in her days for her to focus on each of her roles. The challenge occurred when the two roles collided. When asked to share an example of a time when the roles collided, McKenna stated, " If I had to kind of summarize that, it's when my children's needs during the day are pushing up against . . . because my day is pretty much when I'm less flexible because of all the meetings and stuff" (McKenna, ID125). Her husband was very supportive but had a less flexible job than hers, so she was often the person who was called to deal with emergencies during the day.

McKenna was similar to many of the other women in this study in that she spent the majority of her time focusing on and caring for others. Her doctoral program was what she did for herself; as a result, she has given up other hobbies to make time for her studies. She and her husband spent time with each other and with their family but they did not have many friends or family members with whom they spent time. Her husband was very supportive, which was key to balancing her roles. They split household duties and he shared in parenting responsibilities.

McKenna's faith was very important to her. During changes in her life over the past few months she has relied on her faith to meet the challenges. "Just to be able to say that maybe God's intention for all this [positional changes] is how I can go after that Ed.D. I've always wanted would be an incredible gift and testimony" (McKenna, ID64). McKenna was very caring, compassionate, and dedicated to student affairs. She knew with certainty that student affairs was the field in which she would invest the balance of her career.

Michelle

Michelle was 42 years old, married, and the mother of three children. Michelle was the director of a disability services office at a large public research university. Michelle was the only participant in the study who currently held a PhD degree. She had been in her position for a little less than a year; she had served as the interim director prior to her appointment. Michelle was well prepared for the director position and described the transition as fairly smooth because of her level of knowledge. In the new position there were more night and weekend commitments that had to be juggled with the demands of her family. Her husband provided support and helped with the children whenever needed, but his job was not very flexible; he had night and weekend

commitments and could not easily leave the office. So Michelle often was responsible for coordinating medical appointments and staying home when the children were sick.

All three children depended on Michelle and looked to her for support and guidance. She wanted to be a good mother and director and tried to meets everyone's expectations of her. "I know a lot of it is me putting it on myself, and trying to be the superwoman that a lot of people try to be" (Michelle, ID64). Trying to be superwoman came with a cost; in Michelle's case, it came in the form of guilt. She discussed feeling guilty when she was not at home and feeling guilty when leaving work at 5:00 p.m. to pick up her children. As a result, Michelle sometimes worked from home to combat the guilt of leaving at 5:00 p.m.: "I feel like if they know I'm checking my email when I'm not here, then it's almost like it's okay that I'm not necessarily here working for 8 hours, that I'm actually working at night" (Michelle, ID198). She also felt guilty when she chose her family over work commitments. Despite the guilt, Michelle's family will always be her first priority. "Now I'm never going to be sad that I spent time with my kids, no matter what" (Michelle, ID43).

Confronting the feelings of guilt has led Michelle to realize that "your time isn't your own, whether it's at work or at home; your time always feels like it belongs to someone else" (Michelle, ID15). She stated that she did not have much time for herself. She had friends but did not have much time to spend with those friends or to invest in relationships. To do something for herself, Michelle started using a Wii Fit™ in the evenings, which allowed her to spend a little time working out and focusing on herself while still meeting her responsibilities as a mother. Michelle noted that she could press the "pause" button, address a family issue, and then return to what she was doing.

Michelle had a high sense of responsibility. She wanted to be involved and to make sure that the right things were taken care of. "I think that's just in general with

everything—at work, at home, everything—if I don't do it, who will?" (Michelle, ID68).

Michelle recognized that she should somewhat let go of the control and share it with

others, but it is a challenge for her. "I'm the keeper of all knowledge of when things are

happening and who's doing what and how they like things to be" (Michelle, ID120).

From her perspective, all of the responsibilities fell to her because she had the

information about all of them.

Michelle discussed the difficulties associated with being a mother and an

administrator in the field of student affairs.

> I think at the time when I compare to other people, sometimes in the Division of
> Student Affairs, I know everybody has a life outside of work, but it's very differ-
> ent when you're a mother, especially—a parent in general, but a mother especi-
> ally, that those nighttime activities or weekend things, or even conferences or
> things like that, what I have to do to be prepared to go to those things is so differ-
> ent than someone who's single or has no children. (Michelle, ID3)

In spite of the difficulty, Michelle did not want to make a change or consider

leaving the field. She knew that she did not want to be a stay-at-home mother because, in

her words, "It would've been very unsatisfying to me" (Michelle, ID150). Michelle

found joy and satisfaction in her professional role. Ultimately, she wanted to be a good

role model for her daughters. She wanted them to know that one can be an effective stay-

at-home mother or be a career woman who is still a good mother. "Not that you can do it

all, because I don't necessarily try to espouse that, but just that you can have a job and

be a good mom" (Michelle, ID131).

Nicole

Nicole was 36 years old, married and the mother of two children. She served as a

coordinator in a student health center at a large public university. Nicole enjoyed her job

but would like eventually to be a professor. In order to change careers, she was currently

working on a doctorate. Her husband, who also worked full time, was also a doctoral

student. They had an equal partnership and depended on each other to meet the demands of working full time, being parents, and being doctoral students.

Nicole struggled with guilt for having a career and spending time away from her children. Therefore, she created boundaries with work so she could be at home with them on weekends and evenings. However, "I was never one of those who wanted to stay at home, and so I always needed the career to . . . you know, I figured I went to school for 7 years, got a master's degree, and I kinda wanted to work" (Nicole, ID51). Nicole made the decision to pursue a career despite strong pressures from her family. "My grandmother and I, whenever I was pregnant with [older child], she and I almost got into a screaming fight about me going back to work after he was born" (Nicole, ID49). Despite the family pressure, Nicole knew that having a career was the right decision for her because it "just makes me feel like I'm accomplishing something professionally. And it makes me feel like I'm using the skills that God gave me to use" (Nicole, ID53).

Nicole relied on the strategy of compartmentalization to navigate the roles of mother and administrator. When she was at work, she was at work; when she was at home, she focused on her children. Unfortunately, the compartmentalization did not always work, and she saw her two worlds collide. She recalled one time when it failed: "I wasn't able to come back to work and focus on work, because all day long I was thinking, 'Is he okay? What are they doing?'"(Nicole, ID60).

Nicole and her husband shared parenting responsibilities. When their first child was born, her husband stayed home with him for the first 15 months. Nicole received a promotion while she was on maternity leave, which made the choice easy to continue working and for her husband to stay home. Although the arrangement provided support

to her, it came with consequences. "My husband played the different role; he was the stay-at-home dad. And we saw him treated differently" (Nicole, ID92).

Nicole's struggle with guilt from being away from her family may be impacting her career. In her position she must maintain a certification that requires travel to continuing education courses and conferences. She acknowledged the challenge of leaving her family for conferences and professional development.

> Unfortunately, I have a certification to keep up, and so I'm not doing very well on keeping that up. So that's definitely one of the negatives. But I can't go for 5 days and be away from them, so I don't go to a lot of overnight conferences. (Nicole, ID 125)

Leaving her family causes sadness, so she has often made the choice to stay home, rather than attend a conference, which could threaten her certification.

Nicole valued her professional role but also valued the roles of mother and wife. She was intentional about planning time to spend with her children and with her husband. She worked in a supportive environment, with the support extending from her supervisor and from the staff whom she supervised. She navigated her two roles to fulfill her job responsibilities, including evening commitments, without negatively impacting the time available to spend with her family.

Savannah

Savannah was 36 years old and serve as an assistant director in campus housing at a mid-size public institution. She was married and the mother of two children. Her student affairs career had been in campus housing, so she had experienced living on campus. Her second child was born while she lived in a residence hall. Finding balance and navigating the two roles (professional and mother) was challenging. This challenge was complicated by sharing a home with more than 200 students while trying to be on maternity leave, which Savannah did with her second child. Savannah and her family

currently lived off campus but her experience living on campus enabled her to view her work from multiple perspectives.

Savannah's husband recently quit his job. He was unhappy in his position so made the decision to stay home and look for another opportunity. Savannah has already felt the positive effects of that decision. "I feel like we were at this dam and just holding it with our arms, you know, but then we've let a little bit of the pressure out to where we're not the only one" (Savannah, ID76). Currently, her husband was one of her most important strategies to navigate her two roles. Prior to his employment change, she was responsible for child care and managing child issues during the workday. Now her husband helps. Savannah's work was still very demanding but some of the pressure was lifted from the demands of home.

Although Savannah cared for her family and valued her work, it has been hard for her to be able to give so much of herself to both roles. She described being "torn all the time" (Savannah, ID8). Savannah worked hard in her professional role and believed in the work she was doing. "My first year in this position, I used to work really hard. But I believed so much in what we were doing and felt like we really were transforming and changing students' lives, that I could still do it" (Savannah, ID 141). Her commitment to her work has been diminishing because of leadership changes at the institution. Immediate supervisors changed, as well as leadership up the chain. The change in leadership created a cultural shift that has been challenging for her. When speaking of the changes and the struggles that she experienced as a result of those changes, Savannah described it as "taking me over the edge" (Savannah, ID145).

In addition to leadership changes, Savannah worked in a very unsupportive environment. Specifically, the institution did not show support for families nor encourage work-life balance. The expectation to be accessible all of the time and to work

beyond 40 hours a week were implicit in the work styles of the leadership, all the way to the Vice President. Even taking off time to support sick family members was frowned on at her institution. "I feel this constant tension. They will say that they're supportive, but the actions are not realistically supportive" (Savannah, ID22).

Her unhappiness led Savannah to feeling burned out and unhappy. When asked how her two roles affect her, Savannah responded with a question: "You mean affect me, make me tired, anxious, and angry?" (Savannah, ID 125). Savannah put her family first and understood her priorities but also felt that her role was negatively affecting all parts of her life:

> As a mom, I think I'm tired, and so I do think every day that I'm not being the kind of mother that I would like to be or that I could be because I'm so anxious and feel overwhelmed and overworked and unappreciated." (Savannah, ID132)

She considered her student affairs work to be important but realized that there are other equally important things and people in her life. Savannah was currently re-evaluating her career plans and her next steps, as well as reflecting on whether student affairs was the right field for her, based on her strengths and talents.

Savannah's story speaks to the significant role of a work environment and supervisors in the success and happiness of employees. Savannah was passionate about her work and expended energy to assist her department to function prior to the leadership change. Currently, the institution was at risk of losing a very valuable member of the team by not providing needed support or reasonable expectations.

Sloane

Sloane was 35 years old, the mother of two children, married, and a doctoral student. Sloane served as the director of new student programs at a small private institution. She did not supervise full-time staff but was responsible for oversight and implementation of all programs related to new student orientation. Sloane was a high

achiever. Listening to her experiences and her self-expectations, it was clear that she strived to be a high performer in all of her roles. On one of the shelves directly across from her desk were silver letters that spelled the word ACHIEVE, presumably there as reminder of her ambitions. Although excellence was important to her, Sloane sometimes felt mediocre in all of her roles and acknowledged the challenge of balancing the various roles. "I sort of have those days where I feel like I'm generally mediocre, like I'm a mediocre mom, definitely a mediocre professional, mediocre student, mediocre partner, you know" (Sloane, ID2).

Sloane relied on compartmentalization to separate her roles. She was a private person who believed in keeping work and home separate: "Like for the most part, my general operation has been like work is work and home is home. They don't overlap" (Sloane, ID111). Sloane had worked at her current institution for 3 years. She had integrated her family into her work at this institution more than at her previous institution but had done so cautiously because she was one of few staff members with children.

> In general, the campus climate is one that is extremely receptive and I think pretty accommodating to life. I think it's still difficult for some people to sort of get when I'm out with my kids because they're sick or things like that. (Sloane, ID7)

Although many of her colleagues did not have children, her institution "subsidizes a certain number of both in-home hours and backup childcare hours for days when your childcare provider is closed but your child is not sick" (Sloane, ID217), a benefit not offered to many of the other study participants.

Working in new student programs required night and weekend commitments, and the summer was a very busy time of year. Sloane struggled with the impact of the summer programs on her children, particularly her oldest, who was cognizant of her working late. "In her head, college students look more like her than they look like adults.

So as she's gotten older, I think there's this sense of 'why are you picking them?'"
(Sloane, ID10). Sloane felt bad that her daughter would think that Sloane was choosing
others over her and struggled with the taxing nature of all of her roles. "Sometimes, I
feel like I just don't have enough energy" (Sloane, ID25).

Sloane commuted for her doctoral program, so if she did not have evening
commitments for work, she was traveling for class. She was a very conscientious and
committed student. She spent hours in the evenings and the weekends on schoolwork. "I
don't like to go to class and not be prepared; that makes me crazy" (Sloane, ID146).
Once she got home from work or class, the day was not over. She worked from home
consistently in the evenings, either doing work or school assignments. When she started
her work at this institution, Sloane had made a commitment not to work from home.

> I made a commitment when I started here initially to not take any work home, so
> my initial goal when I first started here was, "When I'm home, I should either be
> doing two things: working on schoolwork or fully present with my family, so I'm
> not gonna take any work home." That has not panned out. (Sloane, ID136)

Sloane had not been able to uphold that boundary but she created boundaries related to
access. She did not share her cell phone number with students or many staff members.
She relied on her student leaders to address problems within their capacity and to work
through their chain of command to get to her. She explained this arrangement as her way
of "not being called for things or contacted for things that actually really aren't major
emergencies" (Sloane, ID183). In addition to not sharing her telephone number, Sloane
had not purchased a smart phone. She had made an intentional choice to have only her
personal emails available on her phone so she would not be tempted to check emails
constantly.

Sloane's supervisory situation was unique. Her institution had recently
undergone an organizational restructure. Prior to the restructure, she had reported to the
CSAO but was currently one tier down in the organization, reinforcing her mid-level

position. She was challenged with the change but used it as an opportunity to reframe her focus. "I was so at the point where I was like, 'Okay, I can't really do anything about this situation at work, so I'm just going to put this energy into school.' It has worked out fine" (Sloane, ID75).

Sloane had considered leaving the field on multiple occasions, particularly after her second child was born. Her thought was to leave the field for a finite period of time and then re-enter the field, but she was concerned about the re-entry. "I'm not even really sure why I didn't; I don't know that I can fully articulate why I did it. I guess on some level I was uncertain what my reentry back into the field would look like" (Sloane, ID91).

Sloane was ambitious and had a plan for post-graduation: looking for a position that combined academic and student affairs. She recognized that her doctorate would open doors for her: "Post the PhD, I have a different set of options than I do currently" (Sloane, ID96). At one point in her career she had considered seeking a Dean of Students or Vice President position but recognized that she did not enjoy managing student crises, which is a large part of either of those roles; subsequently, she changed her plans. She was also challenged by how she would describe her responsibilities to her children.

> I don't really know how my colleagues who are in those types of environments, manage parenting. What do you tell a 7-year-old? "I'm leaving your birthday party because an on-campus dorm is on fire?" I mean clearly you have to go and resolve that, right, but the kid doesn't get that. So I just don't know that that fits into my life at this point in time. Maybe when my kids are much older, but it doesn't work now to me with little ones. (Sloane, ID106)

Sloane was ambitious, achievement oriented, and committed to all of her roles. She saw her role of mother benefiting her professional role: "I definitely think I'm a kinder gentler version of myself, post having kids" (Sloane, ID155). She cared about her work, her students, her staff members, and her family. Regardless of what path her career takes, Sloane will certainly be successful.

Sophie

Sophie was 29 years old, married, and had two young children. She was the youngest participant in this study. She was an assistant director for campus housing at a mid-size private institution. She was the only participant whose position required her to live on campus. In fact, Sophie had lived on campus for her entire career in student affairs. Her husband traveled for his work, which left Sophie alone during the week. "My partner travels with his job, so he's gone Monday-Friday, so I kind of single parent during the week and then we co-parent on the weekends" (Sophie, ID2). Sophie has had to balance her roles while serving as a single parent for the majority of the time. At the time of the interview she had recently accepted a new position that would require the family to relocate but would also allow her husband to spend more time at home.

Sophie was a very caring and compassionate person. She worked hard in both roles and cared deeply about everyone in her life. Her care and compassion had influenced her experience as a mother and an administrator. She battled to carry out both roles well. "I'm just so committed to both, and I constantly feel pulled in both directions" (Sophie, ID10). Sophie spent considerable time and thought in strategizing how to manage these demands. She did not want to be judged for being a mother and so made sacrifices with her family time to fulfill work responsibilities. "I almost have to overcompensate in my job because I have children, because I never want someone to use the excuse, 'Well, she has kids, so we can't count on her for whatever'" (Sophie, ID11).

When scheduling the interview, I was surprised to learn that Sophie was out of the office on maternity leave. There was no out-of-office reply message and she responded very quickly. Sophie said that she checked emails regularly and worked while on maternity leave. Although she was not being compensated for the time, she considered that she owed it to her staff and students to be present and available. "My

supervisor didn't set that expectation, but I still felt this pressure that I live on, and I needed to be there for my staff" (Sophie, ID52). Sophie thought that her department would compensate her for her time if she requested it, but since she was moving to a new position, she determined that she needed the time in the office before her last day.

Sophie had a strong desire to prove that her role of mother did not negatively impact her ability to perform her job. This was based on her philosophy that working women have expectations to meet. "I think honestly it's kind of important for a working woman to set that bar that we can do both, like we can be a mother and work full time if that's what we choose to do" (Sophie, ID36). In the week in which she returned from maternity leave Sophie hosted candidates at dinner and facilitated community tours after the work day ended. When asked why she did that much, she said, "I still feel like I owe people and I need to make up for being gone for 12 weeks" (Sophie, ID32).

Sophie strived to maintain balance in her roles and do each well. She admitted that it was a constant struggle: "I never feel like I do either one really well" (Sophie, ID104). Ultimately, Sophie wanted to be a good mother who was present and engaged in her children's lives: "My most important role is I want to be a good mother; I don't want my kids to remember that mommy is never home" (Sophie, ID107). Sophie recognized that she was a role model for her children and wanted to be a good one. She strove to be successful in the role but wondered whether "there's ever going to be a time where I'm going to feel like I'm a success as a mom. I feel like it's a journey that doesn't have an end point, so there's no place for me to take assessment" (Sophie, ID211).

Sophie said that she felt fortunate to work for a supportive supervisor. Her supervisor allowed her to have a flexible schedule and, although she did not have children of her own, was empathetic to the demands of parenting. Sophie brought her children to events when appropriate and relied on the support of her colleagues, friends,

and extended family to provide child care when needed. Although her husband traveled for work, she identified him as a significant source of support and encouragement. She relied on their partnership to navigate her roles.

Sophie did not have a defined career path and was compelled to be productive in her life. Her family's history was rooted in humble beginnings. "I think that just kind of naturally instilled in me this idea that, like all the sacrifices that have happened for me, that I can't just put that to waste" (Sophie, ID192). Sophie said that she loved to learn; she had recently completed a second master's degree. A doctorate was in her future but she did not know when that would occur. While she was determining her path, Sophie hoped that her position could be more easily managed within the workday. "It can never be an 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. job, and sometimes I wish it could. I'm afraid all the pictures of my girls growing up are going to be with me with a laptop or me on my phone" (Sophie, ID114). Sophie's new position will be a promotion with expanded responsibilities.

Sue

Sue was 41 years old, married, and the mother of two young children. She served as an assistant director for student judicial affairs at a large regional university. Sue's husband also worked in student affairs, as the director of a department. Sue was one of two participants in this study who did not directly supervise staff but was still viewed as mid-level administrator by her institution. She had responsibility for overseeing the student sanctioning model and served on division and university committees. Although supervision was not part of her job description, the scope of her responsibilities reinforced the mid-level status. In addition to her roles as mother and administrator, Sue was a doctoral student. Her studies took her away from her children and family regularly, but the degree was a necessary credential to help her advance in her career.

Sue's identity was embedded within her professional role: "I think there're people who are administrators that come to work, and I think there're administrators in student affairs that that's their identity, and I'm one of the identity people" (Sue, ID244). Her work life and home life were integrated through intentional planning. When reflecting on the blended life Sue stated,

> When my husband and I, both student affairs people, made a decision to have kids, we decided that the kids would live that life with us, that that's what was best for us, that we would all invest in whatever campus we were at the time as a family. (Sue, ID9)

Her children were frequently seen on campus at events and work functions and Sue and her husband utilized college students to babysit when needed so they could meet the demands of their positions and still provide care for their children.

Sue's integrated life created blurred lines that she navigated. When asked what it was like to be a mother in student affairs, Sue responded, "I don't know what it's like, because I think I'm in that place where it's just such a blur sometimes that I don't know that I can describe it well" (Sue, ID11). Her previous positions had been in housing and student activities; she shared that her students often described her role as mothering, not because she was overly nurturing but because she was straightforward and honest with her students, telling them what others might not tell them. Sue cared deeply for the students with whom she worked and had a strong passion for student affairs.

Moving into student conduct provided an opportunity for Sue to develop boundaries and work a more traditional work day.

> I could be a workaholic. I have been in the past, and so it's a very conscious effort not to do . . . by the time I get home from class, or if I don't have in-between sessions, I have such precious time with them that I try not to do that too much. (Sue, ID90)

Sue was one of the few participants in this study who did not work from home every evening. That was due in part to the fact that her office and colleagues did not

continue to work past 5:00 p.m. In this regard, Sue said, "There's no professional staff having discussions at the end of the day that I didn't get to" (Sue, ID91). She was able to leave work at work unless there was an evening event or function, in which case her children typically attended with her.

Sue was the only participant who discussed strong pressure and guilt from her family because of her choices to have a professional career. Her Southern culture dictated that women stay home with the children. "I'm Southern, and I come from a very traditional background. A, I'm working, so that's bad in the culture in which I was raised. And B, I'm not there all the time" (Sue, ID113). Her family, particularly her mother, was not supportive of her decisions and disapproved of her working and pursuing a doctorate. "I know it's a lot imposed on from my mother, that it's just I'm having a very inappropriate life by her standards" (Sue, ID115).

Sue was comfortable with her career choices and ambitions but did think about what she might be missing while at work or in the classroom. She did not want to be a stay-at-home mother and had no intention of leaving the field, but she reflected on her choices: "When I really think about it, I don't think I actually miss things, but I think that I wonder what I'm not seeing" (Sue, ID114). Like other women in this study who often felt that they had to prove themselves in the work setting, Sue was conscientious not to have her children be an excuse. "I'm determined not to be that person that has the kids, that has other people doing the stuff, you know? There's this tension in that of I shouldn't be working this hard with the kids, right?" (Sue, ID235). Her supervisor was very supportive and helped her to maintain her boundaries and recognize her own limits. Despite the support, it was challenging to Sue: " I think I live in a constant state of being torn to the point where I don't notice it anymore" (Sue, ID139).

Sue's husband played an active role in parenting, and their partnership was one of the strategies on which she relied to meet the demands of her roles. They had identified their roles and actively contributed through those roles. Sue was the "big picture planner" and helped the family to forecast and plan; her husband's role was in-the-moment planning and problem solving. As Sue explained, "His role is definitely more nurturing, cook, taking care of the house" (Sue, ID269). In addition to the support that she received from her partner, Sue appreciated the fact that they worked at the same institution and could easily step in and help each other with child care as needed. Sometimes parenting responsibilities fell to Sue due to her husband's director role.

> I think that there's a default switch that hits when something doesn't work out, and there's a choice to be made, and sometimes that's director, assistant director, you know, it just . . . there's a default that, if it all goes wrong, it's on me. (Sue, ID301)

Sue was one of few women in this study who aspired to be a dean or Vice President for Student Affairs. She was cognizant of the demands of the Vice President position and confessed that she worried about the demands of the role.

> I'm at a lot of things with our VP now, she's very collaborative, and we see her all the time. I work closely with her on some projects and stuff, and I see that she's here all the time, just at events, and congratulating students about this, that, or the other, or opening this, that, or the other, and I worry about that. (Sue, ID147)

Because her husband is also in student affairs, they negotiate their career moves together, which could be challenging since they would both like to serve in a Vice President role. Sue followed her husband for the past two moves but the plan for the next move is for him to follow her. However, Sue also acknowledged that such a move might not be possible, so she was open to any opportunities that would help her to grow and develop as a professional.

Tina

Tina was 31 years old, married, mother of two children, and a coordinator in the student health center at a large research institution. Tina's children were 13 months old and 3 years old; her husband was a student and was not working in a full-time job. Tina had entered student affairs through a nontraditional path. She was born and raised in Germany and had started working at the university after moving to her current city. Her background was in real estate but she always knew that she wanted to find a position that allowed her flexibility to be both a mother and a professional and that she did not want to work extensive hours. "My goal that I had with going back to school was (and at the time I was joking when I said that) that I wanted to work part time and make the same amount of money that I was making as a real estate agent" (Tina, ID4).

Tina had been in a mid-level position for the shortest time of all participants. She had held a mid-level title for 4 years and had supervised staff for the past 2.5 years. She was also unique in that she was the only participant in the study who worked part time. Following the birth of her second child, Tina had negotiated a 30-hour work week. Her supervisor and department had been very supportive of the request and she reported that she had excelled in her role. In reducing her hours, her salary was also reduced, but none of her job duties had changed. In fact, over the course of the past year she had gained additional responsibilities. Tina reported having learned how to be efficient and effective with her time in the office. She came into the office for 6 hours a day and focused on the work that needed to be done, without spending time on anything that was unnecessary. Although she left at 3:00 p.m., her work was typically not finished. She kept her telephone on and stayed available so she could answer questions and emails to support her staff. When asked whether this was an expectation, she stated, "I don't think that

everybody expects me to look at my emails; I think if it's really important, they would call. But I just do it because I care" (Tina, ID28).

Tina utilized a range of strategies to help her manage the roles of mother and administrator. First and foremost, she worked in a supportive environment that allowed her flexibility in the workday. Working only 30 hours a week provided 10 hours a week of business time to take the children to medical appointments, run errands, or take care of personal business. Both her department and her supervisor were supportive of this arrangement because she was a strong performer. Her husband was also supportive and they shared an equal parenting partnership. With his flexibility, he was able to help with the children's schedules and needs.

She also took advantage of outside support. She hired a cleaning service, a lawn service, and babysitters when needed. She was very organized, which allowed her to know when she needed assistance so she could get all of her tasks taken care of in order to spend time at home with family. "I try to make a point to reserve the time between 5 and 8 only and alone for my kids. During that time, I am their mom and nothing else. We play outside, we read, we color, we sing" (Tina, ID163).

Tina's mother had worked extensive hours, which had influenced Tina's desire to have a strong presence with her children. "I am only working 30 hours because my mom was never at home. That's part of the reason I am doing it, because I want to be there for my kids and that's important to me" (Tina, ID142). Although her role as a mother was very important to her, her career was also important. When discussing her position, she stated, "It gives me personal satisfaction to be successful in my job" (Tina, ID40). She did not want to be a stay-at-home mother because she appreciated the contributions and satisfaction gained in her professional role. Her career brought satisfaction but it also carried a feeling of guilt. "At first, there was a lot of guilt on my end, thinking that being

a full-time employee and having an important job, I kind of abandoned my kids and don't spend enough time with them" (Tina, ID51). She worked actively to reconcile the guilt but from time to time it continued to be present.

Tina was a strong example for other women. She valued her professional role and wanted to continue to advance in her career. Although she had put further education on hold for the time being, she sought additional opportunities and responsibilities so she could develop professionally. She also identified her personal needs and advocated for herself. "I think there are so many moms [who] want to work but not full time, or [who] are just overwhelmed with it. If you ask for what you need, then you most likely will get it" (Tina, ID146).

Veronica

Veronica was 32 years old, married, and the mother of two young children. She was a coordinator in the student union at a large research university. Veronica's husband was an active parent and provided strong support to her in caring for their children but also had an untraditional job. His schedule was unpredictable and he regularly worked well into the evenings. When this happened, Veronica had the sole responsibility for caring for her children after work. Serving in a coordinator role, Veronica advised several student organizations, which brought night and weekend commitments.

The intensity of her work, along with parenting responsibilities, required Veronica to utilize several strategies to navigate her roles. One of the most important strategies was building a support system, which "isn't just him [husband]; it is a village" (Veronica, ID77). Veronica had an active network of friends, family members, and students who were available to pick up her children after work or babysit for her so she could attend a evening meeting. Monday nights tended to be her late nights so she lined

up someone every Monday to pick up the children and bring them home for dinner and baths because she usually is not home until after 9:00 p.m.

Veronica enjoyed working in the student affairs profession. "I value my work because it makes me a better wife and parent" (Veronica, ID233). She expressed belief in the work of student affairs professionals and had a clear passion for student development. "I get to see students succeed every day. That is for me. . . . I get to help young adults reach their goals as an organization and as individuals every single day" (Veronica, ID71). In addition to her work making her a better wife and parent, Veronica recognized her family for helping her be better at her job. "I think kids have made me better at my job, because I don't waste time" (Veronica, ID55).

> I think I advise with more intention because I'm trying to lead by example to my kids, like I want them to see the work that I do and the values that I'm trying to instill in these young adults as they're growing up. (Veronica, ID57)

Veronica had a great passion for and commitment to student affairs; an ethic of care was evident in her work. Even when in the hospital after giving birth to her second child, she responded to a text message from a student because "something about a scholarship was up for review, and he really needed a letter of recommendation, and so I felt that was important enough to let him know I'm not going to be able to do that" (Veronica, ID91). However, she relied on boundaries to not allow her desire to care for and give to others to interfere with putting her family first. She communicated clearly with students about her expectations and availability. She was not afraid to empower her students and allow them to move programs forward if she was unable to be there due to family responsibilities.

> I think that that's a really great thing that we get to do in this profession, is sharing our lives with young people so that they can learn from it and they can be compassionate, and they can take over because you can't do it all the time, and so that's when I think it comes in the most. (Veronica, ID173)

Despite her unwavering commitment to the work in student affairs, Veronica did not envision a career in student affairs. She and her husband had chosen the town where they would build their home, and she did not see advancement opportunities for her in her current department. "The department that I work in doesn't see me as capable, or they are looking for different people that have a commitment that maybe I'm not able to give" (Veronica, ID39). Because she had chosen to put her family first and not work extensive hours, Veronica did not think that she would be viewed as capable of advanced leadership positions in her organization. She recognized that her choices might impact her career options but she was comfortable with that choice. "I sacrifice that part of my career to be able to stay at home—"sacrifice"—but it's a privilege for me to be able to raise those kids, that's much more important" (Veronica, ID40). Although Veronica would gladly make the sacrifice, she contended that the profession should change and should not force the choice between being a mother or an administrator. "It shouldn't be an either/or. I shouldn't have to say I'm either going to work or I'm going to be a mom" (Veronica, ID230).

Victoria

Victoria was 32 years old, married, and the mother of one young child. She served as the director of student activities at a small private university. Victoria's husband also worked in student affairs, so in addition to juggling the demands of a very intense position, she had to account for the demands of her husband's equally intense role. She had recently moved into the director's position, which had required a physical move for her family. One of the primary reasons they had moved was to be closer to extended family and the support that they receive from them. Victoria had recognized that, without family support, it would be much more challenging to meet the demands of both of their roles.

Victoria was achievement driven and wanted to excel in all of her roles. She had quickly established a positive reputation on her new campus, which resulted in additional projects and responsibilities. She knew that in student affairs it was easy to become absorbed in work. She defined student affairs as a profession focused on caring for others.

> Because our roles are caring for so many different people, there's only so much time in the day. And when you're caring for that many people, it's harder to keep time for you. Because if you gave all of the time to all of the people who need it, there wouldn't be any more time. (Victoria, ID210)

Victoria was the director of a department with a large amount of responsibility but with very few staff members to support the programs. She was very intentional about keeping her family a priority: "As professionals, especially in student affairs, we tend to let family and personal slip the priority list" (Victoria, ID206).

Victoria loved being a mother; she had wanted to be a mother since she was a young child. She relied on compartmentalization to balance the roles of mother and administrator and her child helped her to stay focused on home when she was at home. "Part of the joy of having a child has been that's how I stay in the moment. I'm in the moment the most often when I'm with my son" (Victoria, ID64). Victoria wanted to be a great mother and a great administrator but sometimes she needed to redefine her expectations for each role. Talking about her role as mother, she said, "It's important to me to do that well, and to do that right. But the way that *well* and *right* end up being defined sometimes gets stretched and tweaked" (Victoria, ID61). Victoria kept her family first: "It's just trying to remember that being a mom is a priority, and sometimes that priority means time, and sometimes that priority means energy" (Victoria, ID90).

Victoria employed a range of strategies to balance her roles. Compartmentalization was important; she was focused on work at work and on home at home: "When I'm at work, I work my butt off from the time I get here until the time I go

home" (Victoria, ID183). There were times when the roles blended and work came home and vice versa. For example, she spent time every night catching up on emails to manage the volume received each day. She had established boundaries with the students with whom she worked to manage the number of night and weekend events that she had to attend.

> I try to make a rule with them that, unless I have a role, or unless there's something planning-wise that's happening that impacts maybe the rest of our semester or year, I try not to do weekend stuff, or even nighttime stuff if I can help it, aside from things like set standing meetings. (Victoria, ID169)

Her husband was one of the most important sources of support as she shared parenting and household responsibilities with him. They compared calendars and strategically planned when each could work in the evenings to ensure that their child always had care and attention. She described it as winning the lottery when she found her husband. He liked to cook and clean and took responsibility for many of those household chores.

Victoria had not defined a definite career path. She did not know whether she would stay in student affairs and had considered leaving the field. But she remarked, "I don't know what I would change to" (Victoria, ID75). She did not see her path taking her into a dean or vice president position.

> I see that like the dean-level positions are really having to go to more events as the face person and things like that, and that adds on to all the work that they do during the day and evening already. I don't know if I'm willing to do that and be that, so I'm not sure. (Victoria, ID85)

Victoria was a very talented student affairs professional who made a positive contribution to her campus daily. If she were to choose to leave the field, the profession would lose a valuable member.

Summary

Each of the study participants had a different experience as a mother and an administrator. Each had developed various strategies to navigate their roles and to fulfill their personal and professional responsibilities. Despite the uniqueness in their individual stories, the participants shared a common experience: Being a mother and an administrator in student affairs is a challenging undertaking that can be difficult, taxing, and tiring. The participants' time, attention, and emotional capacity were constantly sought by multiple constituents, including their children, their partners, staff, supervisors, and students. Although this combination of responsibilities was challenging, the majority of the participants found value and personal fulfillment in their professional roles.

The Women's Experiences

All of the women in this study assumed dual roles (mother and administrator). Each role had specific expectations and responsibilities that the participants navigated in an attempt to be successful in each. They often experienced an overlap or collision between the two roles. Such experiences had a negative impact on the participants and prompted them to develop strategies to address the role overlap or collisions. The women's experiences occurred within the context of the student affairs profession, their individual institutions, and their perspectives related to career. This section reviews multifaceted experiences reported by the study participants to address the first research question, *What are the experiences of women who have children and serve in mid-level positions in the student affairs profession at higher education institutions in Texas?*

Table 3 presents an overview of the findings related to each research question.

Table 3

Overview of Findings

Research question	Category	Major themes	Subthemes
1	Women's experiences	Perceptions of student affairs	Commitment to job Ethic of care Intense work A typical day

		Institutional culture	Institutional culture:
			    Flexible schedule
			    Maternity leave

			The role of the supervisor
		Role of mother Role of administrator Role collision Impact on self	Lost identity Personal sacrifices Proving themselves Battle with guilt
		Career plans and aspirations	Well-defined career plans No desire for advancement Leaving the field Lack of role models
2	Strategies	Building support systems	Partner support Family support Friend support
		Defining boundaries Managing time efficiently Focusing on family Taking care of self Serving as self-advocate	

Perceptions of Student Affairs

When asked to describe being a mother and an administrator in student affairs,

the participants frequently used words the words *challenging*, *demanding*, *hard*, and

stressful. Every participant immediately acknowledged the difficulties and reported resulting stress. Savannah did not have a traditional student affairs background and was concerned when she started to realize the intensity of the profession: "I went to a conference and [attended] a working moms/live-in moms conversation. I was like, 'What have I gotten myself into?'" (Savannah, ID243).

Commitment to jobs. The profession encourages a commitment to individual jobs and responsibilities. This creates challenges when women also want to be committed to the role of mother. Sophie described this challenge: "It's hard [to be a parent] in this field when I am so committed to my job" (Sophie, ID6). Lynn acknowledged and embraced the demands: "It's challenging, but I also don't know if I would have it any other way" (Lynn, ID 9). Victoria observed that people in the profession can lose sight of priorities: "As professionals, especially in student affairs, we tend to let family and personal slip the priority list" (Victoria, ID206).

Sue made an important point: "There's a lot of disagreement even among the functions. If you were talking to a mom who's an administrator in financial aid, it would be much different from housing" (Sue, ID252). All of the women acknowledged that being a working mother was challenging but their individual experiences were quite different. For example, those with on-call responsibilities were never able to truly separate work from home. In this regard Savannah shared, "I think housing in and of itself is a tough field to find [balance]. . . . I don't know if there is ever true balance. But to create what perceived balance would be, just because I'm on call all the time" (Savannah, ID2). Participants such as Sue, who worked in an office with business hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., still had occasional evening commitments but did not struggle with work accumulating overnight.

Ethic of care. In addition to encouraging a high commitment to their job roles, the student affairs profession promotes an ethic of care. The participants described the profession as all about investing in others' growth and development. *"We're in the business of people, . . . developing people, helping people grow as leaders, showing them their potential and personal growth"* (Veronica, ID133). Investing in others often involves and implies care. The theme of care emerged related to caring for students, staff, perceptions held by others, and aging parents. The tasks that the women faced in their role of mother implied an ethic of care and responsibility for others.

The participants described their professional role as also requiring them to care about others. This investment in others was positive for some participants and negative for others, depending on how it manifested in their lives. Victoria reflected that the caring nature of the profession pulled her in multiple directions:

> Because our roles are caring for so many different people, there's only so much time in the day. And when you're caring for that many people, it's harder to keep time for you. Because if you gave all of the time to all of the people who need it, there wouldn't be any more time. I mean there's just not enough of you to go around to all those people in the way that they might like it. (Victoria, ID210)

For Kylie, the ethic of care appeared to be negative; she was working on reprioritizing her life and admitted, "A big regret is I just cared too much about my work" (Kylie, ID 272).

Jody stated that her role as mother had enhanced her ability to care for students. "I'm probably more caring for students in general, because, as a parent who's a mom, you just sort of have that nurturing, and it probably carries over into my work more than I think that it does" (Jody, ID236). Similarly, Sophie had worked during maternity leave because "I still kinda felt this pressure that I live on, and I needed to be there for my staff" (Sophie, ID52). Tina worked only 30 hours a week but remained available via phone and email because she cared about her staff and meeting their needs.

Intense work. As described by the participants, the profession of student affairs is demanding, challenging, and caring, resulting in an intense and demanding work environment where the work never ends—there is always a program to attend or a crisis to solve. The responsibilities of the participants included on-call responsibilities 24 hours a day, facility oversight, program oversight, and living in residence halls. Such commitments lead to difficulty in separating work from home. There was never a shortage of opportunities in student affairs; staff could work all the time if they wanted. The intensity extended beyond the type of work to the amount of work and there was an expectation that staff members would work hard from the beginning. Sloane confirmed,

> It's tough because of the hours and the fact that I think you're set up from the time you're a graduate student that good student affairs professionals work a lot and are always accessible and don't really unplug, and it's not always modeled any other way." (Sloane, ID14)

The interviews presented numerous accounts suggesting how full calendars were during the day, with meeting after meeting, and the only time they could get actual work completed was at home in the evenings.

In addition to the interviews, I reviewed each participant's calendars for the months of June, September, and April. One commonality was countless meetings. These women spent the majority of their days in meetings, which limited their ability to complete their tasks, as indicated by McKenna's comment: "My biggest problem with my job is that I go 8 to 5 straight in meetings, and I have no time to do work that accumulated that day alone, much less what I need to prepare for" (McKenna, ID22). The high volume of meetings prevented strategic planning in their areas, resulting in a reactionary approach to work. "Over the course of the year, I haven't had time to just sit and plan because it's just been go, go, go, do what you need to do to get by for the next deadline kind of a thing" (Michelle, ID25).

Amy reflected on the continual intensity: "It doesn't ever stop. I guess when you're at an entry level in the profession; you kinda have those breaks in the cycles. Adding being a mom, there's no break; you're a mom 24/7" (Amy, ID4). The number of meetings could be related to the participant's role as a mid-level manager, supervising staff and reporting staff, serving as a conduit between levels. Kristin was the only participant who thought that she had become better at balancing work and life after moving into a mid-level position; she did not think that the intensity was overwhelming. She said, "Being at the level that I am now, I'm not completely 8-5, but more so 8-5 than when I was younger and a newer professional in the field" (Kristin, ID4).

The opportunities in student affairs were described as never ending. "There's no shortage of things that I can find ways to be involved in" (Kylie, ID187). For example, Victoria identified a need on her campus and was subsequently charged with the responsibility of meeting the need. No responsibilities were removed from her job description; instead, she described the responsibility as follows: "I could easily see on another campus it being a fulltime job" (Victoria, ID151). Within the environment of constant opportunity was also an expectation for excellence. "There is a striving and a level of excellence that you can never do too much. No one is going to tell you you're doing too much" (Kylie, ID13).

The intensity may not be sustainable for all of the women. As indicated in the interview, Savannah was actively considering a job change. She expressed frustrations with the intensity and demands of her work environment, which was one of the most demanding in the study. "I feel like no one acknowledges the intensity; we all just talk about it, but then keep going" (Savannah, ID68). Victoria echoed this feeling:

> I often question how long I can keep up the pace that I've had to set at work over the last 2 years, just to meet my own standards of professionalism and to keep up with the never-ending work. Somehow I do manage it, but I anticipate that I will find a new job before the job itself improves. (Victoria, ID261).

A typical day. Each of the participants described a typical day at work. They woke up early and went to bed late. The mornings started with the alarm clock and then tasks to complete before leaving the house to take children to school or daycare. Michelle started her day between 5:15 and 5:30 a.m., "not because I go to the gym before I get to work; that's because I get myself up, I get my kids up, I get them breakfast" (Michelle, ID6). The participants cooked breakfast, prepared lunches, fixed hair, and, for some, such as Sue, tried to get some schoolwork done before the workday began. Lynn and McKenna, with the support of their partners, headed to the gym for a morning workout. The mornings presented an opportunity for chaos.

> Even this morning, my oldest daughter, she's like ,"Oh, you have my clothes because we're running late again." I'm like, "Yes, we're always running late." So normally as they're finishing breakfast, they have to be changed and out the door and pack their lunches. So we'll do all of their clothes and stuff while we're trying to brush hair and get them out the door, and then take them to daycare. (Amy, ID38)

Once the women arrived at work, the fast pace continued. As mid-level administrators, all participants had responsibility for oversight of significant programs and for some departments, including strategic planning, staff supervision, budget management, and program development. The sheer number of required meetings was overwhelming. The women's calendars showed that on some days they had a meeting every hour of the day, including the lunch hour. They had meetings with their staff, supervisor, leadership teams, and committees, as well as training programs and presentations. The calendars showed little or no time for doing the work associated with all of those meetings. There was never a dull day and all had to be ready for the unexpected. As Kylie noted, "There's always going to be something that crawls up in a week that you didn't plan for" (Kylie, ID316).

Many of the women had to leave the office at 5:00 p.m. to pick up their children before childcare facilities closed.

And then from here, it's constant all day back-and-forth, either in meetings or trying to just deal with the things that I never finished yesterday. I'm a couple of months behind right now, just like balancing like the financial purchasing cares and paperwork that I have on my desk, so trying to fit all that in. And typically trying to leave by 5:00 p.m. (Amy, ID40)

McKenna was the director of her department and always had a full day of meetings. For her, 5:00 p.m. was "always frantic, because it's that 5:00 p.m., and oh my gosh, I gotta get going" (McKenna, ID206).

For some of the women, leaving at 5:00 p.m. was not an option because of evening commitments. For example, Veronica described the week of her interview: "This week in particular is really hard because I have something every night this week" (Veronica, ID75). Sue and Kristin brought their children to evening events. Sue's partner, also in student affairs, often had the same evening commitments, so the best option for them was to hire a babysitter to watch the children on campus or set them up with activities in the back of the room. Kristin was a single parent, so her option was to pay for a babysitter or bring her daughter with her to events. Many of the women tried to be strategic about the time of the evening commitments to allow them to go home and have dinner with their family before returning to work.

The pace of the day did not slow when the women arrived home. They had to cook dinner, clean the house, and bathe the children and then get them to bed. The women who were also doctoral students left work for class, often not arriving home until after their children were already asleep. Many of the children were involved in activities such as tennis, baseball, theatre, swimming, soccer, ballet, computer classes, gymnastics, religious education, Spanish lessons, and violin lessons. Some of the activities were a part of the after-school activities, but most of them required parents to shuttle the children from one activity to another. Lynn had hired a student to facilitate that process so that her daughter could go to an earlier dance class, resulting in one less evening activity a week. The majority of the children were asleep by 8:30 p.m.

Reflecting on the challenges of evening commitments, Nicole shared, "By 8:15-8:30 I put them to bed, and I'm just ready to crash. Physically, it's become a little bit more challenging as they've gotten older" (Nicole, ID10). Despite being exhausted from the day, once the children were asleep, many of the women started the second part of their workday: responding to email, finishing projects, or studying. Kylie worked at home more than the other participants; she said, "If I get into the flow of something, I'll just keep going with it, until . . . sometimes that's until 2:00 or 2:30 a.m." (Kylie, ID168). Sloane also worked at home.

> Depending on how much work I have to do, then I work until it gets done. I have to get in bed on class nights by 2:00 a.m.; I cannot go any later than that, or else I can't function the next day, I'm too sleepy. (Sloane, ID131)

The departmental expectation related to work hours was a critical determinant of whether a participant worked at home. Some could not afford not to work because so much happened via email overnight. Others, such as Kristin and Sue, were able to establish boundaries and not bring work home.

The weekend provided an opportunity for the women to spend time with their families. The nature of student affairs necessitated occasional weekend commitments, but none of the women had functions every weekend. They spent this time with their families, doing chores and completing schoolwork. There were some children's activities on the weekend, such as baseball games, soccer games, and gymnastics, but these varied by participant. All of this was in preparation for the next week, which would arrive quickly with the same level of intensity as the previous week. The women's experiences with the profession were dependent on several influential factors, including the institutional culture and supervisor support. These factors are described below.

Influential Factors

Several factors influenced the women's experience as mother and administrator, ranging from institutional culture to supervisors' style and expectations. Among the participants in this study there was a wide range of experiences. Some participants, such as Jody and Kristin, worked in a very family-friendly environment, where multiple staff members had families and children; other participants, such as Savannah, worked in a very unsupportive environment, with very few staff members with families and children but with high expectations for long work hours and constant accessibility. Ultimately, these factors influenced the woman's ability to navigate the roles of mother and administrator.

Institutional culture. The culture of the institutions involved in this study varied from being very supportive of staff with children to being unsupportive to the extent that employees were not allowed to take time off to care for or visit sick family members. Savannah recalled an experience:

> My dad is really sick, and he's been in the hospital a week and I just couldn't get away last week. But I asked to leave next Tuesday through Thursday. . . . And we have a hall director candidate that's coming for the other side. . . . I mean, it just was like, "Are you sure that's the best time?" (Savannah, ID17)

Sometimes the institutional culture extended into the department, at other times the department could choose to operate within the framework of its own policies and procedures. For example, Tina worked at a large research institution with rigid policies and procedures but her department chose to work within the policies to allow her a flexible schedule of 30 hours per week. Because her department supported her, she was appreciative and very loyal to the institution.

Flexible schedule. Many institutions allowed flexibility in the work day and many staff were able to use that flexibility to their discretion, allowing them to leave during the day to take a child to a medical appointment or to attend a program at the

child's school. The flexible schedule was both positive and negative for participants. Jody's institution was family friendly and focused on helping staff members to succeed. She referred to the flexible schedule as a benefit. "When random things do come up, you're able to come and go as you want without a lot of red tape to get through. So that's probably the best one, the flextime" (Jody, ID63). McKenna had the opposite experience. She enjoyed being able to use the time but also knew that she would make up that time later. "It just means it's my sacrifice; it's just coming out of my hide later by having to do that" (McKenna, ID146). McKenna's environment encouraged long work hours: "Not that we're trying to promote workaholism by any means, but at the same time, the real perception is that people who work a lot get a lot" (McKenna, ID18).

Maternity leave. The institutional culture and institutional policies were evident in the women's experiences with maternity leave. Sophie was on maternity leave when I contacted her about participating in the study. She did not have an "out of office" message on her computer because she checked email daily and wanted to be available to her staff. Similarly, despite advocating for a maternity leave plan to cover her work duties, including a major orientation program, Sloane had left for leave without a well-developed plan. "At that point in time I had a different supervisor, and I kept going back, and was like 'Hey, we don't really have a plan for how to manage this'" (Sloane, ID65).

Kylie observed one of her staff member's challenges with the maternity leave policies because she was new to the institution and did not have much leave time built up in advance. Savannah supervised a staff member who had lived in the residence hall during her maternity leave and had brought her new baby to a meeting because she felt that it was important for her to be at the meeting. Commenting on this staff member's availability by telephone, Savannah said,

> I wouldn't say an expectation, but on several occasions I have people share their frustrations with me about not being able to get in touch with her while she is

out. I have encouraged her to turn it off completely, but there is not a full under-standing of that in our department" (Savannah, ID239).

Only two institutions in the study provided paid maternity leave in addition to accrued vacation and sick time. All of the other institutions required women to exhaust their vacation and sick leave and then take unpaid leave if needed if they wanted to take full advantage of their rights through the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This policy negatively impacted some of the women's ability to spend time with their new-born child. Jody elaborated: "Having to go unpaid after using your time, and feeling pressured, 'Well, I don't wanna go unpaid for too long.' So you'd like to take 12 weeks, but you can only end up taking 9 or 10" (Jody, ID66). This also resulted in women strategically considering their potential plans and vacation time. For Victoria this meant "less likely to take a vacation for myself, even though I might need it for mental health purposes, because I know I need to save it" in the event that they decided to have another child (Victoria, ID50).

The role of the supervisor. In addition to the institutional and departmental culture that shaped the experiences of the participating women, their supervisors also played a vital role. The supervisor was one of the most critical factors contributing to a woman's experience with navigating the two roles. A supportive supervisor was extremely meaningful and helped the woman feel that she could be successful in both roles. At the same time, an unsupportive supervisor derailed women and was a significant barrier to their success.

The women who had supportive supervisors thought highly of their departments and institutions and felt empowered to make their lives work while still making meaningful contributions to their professional role. The supervisors served as role models for them, both in how they approached their work and how they supervised their staff. Supportive supervisors allowed participants to think creatively about their work

and to find meaningful solutions to the challenges that they were facing. The supportive

supervisors were both men and women, and not all of them had children of their own;

however, they invested in the staff member in a way that was personally meaningful.

Tina's supervisor valued family. "My direct supervisor is just real understanding

towards family. He values the importance of family. He takes a lot of interest in my

children and offers advice" (Tina, ID15). One of Kylie's past supervisors had challenged

her to find a creative solution to the challenges of being a mother and an administrator.

"He allowed that space for me to feel like I could talk openly about the challenges—not

just professionally, but just this conflict" (Kylie, ID35). Kylie's former supervisor also

served as her role model due to his approach to work and family and through

> his out-of-the-box thinking and the way I saw him be so involved in life at the
> university, how I perceived the way he talked about his family, how connected
> and present he was for his family, how he served the community and his church.
> (Kylie, ID60)

All of the participants had experienced a change in supervisors during their

tenure in the profession, and the transitions had caused anxiety. "Until you can

determine whether or not they're supportive, then it's a little bit harder" (Jody, ID58).

Victoria valued the support from her supervisor she had had at a previous institution but

she did not receive the same level of support from her current supervisor.

> I think it's important, from like a supervisory perspective, that supervisors really
> have an understanding of what's going on in your world and that you have that
> kind of connection to where they know what work you have on your plate, and
> what family stuff you have on your plate. (Victoria, ID225)

The presence of an unsupportive supervisor was demotivating and in some cases

caused staff members to begin to look for new opportunities. In many instances an

unsupportive supervisor would have also been classified as an ineffective supervisor—

one who did not develop trusting relationships or one who had unrealistic expectations

for staff members. There were also some examples of unsupportive supervisors due to

leadership transitions and a change in the vision and direction for the department or division. McKenna struggled with the transition to a new supervisor. "Without a direct communication link to the vice president, I felt like I just didn't have a chance to really kind of prove that this department, or even myself as a leader, were competent" (McKenna, ID39). Savannah described her environment as unsupportive: "I feel this constant tension. They will say they're supportive, but the actions are not realistically supportive, and they haven't been" (Savannah, ID22).

The women in this study worked harder when they were working for someone in whom they believed and who they thought believed in them. Many of the women adopted this philosophy in working with their staff members, striving to be supportive and encouraging. They sought to be supportive of work-life balance issues for all of their staff members, regardless of whether those members had children. Learning through her role as a mother, Jody learned to "teach my staff to balance and take time for themselves" (Jody, ID237). The institution, the department, and the supervisor made a difference in how these women navigated their roles. The roles of mother and administrator are described through the experiences of the participants.

Role of Mother

All of the women in this study were mothers of at least one child; two participants had three children each. The oldest child in the study was 14 years old and the youngest was 13 weeks old at the time of interviews. All of the participants wanted to be good mothers. When Sophie and her partner had considered started a family, she had reflected on the responsibilities of motherhood and determined that "my most important role, is I want to be a good mother" (Sophie, ID107). Victoria stated, "It's important to me to do that [mother] well, and to do that right. But the way that *well* and *right* end up being defined sometimes gets stretched and tweaked" (ID61). Although

they strove to be good mothers, the participants did not always feel that they were excelling in that role. "I don't know if there's ever going to be a time where I'm going to feel like I'm a success as a mom" (Sophie, ID211).

The women enjoyed their role as a mother and wanted to excel in that role while excelling in their role as an administrator. Their role of mother was at the forefront of their decision making and thoughts. Sophie confirmed this feeling: "Being a parent is my absolute first priority" (Sophie, ID5). Family first was a constant theme from all of the participants, even though at times it was difficult for them to avoid being caught up in the volumes of work. Lynn acknowledged the conflict: "I am not willing to sacrifice them [my family] for my career" (Lynn, ID35). Victoria prioritized her role of mother: "It's just trying to remember that being a mom is a priority, and sometimes that priority means time, sometimes that priority means energy" (Victoria, ID90). Although work was important to her, Michelle stated, "I'm never going to say, 'Gosh, I wish I spent less time with my kids'" (Michelle, ID45).

With the role of mother came specific tasks and responsibilities, which varied among participants largely depending on the roles that they had established with their partners. For example, in Sue's home her husband was the nurturer, while in many of the other families the woman served in that role, taking responsibility for such tasks as facilitating bedtime routines, cleaning, scheduling and taking the children to medical appointments, and school meetings. The majority of the participant's children were young; therefore, to meet their needs often required physical, mental, and emotional energy from the women after the work day and, for many, before they started working again in the evening. As the only single parent in the study, Kristin had responsibility for all parenting tasks. Reflecting on what happens when she is sick reinforced this reality:

"When I'm sick, I don't get a break. I mean you still have to be a mom, you don't get to just take that hat off" (Kristin, ID20).

Many of the participants had nursed their infants, which had created an additional obstacle in the workplace.

> It is a personal choice I make and I wouldn't change, but it is extremely difficult and tiring. Not only at home, but at work . . . to schedule pumping around meetings and making sure your child has enough to eat is a lot of pressure. (Veronica, ID32)

Many of the women in the study were fortunate to have partners who shared equally in the parenting and household responsibilities. Others had partners who were unable to assist regularly due to their jobs; in these situations the women had to assume full responsibility for child emergencies during work hours. Despite strong support from her partner, Veronica felt pressure to be very involved in family planning and organizing. "Moms have to think all of the time, dads can follow instructions that moms give" (Veronica, ID36). Every married participant depended on support provided by partners to navigate their roles, which is discussed later in depth.

Many of the women described their roles as complementary: The role of mother helped them in their role of administrator and vice versa. For Victoria, having a child forced her to prioritize her family over work, "In some ways, I think having a baby is actually really good for professionals, because it means that you're almost required to put your family life at some level of priority" (Victoria, ID205). Veronica described herself as more efficient at work: "I think kids have made me better at my job, because I don't waste time" (Veronica, ID55). Lynn stated that her empathy and understanding had increased. "I do think in being a mom that I'm probably more patient with staff, or kind of trying to be understanding and go the route of encouraging people" (Lynn, ID166). Sloane described how her role of mother had made her a better professional because it changed how she made decisions.

> I don't think it makes you overly emotional. I don't think that it makes you unable to use sound judgment. I think that it reinforces the use of your heart. . . . I always ask students what's their primary decision-making tool: head, heart, or gut. (Sloane, ID162)

Kylie had been in her career for several years before her daughter was born; she stated that being a mother had "just brought things in better perspective" (Kylie, ID251). While the women identified many positive aspects of being a working mother, they also acknowledged multiple challenges associated with the dual roles. Discussing her choice to be a working mother, Veronica observed, "I think it's our sacrifice, but it's also our privilege" (Veronica, ID30).

Role of Administrator

Similar to the role of mother, the role of administrator brought satisfaction and challenges to these participants. Serving as a mid-level manager in student affairs was not an easy professional role. The expectations and norms of the profession were demanding and the women found it challenging to be a mother and an administrator; however, for the most part, they would not trade their experiences. All of the participants had found value and meaning in their work. "I love what I do at work, and it's very fulfilling" (Michelle, ID258). "I really care about my job, I love my job, I love my students, I really love the staff that I supervise, and I like the role that I have to play with them" (Sophie, ID4). Despite all of the challenges that McKenna had faced, she stated that her administrator role "gives my life a lot of purpose. And I feel like I know what I'm called to do" (McKenna, ID3-4).

Just as the role of mother had made them better professionals, the participants stated that the role of administrator made them better mothers. Kristin was the only participant who would like to be a stay-at-home mother. Other participants had considered leaving the field, but all said that they did not think they would be happy to be a stay-at-home mother. "I just don't think I'm the kinda person that could've stayed

home" (Nicole, ID52); "I figured I went to school for 7 years, got a master's degree, and I kind of wanted to work" (Nicole, ID51). Michelle described herself as a "better mom because I work" (Michelle, ID133). Some of the women stated that they would consider a part-time position that would give them more time to devote to their family but also provide satisfaction that they found in their work. Most of the participants did not envision their departments or institutions supporting a part-time position, so they did not pursue the option. "I always think if I could work 30 hours a week and leave every day at 3:00 p.m., that would be so great" (Jody, ID204). Working had allowed the women to satisfy their drive and ambition and then be engaged and present with their children after work.

The majority of the participants had found value in their administrator role and they wanted to work. Many were cognizant of their professional role defining their identity. Some, like Savannah, had once defined themselves through their job but stated that they were changing. "Because some people find their worth in their job—I'm done with that [laugh]—I just don't see it taking me anywhere, eternally or long-term with my family" (Savannah, ID70). Others did not want to be defined by their job. "I don't want my job to define me; I'd rather have my family define me" (Jody, ID17).

> When I'm done I want to be able to just say "wow, that was really fun, and I think I made a real difference," but also be able to just say that what was more important is how my kids turned out, and they're going to school, and doing all those things. (Jody, ID243)

Sue was the only participant who was comfortable with her identities being intertwined. "I think there are people who are administrators who come to work, and I think there are administrators in student affairs and that's their identity; I'm one of the identity people" (Sue, ID244).

The women in this study were high achieving and ambitious. They had a strong desire to succeed in both roles. They also wanted to be a role model for their children

and colleagues, demonstrating that life and work can co-exist. "Not that you can do it all, because I don't necessarily try to espouse that, but just that you can have a job and be a good mom" (Michelle, ID131). Realities related to finances and insurance had influenced their decision to work but ultimately they had found value in what they do. Nicole summed it up: "Having the career just makes me feel like I'm accomplishing something professionally. And it makes me feel like I'm using the skills that God gave me to use" (Nicole, ID53).

Role Collision

The participants' desire to fulfill the roles of mother and administrator often resulted in a collision of roles. Many of the women in this study had attempted to manage their roles through compartmentalization. Although the strategy was helpful, they saw their roles colliding and compartmentalization failing, which at times created stress. The role collision was evident upon entering their offices. In every office there were items that indicated that the women had families, children, and people who were important to them. Tina's children's artwork was proudly displayed on the door of her office. Sophie's office was filled with her children's artwork and her desk was lined with pictures of her children, family, and people who were important to her. Some women displayed these items less prominently than others. Lynn, for example, had a very professionally decorated office. Her desk was neat and clean, and the few pictures of her family were on the credenza rather than on her desk.

Each participant described role collision differently. Some described it as a tug-of-war, feeling constantly torn between competing priorities. Kylie could not separate the two roles that she said, "pull at each other sometimes. And when I step onto campus, when I step into my office, I can't turn off that I'm also a mom and a wife" (Kylie, ID6). Lynn described the collision in reference to two different worlds: "I feel like there are

two worlds that I live in, and that sometimes those worlds go very well together, and sometimes they collide and crash" (Lynn, ID4). For Sue, her roles collided constantly in what she described as blended or blurred:

> My mom role and my work role blend a lot, because my kids are here; my husband is in student activities, so my kids are constantly at events, they're involved, they're fans of the athletic programs, and so sometimes the roles blur. (Sue, ID1)

McKenna said that she approached life with structure and compartmentalization and that role collision caused stress. "That's when it feels most challenging. If I had to summarize, it's when my children's needs during the day are pushing up against . . . My day is when I'm less flexible because of all the meetings" (McKenna, ID125). Kristin, a doctoral student, echoed other participants' feelings: "I feel like I need to give to my job, but I need to give to my child, and in my case also school. I feel like I'm being pulled in a lot of different directions" (Kristin, ID142).

Role collision occurred for a range of reasons, initiated by both home life and work life. Examples role collision included sick children, meetings outside of the normal work hours, work crises, and on-call commitments. Home and work did not always coordinate. "Home life doesn't always understand my work commitments, and work life doesn't always understand my home commitments" (Lynn, ID40). Amy appeared to be one of the most well-balanced participants in the study. "I think I'm fairly well happy accepting that I have multiple roles and that they kind of have to exist in order to keep me from feeling like I'm not doing the right things for me" (Amy, ID223).

Role collision was facilitated by technology. All but one participant had a smart phone with work email on the phone. Some viewed the technology as a tool to manage the volume of work and emails that they receive each day. Kylie used her phone to be more efficient with her time: "It has helped me a lot. Even waiting for a meeting to start, I can get some things done. I think overall it has been a big strategy that's helped me"

(Kylie, ID351). Jody used her phone to be with her children more often: "I can be away at something at school, or doing something with the other kids and still feel like, if something came up, [I'd] be there for the job" (Jody, ID32). Sloane did not have a smart phone and had made a concerted effort not to get one, although she had a laptop computer, which she took home and worked from regularly in the evenings.

For some participants, their need to stay connected was related to their position; for others, it was due to their personal need for information or a departmental expectation that they respond immediately. The women had their phones with them all of the time. They checked their email first thing in the morning and just before going to bed. Despite the lack of supervisor expectation to check her email constantly, Lynn did so. "I am really bad about imposing it upon myself, I always feel this need to connect and stay connected" (Lynn, ID25).

In addition to smart phones, laptops and Apple© I-Pads™ were utilized to help the participants keep up with the volume of work, although this plan facilitated frequent role collision. Victoria had just purchased an I-Pad so she could more effectively manage the volume of emails. Kristin depended on hers:

> I don't know what I would do without my I-Pad and I-Phone because I am sitting in meetings a lot, and going okay, let me respond to this email, okay, delete that, I don't need it, move it to this box. I think that helps because there are a lot of meetings that are just a waste of time. (Kristin, ID106)

Sloane questioned her decision to have a laptop.

> Probably the worst thing I could've ever have done was get a laptop with a docking station. I should've gotten a computer that was stuck here and that I had no ability to be able to take work home, because that facilitates it in bad ways. (Sloane, ID137)

Veronica stated that role collision should force women to make a choice. "It shouldn't be an either/or. I shouldn't have to say I'm either going to work or I'm going to be a mom" (Veronica, ID230). The reality of the experience for these women was that

they could do both but that came with a cost. The role collision and demands of each role resulted in negative impacts, including feelings of guilt and giving up friends, volunteering, and hobbies.

The Impact on Self

Referring to her ability to be a mother and an administrator, Veronica stated, "I think it's our sacrifice, but it's also our privilege" (Veronica, ID30). From the experiences of these women, it was evident that they had made personal sacrifices to excel in both roles. They shared their sacrifices in a matter-of-fact manner, leading to the conclusion that they did not comprehend the magnitude of their choices but were simply doing what was required. Managing the two roles had negatively impacted self-confidence and self-esteem. The participants had given up activities that had brought them personal pleasure, relationships with partners had been strained, they felt the need to prove themselves, and they constantly battled feelings of guilt. The various ways in which the women were impacted influenced their career plans and ambitions.

Lost identity. These women valued both of their roles and found personal satisfaction in serving both as a mother and an administrator, but the combination has exacted a significant cost.

Evident from the impact of the role collision, the women stated that they often felt that they were not successful in either role and, as a result, lost a little bit of themselves in the process of trying to be successful. "I just felt like I wasn't there for anyone because I was just running around and trying to keep up all these facades of being the best, but losing myself a little bit in that" (Kylie, ID62). The challenge of managing the roles had negatively impacted Victoria, "You're in so many different roles that you forget a little bit about who you are" (Victoria, ID138). The roles were also draining for Victoria: "Energy is a constant balancing act, in addition to budgeting and

life planning and those kind of things" (Victoria, ID141). Sophie shared emotionally, "I never feel like I do either one really well" (Sophie, ID104).

Time became a precious resource because these women clearly understood that there were limited hours in the day. "Your time isn't your own, it's at work or at home; your time always feels like it belongs to someone else" (Michelle, ID15). "There really isn't [much time for self]. And that is the hardest part" (Michelle, ID100). This lack of time forced the women to make choices about how to spend their days, which resulted in some personal sacrifices. Amy acknowledged the obviousness of the time change once she had become a parent.

> My initial reaction is, if it doesn't change, then you've obviously been doing something wrong either way; you weren't doing what you were supposed to do when you didn't have kids or you're not doing the things you're supposed to do when you do. (Amy, ID171)

Personal sacrifices. The women described personal sacrifices that they had made to have time to fulfill responsibilities of mother and administrator. They were not able to keep in touch with friends, do things for themselves, or invest in the relationship with their partner. When reflecting on her sacrifices, Sophie shared, "I lack sleep and lack getting to do some of the fun non-work, non-parenting things because there just isn't enough time in the day to get that all done" (Sophie, ID9).

Relationships outside of their partner and immediate family seemed to have lesser importance. Some women invested in and maintained relationships with friends, but others, such as Tina and McKenna, stated that their time did not allow these pleasures. "I really don't have any time to develop a lot of friendships with other moms" (Tina, ID159) and "If it's not work and each other, then nobody else exists because it just doesn't fit in" (McKenna, ID265). Long telephone conversations and face-to-face time with friends was not always possible, but technology provided an avenue for staying connected. "Facebook has saved many relationships, because I can do a quick

little post and stay in touch without needing the hour-long phone conversation or emails, because I don't make time for those things, which is sad to say" (Sophie, ID154).

These mothers tried to protect their children from the negative factors of being the children of working mothers. This resulted in giving up relationships with friends, volunteering, working out, and hobbies. The root of all of these choices was lack of time. "I don't have time to work out, I don't go to the gym or do those kind of things because I just don't have the time" (Amy, ID87).

For some of the women, the dual roles negatively impacted their relationship with their partner. Lynn reflected on her choices and her relationship with her partner: "It's so easy, out of everything to let go, for that to be the one thing that you let go, which is probably the thing I need to work on the most" (Lynn, ID232). Sophie, McKenna, and Amy were challenged with maintaining the same type of relationship that they had prior to having children. Amy pointed out that before having children she and her husband had worked much more closely as a team. Sophie noted that, prior to their second child, she and her husband had been able to go on more date nights, which had not occurred since the second baby had arrived. Not investing enough in the relationship with their partner weighed heavily on these women and contributed to their desire to prove to others that they are capable.

Proving themselves. Some participants stated that they needed to prove themselves in their roles of mother, others in their administrator role, and others in both roles. They did not want to be judged or looked at differently because they had children or because they had a job. Some of the women took the attitude that they could handle anything. Despite a demanding work schedule, Veronica told herself, "I can do anything for 12 weeks" (Veronica, ID5), when she returned from maternity leave after her first child was born.

Sophie was very careful not to use her children as an excuse, to the point that she said, "I almost have to overcompensate, because I have children, in my job, because I never want someone to use the excuse, 'Well, she has kids, so we can't count on her for whatever'" (Sophie, ID11). Sue also was careful to avoid the perception that her children hindered her ability to be successful in her professional role: "I'm determined not to be that person that has the kids, that has other people doing the stuff, you know?" (Sue, ID235).

McKenna and Michelle were keenly aware of when others were working and they were not, since they both needed to leave the office promptly at 5:00 p.m. every day to pick up their children. Hence, they often chose to work at home in the evenings to demonstrate their commitment to their roles. When discussing her evening work, McKenna said, "It's a good thing that people see that I'm online working, because I think there are a lot of people that do stay until 5:30, 6:00, 6:30" (McKenna, ID16). Michelle commented, "I feel like if they know I'm checking my email when I'm not here, then it's almost like it's okay that I'm not necessarily here working for 8 hours, that I'm actually working at night" (Michelle, ID198). The need to prove themselves to others was coupled with feeling of guilt that the participants battled on a regular basis.

The battle with guilt. The colliding roles of mother and administrator had a great impact on all of the participants. One way in which this impact manifested was through feelings of guilt. The majority of the participants expressed feeling guilty as they described their experiences as mother and administrator. The guilt stemmed from a variety of factors: feeling that they did not spend enough time with their children; recognizing that they had only a short period of time with their children and wanted to make the most of it; doing things for themselves when they felt that they should be focusing on others; not spending time and/or energy with friends, family members, and

partners; wishing that they could do more than they had time to do; acknowledging demands of their position that took them away from their families (e.g., summer orientation, evening programs); letting students down because they had a child emergency; and guilt that was imposed by others.

Each participant described the guilt differently, but all reported having felt it on a regular basis. "There is some guilt that goes with that because you feel you want to be committed to your job but also committed to your children" (Jody, ID1). Victoria relied on compartmentalization to manage her roles but felt guilt when "compartmentalization doesn't work the way that it maybe should" (Victoria, ID8). Lynn said that she wanted to be everything for everyone and felt guilty when "I can't be at everything at work and I can't be at everything at home" (Lynn, ID47). She provided an example of a time when she had gone back to the office for an important evening meeting and her daughter asked why she could not eat dinner with the family. She went to campus and presented at the meeting but did not consider it as a success. "I know exactly why [the presentation did not go well]; it wasn't that I wasn't prepared, I just was dealing with the guilt" (Lynn, ID207). Sue felt guilt because of disapproval of her career by her family: "Well, I'm Southern, and I come from a very traditional background. A, I'm working, so that's bad in the culture in which I was raised. B, I'm not there all the time" (Sue, ID113).

The participants had developed strategies for managing guilt. Kylie relied on self-talk: "Instead of feeling bad, that voice pops up, "Okay, give yourself a break'" (Kylie, ID133). Tina rationalized guilt by reminding herself that she was a better mother because she worked.

> I try to push it out by thinking that it's the best way for me to, to give a good example. What would my kids want to do with me if I would be in a bad mood all of the time or I wouldn't be satisfied with my life? (Tina, ID67)

Career Plans and Aspirations

The women's experiences and their impact on self as mother and administrator extended beyond day-to-day routine and influenced career plans and aspirations. The participants' career ambitions varied. Some felt comfortable with their current position and did not have a desire to change roles or to move up; others aspired to pursue a student affairs leadership role. The majority of the women did not have a clearly defined career path or trajectory. Many articulated the types of position or work in which they might be interested but only a few specifically stated career goals. For example, Sue, Amy, and Kristin had a clear career vision of working toward holding the position of Dean of Students or Vice President of Student Affairs. Sophie had just accepted a position as a director of campus housing, which allowed her husband to be closer to the areas in which he was required to travel on a regular basis and provided her increased job responsibilities.

Well-defined career plan. Kristin, Amy, Nicole, Sloane, and Sue had the most clearly defined career plans of all of the participants. "At this point in time, I could rattle off exactly what my plan is; at this point I want to be a dean of students at a small to mid-size university" (Kirstin, ID30). Although Amy desired a Dean of Students position, she was concerned that the fact that she was a parent would hold her back and that her career plans would face impenetrable barriers. "I think it's harder to move around as a professional [as a mother] because people think you need to say where you are in order to be stable" (Amy, ID80).

The participants recognized that, to move up, they would most likely have to leave their current institution.

> That's one of the things about the field: If you want to move up, you have to have the degree, and you have to allow time to move on. It's rare that someone gets to stay at the institution and move up in that institution. (Kristin, ID30)

Sue also aspired to hold a Vice President position, but her career plan and opportunities were dependent on her partner's job search. He also had aspirations to be a Vice President and Sue acknowledged that his career might take precedent over hers because he currently held a higher title. She reflected, "I'm surprised that seems, I think, not as ambitious to people, but for me it's just realistic" (Sue, ID163).

Sloane had once considered striving for a Vice President or Dean of Students position but had since changed her plans. She had learned that she did not enjoy the type of work those positions required; "It's just not what's in the plan for me professionally and in terms of just work-life balance" (Sloane, ID77). She planned to pursue a position that integrated academic affairs and student affairs; she articulated the steps that she would need to take to attain her career goals. Nicole's career goals took her out of student affairs. She was pursing her doctorate to serve as a faculty member in a Health and Kinesiology department.

Even those participants who were interested in moving up had apprehensions about the demands of the role. Kristin knew that moving to a higher level would mean more events and weekend commitments and that she would have to navigate those with her child; however, she was determined to provide her family with the best life possible. Sue shared observations of her current Vice President: "She's here all of the time, just at events, and congratulating students about this, that or the other, or opening this, that or the other, and I worry about that" (Sue, ID147). The apprehensions described by these participants were some of the reasons why other participants did not have a desire to pursue these positions.

No desire for advancement. Some participants were undecided regarding their career plans. They articulated the types of positions that would be of interest to them but were either happy in their current positions or anxious about what a promotion might

require related to work-life balance. Kylie, McKenna, Michelle, Veronica, Victoria, and Sophie expressed no desire or plans for an advanced position.

Kylie was focused on meeting the expectations of others. "I don't want to let anyone down, and so I don't see anything higher with student affairs for me" (Kylie, ID232). She was content with the scope of her responsibilities and the positive impact of her role. She had considered other types of positions and acknowledged that, when an opportunity was presented, she would consider applying; however, she did not plan to actively seek a position higher than director.

Victoria did not want additional commitments because they would conflict with her family priorities.

> The dean-level positions are really having to go to more events as the face person and things like that, that adds on to all the work that they do during the day and evening already. I don't know if I'm willing to do that and be that, so I'm not sure. (Victoria, ID85)

Due to the additional commitments, Veronica did not think she would be considered a realistic candidate for a higher position.

> Sometimes the job takes more of a commitment—or so people perceive—than I could potentially give. I'm not going to be here four nights a week. I'm not going to show up at 7 a.m. meetings; I have more important obligations. (Veronica, ID53)

Jody's career ambitions had changed once she had children. Her current position allowed flexibility to fulfill both role responsibilities. "That works best for my family, so I think having kids has definitely changed those aspirations, and probably even more specifically adding [child] to the mix" (Jody, ID284). Michelle was happy with her current role as a director and did not plan to seek a higher position, but she did not rule out the possibility.

> Who knows? I had decided a couple years ago I was happy being second in command, and that's fine, and that I wasn't moving up and that was fine. Then things change, so you never know. I just go wherever it works and it fits and it's right. (Michelle, ID271)

Leaving the field. Many of the women reported that they had considered leaving the field but had chosen to stay, either because they did not know what else they would do or because they were committed to student affairs. Some of the women wanted to work and wanted to continue working in student affairs but would welcome a change in how their work was approached and the expectations associated with the work. Sloane had considered leaving the field when her second child was born but she knew that she wanted to return to the field eventually and did not know what to expect if she tried to re-enter. Describing her anxieties she said,

> I was just picturing how that conversation would go, and for me it was just exposing a lot right at the beginning, before I had an opportunity to build good will and say, "This is what I can do, and this is what I can produce, and this is how hard I'm willing to work and that piece." (Sloane, ID93)

Only Sue and McKenna said that they had never considered leaving the field.

Lynn stated that she had found great value in her professional role but had had frequent moments of doubt. "Probably once a week, I'll be honest with you, I think I should try to do something different, or is this too much? Because when those moments come up, it's hard" (Lynn, ID335). Veronica was hoping to take time out from her role when her children were school age.

> For us, that means when they're in school age, I can't be finding a babysitter to take them to T-ball or soccer or dance. So when [child] reaches second or third grade, that's our goal for me to stop and maybe have a job but not a job with these hours. (Veronica, ID117)

Jody said that, even if she left the field, she would still want to have a job. "I like working enough that I would probably want to work part-time. But then that doesn't really save you any money because you still have to find somebody to watch your kids part time" (Jody, ID207).

Victoria stated that she had considered leaving the field or staying at home but commented, "I don't think it's fair to my family or our budget and the lifestyle that

we're used to and things to do that" (Victoria, ID79). Kristin said that, if given the

opportunity, she would leave the field to be a stay-at-home mother. "I would love to be a

stay-at-home mom. People laugh, 'Well, you're getting your PhD.' I can be the highest-

educated mom on the block; I'm fine with that" (Kristin, ID152). Despite the challenges

that Savannah had experienced, she reported that she was grateful because the challenges

had given her the opportunity to explore life outside of student affairs, "It's been good

because I've finally given myself the freedom to say, 'Maybe this isn't for me'"

(Savannah, ID187). In part, these women had considered leaving the field because they

did not see a large number of women advancing in the field while balancing the demands

of family.

Lack of role models. Women in this study were unable to identify a large

number of role models who were also mothers. When they looked up their

organizational hierarchies or at their colleagues, they saw many single women. Veronica

elaborated,

> If you look at the women that are in the top positions, more than likely they're
> not married, or if they are, they don't have kids, or they're alone, so to say, and
> . . . so they sacrifice this part of their life to be at the top. (Veronica, ID247)

Sophie's Vice President for Student Affairs was a woman, but her experiences had made

Sophie question her desire for the role.

> I know she has been fairly candid in saying that she really chose her career over
> her family. And she doesn't have children, and she regrets that. I was amazed
> that she was so candid to talk about that—a vice-president sharing that informa-
> tion. I don't know how anyone could do what's asked of her with children.
> (Sophie, ID137)

Without role models, the women found it difficult to imagine themselves in more

demanding roles than the ones that they had already assumed.

The demanding nature of student affairs, coupled with the dual roles of mother

and administrator and career aspirations, affected each woman in this study differently.

The experiences described above speak to physical, emotional, and mental demands that are challenging to manage. This highlights the importance of having effective strategies to address these challenges.

Strategies

The second research question in this study was, *What strategies do these women employ to navigate the roles of mother and administrator?* The participants identified a wide range of strategies, each determined by the individual, her relationship status, her institution, and her financial resources. Reported below are five common strategies: (a) building support systems, (b) defining boundaries, (c) managing time efficiently, (d) focusing on family, and (e) taking care of self.

Building Support Systems

A support system was critical in helping the participants to achieve work-life balance. They found their support systems in several places, including family, friends, and partners. Support systems were easier for some participants to develop than others. Ultimately, the support systems resulted in feeling that they had others on whom to depend and to help them through the challenges. Kristin was considering moving once she had obtained her doctoral degree but she also realized that in doing so she would lose her well-established support systems, which she described as "encouraging and loving" (Kristin, ID195). Victoria had found support in colleagues who had children.

> I've found it helpful to try to network with other women at the university who have children, whether in my division or outside of it, and to have intentional lunch or coffee time with them. This provides an outlet and support system that is of great value to me as they understand a lot of what I'm going through and we are often able to share tips or suggestions with each other to just share an understanding laugh. (Victoria, ID197)

Having a support network of other mothers provided the women the opportunity to share common experiences. Michelle reflected, "Just to say that to another mom and realize that it's normal versus thinking that there's some ideal that you have to live up to

and you're not because you're not perfect in both areas of your life" (Michelle, ID249).

When considering the demands of the participants' positions and their full calendars, it

was clear that maintaining a support system was not easy. "You have to be very

intentional about it, and I need to get back to being intentional about having that support

network" (Lynn, ID314). Veronica was not afraid to ask for help and relied on her large

support system to help her navigate her roles: "It's an army of people that help me raise

my children" (Veronica, ID180).

        Partner support. Partners provided significant support to the women in this

study. Whether they provided honest and direct feedback, helped with parenting and

housework, or supported the educational pursuits of the women, the male partners were

identified by the participants as an important strategy in managing their roles. For the

most part, partners were a great source of assistance and support. In some cases, the

partner's job responsibilities created challenges and stress. For example, Sophie's

partner traveled every week, leaving her to be a single parent while he was gone.

Similarly, Michelle's husband had limited flexibility in his role; as a result, she had to

assume the majority of the responsibility for child care crises during the work day.

        Unlike Sophie and Michelle, other participants' partners appeared to take on

parenting and other domestic responsibilities. For instance, Tina's partner worked from

home so "he is just as much as a mom as I am" (Tina, ID106). Nicole's partner had

stayed at home when their first child was born and Nicole faced resistance from her

community and her family regarding the reversal of roles. "My husband played the

different role: He was the stay-at-home dad. We saw him treated differently" (Nicole,

ID92). Sue's partner also challenged gender roles; he was the cook and the nurturer in

the home. As a doctoral student, Sloane often had coursework to complete and had to

use the weekends to focus on school. When this occurred, her husband became "a single parent because that's my time to crank stuff out and get it done" (Sloane, ID145).

Support from partners meant not only sharing parenting responsibilities but also emotional support. Sophie's husband traveled for work but provided emotional support, which was important to her. "He is my biggest fan, and always right there to take my side, even if maybe he shouldn't take my side" (Sophie, ID143). Veronica also valued the support that she received from her husband.

> For him to really recognize I do so much, like he's been really great at saying thank you, and "You're a such an amazing mom and wife. And what you do in your work impacts us all so much." To me that means that I'm succeeding in whatever it is I'm doing, so it's worth it. (Veronica, ID112)

Kylie depended on her partner to provide honest feedback. "He's always been great at helping me see what I can't see" (Kylie, ID66).

Many partners of the participants had challenging and demanding roles themselves. Victoria's partner worked in student affairs but still provided strong support. Together, they strategized how to share support. "It's just like us balancing; he has a lot on his plate, too, and it's tiring to do by yourself" (Victoria, ID258). Sloane had worked in orientation, so during the summers her partner was responsible for the child care pick-up and knew that he would be the primary parent until the busy season subsided. The women described the men in their lives as supportive husbands and good fathers; they said that they could not imagine what they would do without the support from their partners.

Family support. In addition to partner support, families served as a source of support. The participants who had family in town relied heavily on their support and stated that they could not imagine what it would be like to manage their roles without that support. Lynn looked to her mother for emotional support. "I call my mom if I'm stressed; she's still very much a source of comfort" (Lynn, ID182). Her mother lived 3

hours away and could come into town occasionally to provide child care if Lynn needed

the extra support. Lynn's family was very important to her.

> My friends are really important to me, but my family is what's critical to me. I would miss friends and all that, but my immediate family, my nuclear family, and then my extended family is what is critical to help me feel supported and to go on. (Lynn, ID315)

Michelle reported that her family was proud of her accomplishments. "I know

that my family is very proud of me, and my husband, my kids, my parents, my in-laws,

all of my family is proud of where I am and what I do" (Michelle, ID169). Knowing that

they were proud of her provided emotional support and encouragement. Michelle had

family members in town available to assist when needed. For example, her work

required late nights at the end of the semester and her family knew that they were on call

for support if needed. Victoria and her family had moved to a new state to be closer to

her extended family. Moving closer had been an important strategy for her to navigate

her roles.

> I don't know what I would do without having some of that family around, knowing that there are nights that we both work late and that is hard to negotiate sometimes. So that's been really important to us and a lot of the reason that we moved back. (Victoria, ID113)

Friend support. Friend support was evident in the participants' descriptions of

their support networks. Friends were formed at work, at church, at the children's

activities, and at the children's schools. Although most of the participants were not able

to spend much time with their friends, they relied on them for support to navigate their

roles. Jody's family lived 10 hours away, so she had developed a strong network of

friends. "All of our friends are in the same boat, for the most part, so I think that we're

all just really supportive of one another because everybody is doing the same thing"

(Jody, ID267). McKenna's life did not allow for extensive friendships but she valued the

relationship with a couple who had a child with special needs. "There's a comfort that

we both talk about as couples of being able to feel like we can be ourselves because we understand what their kid is doing" (McKenna, ID231).

Savannah's best friend is a working mother, and Savannah relied on their friendship to discuss roles. She valued her friend being outside of student affairs because it gave her a different perspective of her work and roles. Sloane did not have family in town but had close friends to whom she could turn for assistance with her children.

> There have been times when my daughter had early release, or I couldn't find child care, and she's off, and she'll spend the day with her godmother. So that's super helpful to fill in the gaps, but that's decently infrequent. (Sloane, ID215)

For Sophie, serving as a single parent during the work week and living on campus created unique challenges. For example, if she was on call and had to leave for an emergency, she could call on a colleague and friend whom she described as "a saving grace" (Sophie, ID86) because she could depend on her to stay with her children. According to the participants, support systems were critical in helping them to manage work-life balance.

Defining Boundaries

Boundaries gave the women permission to approach their work differently. Many of the women were faced with reprioritizing their time, which resulted in boundaries once their children were born. Boundaries took multiple forms. For some of the women, boundaries were the hours they worked or the amount of work that they took home each evening. Sloane defined an accessibility boundary by not sharing her cell phone number widely. Kylie reflected, "I regret these things, these boundaries that I've tried to put in place, that I wasn't wise to that earlier" (Kylie, ID275). Veronica communicated clearly her boundaries with students: "I will let them know like because of this, I'm missing this, you know, just so they get like it's not all about them, that I'm sacrificing the time with my family and friends to help them with something" (Veronica, ID171). Lynn was

strategic about which events she attended, selecting them carefully because, "If I went to every single thing that our student organizations went to, I'd never be at home; I just can't do that" (Lynn, ID51).

Sue did not bring work home. She knew herself and knew that she needed to put limits on her work time.

> I could be a workaholic. I have been in the past. It's a very conscious effort not to do it . . . , but the time I get home from class, or if I don't have in-between sessions, I have such precious time with them that I try not to do that too much. (Sue, ID90)

Michelle was thoughtful about what emails she handled at home.

> I almost never respond to emails at night at home; if it's from a parent or a student, I don't respond from my phone because I don't want them to then have that expectation that I'm going to be available to them anytime, nights and weekends. (Michelle, ID187)

Kylie was strategic with her time and put boundaries on her calendar. "Sometimes I'll try to block time just so that other meeting requests don't come in, and I know that I need to put some focus to a certain project" (Kylie, ID299). Jody employed strategic planning by trying not to be overcommitted. Despite the variations in form, setting clear boundaries was a critical strategy for all participants. With these well-defined boundaries, the women were in a better position to take control over work and family life.

Managing Time Efficiently

The women recognized that their time was limited and did everything in their power to maximize their days. As described above, the typical day was intense and allowed little extra time once all responsibilities were completed.

Efficiency was important to the participants in both home life and work life. For example, Lynn described her to-do lists:

> I used to have two separate to-do lists, and I couldn't do that anymore. Probably about a year ago I switched to where everything is on [one list]. . . . I'm still old-

> fashioned; I like a written-down list, so everything is on one list. And there's a line in the middle, and there's work and there's personal. (Lynn, ID243)

By combining the lists, Lynn always knew what was expected of her in each of her worlds.

Victoria approached efficiency from a process perspective. "I'm an efficiency person; that's the way I function. So I've tried to streamline and create solid processes" (Victoria, ID186). She had revamped her work processes to make her work more manageable. Once she had two children, Amy had to use her work time differently. "I have to use my working time even that much more efficiently, because I can't work more than between 9 and 5" (Amy, ID142).

Calendars were an important tool for being efficient and maximizing time. Almost all of the women referred to their calendars and cited how important it was to plan and have purposeful foresight. Lynn found this to be very helpful particularly because her partner traveled extensively. "Anything that I can do to schedule, to look at things in advance" (Lynn, ID240). Tina was strategic in completing her chores. "I try to do chores that I have to do by myself" (Tina, ID102). She went to the grocery store by herself because it saved time and allowed her to spend the remaining time with her family. Kristin did laundry twice a week so her weekend would not be consumed with the chore. Veronica asked for help, both at work and at home. "I'm not afraid to ask for help, whether that be from my administrative assistant or some of my top leaders" (Veronica, ID199).

Focusing on Family

Spending time with family was important to all of the participants. The time with family allowed the women to be rejuvenated and to focus on what was most important to them. At times, they had to be very purposeful about planning for that time so it was meaningful. Jody and her family planned a vacation every year to provide uninterrupted,

quality time together. "We take a vacation every year, we go to Disney World" (Jody, ID163). Nicole's children asked her to stay home, especially during the summer, when her partner was also at home with them. "There have been a couple times in the last few years where I actually have stayed home. I call my boss and say I'm taking the day off and hanging out with the kids" (Nicole, ID23).

Amy used her free time to be with her children. "I spend a lot of my free time focused on what we're doing at home, like teaching the kids how to cook, and playing in the sandbox, and doing a lot of that stuff so there is balance" (Amy, ID107). Kristin found quality time with her family during the summer. "I do more things for myself during the summer, because I like to go to the beach, I like to be at the river, I like to go to the pool" (Kristin, ID179). All of the participants would likely share Kylie's sentiment: "I love just being with my family, even if we don't have a plan for the day" (Kylie, ID256).

Taking Care of Self

Spending time with their family was important to the women but they also recognized the importance of reserving time for themselves. As discussed earlier, many of these women had given up hobbies, friends, volunteering, and other things that they used to do for themselves because they no longer had time to do everything. Although they were willing to give things up, they also recognized the importance of taking time for themselves. Nicole worked out during the lunch hour on a regular basis. After the birth of her second child, it had been difficult to find the time but, "Once I started working out again, I felt like I was able to do better in both worlds" (Nicole, ID68). Jody enjoyed working out but could not fit it into her schedule, so she started running instead. "Running is the easiest and quickest because you can do it from home, leave and be back, versus having to go to the gym" (Jody, ID223).

Lynn treated herself to a facial every month. "I do that every month, and that is absolutely completely selfish; I do it for nobody else but me" (Lynn, ID319). Veronica spent time for herself on projects that also benefited her family, such as "baby books, home videos, blogging, etc., so that my husband and kids can look back on our lives and smile. Ultimately, that is for me, too" (Veronica, ID72). For some of the women, taking time for themselves meant spending time in planning and thinking. "Sometimes just having that time and stopping and thinking about it brings me peace" (Kylie, ID315).

For some of the participants, taking time for themselves meant continuing education. McKenna, Nicole, Amy, Sophie, Sue, Kristin, and Sloane were involved in continuing education, which was important to them for two reasons. First, it provided the an investment in self, which was very meaningful to them. Second, the completion of the degree would open doors to opportunities that they would not have otherwise. The women recognized the impact of education not only themselves but on their families. "Sometimes I think I entered into this, but the whole family is impacted by what my choice was" (Sloane, ID152).

Sophie had just completed a second master's degree and the rest of the study participants were doctoral students. Sophie described her education as something she did for herself because she enjoyed the learning process. She described education as "a deal-breaker that I didn't want to let go; that's like my absolute time" (Sophie, ID41). Amy described her doctoral program as a double-edged sword: "It's added more stress, because it's just like so much stuff all of the time. But . . . you have to do something for yourself" (Amy, ID109).

Kristin was depending on her degree completion to provide more opportunities, in spite of the time that it took her away from her child. She explained her rationale to her child in this way: "This will allow us to do different things, and so I just have to keep

telling her that there's this light at the end of the tunnel, and we just have to persevere" (Kristin, ID58). Nicole was pursuing a doctorate because she wanted a career change. "I just really want to be a professor full time" (Nicole, ID80). Sue said that her degree would give her more options. "I thought the doctorate would actually give me more options, if I wanted to write for a little while, if I wanted to do something else, if I wanted to kind of do more research" (Sue, ID164).

McKenna was only a month into her doctoral program at the time of the interview. She was excited about the opportunity and shared that her job changes would allow her to "go after that Ed.D. that I've wanted forever" (McKenna, ID64). Regardless of their motives, continuing education provided the women with time for themselves and hope for new career opportunities in the future.

Serving as Self-Advocates

The women utilized all of the strategies described above. They also offered advice for other working mothers that could help them to determine the best strategy or approach. Their advice was grounded in two beliefs: (a) the importance of being a self-advocate, and (b) using personal priorities to guide choices.

Tina had gained a 30-hour work week because she had asked for what she needed. "I think there are so many moms out there want to work, but not full time or that are just overwhelmed with it. I think if you ask for what you need, then you most likely will get it" (Tina, ID146). Savannah echoed this thought: "Don't assume that people are going to take care . . . or look out for you. You need to look out for yourself, regardless of what people think" (Savannah, ID217).

Jody and Kristin recommended that working mothers put their children first. "Leave when you're ready to leave, go home; your job will always be there the next day" (Jody, ID311). Kristin reiterated this when she noted that women should not "be

afraid to stand up and say, 'I'm going home, my child is sick,' and there's nothing wrong with that" (Kristin, ID218). Amy reflected on the myth of the superwoman: "It's hard to say there's this like super-person who can take it all, because it doesn't exist" (Amy, ID205). She noted that women must be prepared to make choices and to be comfortable with the choices that they make.

Victoria encouraged working mothers to stay in the present. "Enjoy the little moments and try not to take yourself too seriously" (Victoria, ID194). Veronica and McKenna focused on individual styles.

> Figuring out what works for you and being okay with not being perfect. I think that we set high expectations on ourselves as moms, as women, especially women in a field where we seem to be the majority, but still the upper echelon is still we're the minority. (Veronica, ID218)

McKenna also encouraged each woman to approach this task differently. "Find your style, and then try to figure out your life around that" (McKenna, ID296). The advice that the women shared was based on the strategies that they had used to navigate the roles of mother and administrator.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the lived experiences of 15 women who held mid-level student affairs administrator positions and were also mothers. The dual roles presented challenges and rewards for each participant. Each role had specific expectations and responsibilities that the participants navigated in an attempt to be successful in each. The women often experienced overlap or collision between the two roles. Such experiences had a negative impact on the participants and prompted them to develop strategies to more address these challenges. The five most common strategies were (a) building support systems, (b) defining boundaries, (c) managing time efficiently, (d) focusing on family, and (e) taking care of self.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of women in mid-level student affairs positions who had children. Fifteen women currently employed in mid-level positions in student affairs divisions at higher education institutions in Texas were interviewed. A phenomenological approach within a naturalistic inquiry framework was used to explore the lived experiences of the participants (Moustakas, 1994). The study sought to answer the following two research questions:

1. What are the experiences of women who have children and serve in mid-level positions in the student affairs profession at higher education institutions in Texas?

2. What strategies do these women employ to navigate the roles of mother and administrator?

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the relevant literature and theoretical framework presented in Chapter II. It also presents a newly developed conceptual framework for understanding the experiences of women who are both mothers and administrators. The chapter concludes with recommendations and implications for practice and research.

Discussion of Key Findings in Relation to the Literature

An analysis of the women's experiences related to the two research questions led to five major conclusions: (a) Mother + Administrator = A potentially rewarding challenge, (b) acknowledging role interconnectedness is important, (c) combining the two roles comes with a cost, (d) career path is shaped by dual identities, and (e) personalized strategies are key to success. Each of these conclusions is elaborated below.

Mother + Administrator = A Potentially Rewarding Challenge

The women in this study reported that the experience of being a mother and an administrator in student affairs was challenging, stressful, and demanding. While the women acknowledged the difficulties and the obstacles that they had to navigate, they also found the overall experience as both mother and administrator to be rewarding. Most of the women enjoyed their professional roles and did not want to give up their professional identities. Nevertheless, they described the profession as emotionally, mentally, and physically demanding, which at times caused them to question whether this was the best field in which to pursue their professional goals.

Emotionally demanding profession. All of the participants in this study considered student affairs to be an emotionally demanding profession due to the prevalence of an ethic of care. This finding is consistent with the extant literature. For example, several authors (Boehman, 2007; Evans et al., 2010; Manning, 2001, 2007) noted that student affairs is a field with a strong ethic of care. Manning (2001) described student affairs as a profession in which it was easy to put others' needs ahead of one's own; this was evident in the stories of the women in this study. The participants reported that they continually put others' needs ahead of their own, reinforcing the emotional demands of the profession. The sentiment expressed by one of the participants, Victoria, was representative:

> Our roles are caring for so many different people; there's only so much time in the day. Because if you gave all of the time to all of the people who need it, there wouldn't be any more time. There's just not enough of you to go around to all those people in the way that they might like it. (Victoria, ID210)

Part of the emotional challenge for women was the expectation of care in both of their roles and the challenge of reconciling the feelings of guilt associated with the dual roles. This study is unique in that it focused on women who experienced life differently from men. Numerous studies have found that women make decisions from a *relational*

perspective; in other words, they consider their actions in relation to other people in their lives (Gilligan, 1977, 1993; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Gilligan's theory of women's moral development (Gilligan, 1977, 1993) asserted that women face moral dilemmas and make decisions differently from men, often using a decision-making approach rooted in an ethic of care. Gilligan (1993) defined the ethic of care in relation to women's perception of self: "Women not only define themselves in a context of human relationship, but also judge themselves in their ability to care" (p. 17). This judgment of self was evident in many stories shared by the participants, specifically when role collision occurred and the women were forced to make decisions that impacted their ability to provide care to one or more groups due to competing demands.

Physically and mentally demanding profession. The women experienced the profession as physically and mentally demanding. They described intense and full work days and work weeks, along with frequent evening and weekend commitments. For some of the women, their work did not end at 5:00 p.m.; the institutional culture required longer hours and constant accessibility. The physical and mental demands reported by the women were not limited to the demands of the profession; the role of mother also placed demands on the women. This finding was supported by Acker and Armenti (2004), who found that women in academe experienced "high levels of stress, exhaustion, and sleeplessness associated with combining the building of an academic career with bringing up young children" (p. 11). The finding of the demanding nature of student affairs and some women's consideration to leave the profession due to that intensity was also consistent with previous studies. For example, Hebreard (2010) reported that women opted out of student affairs partially because it was too demanding and inflexible.

Multiple studies have described the student affairs culture as demanding and arduous (Boehman, 2007; Collins, 2009; Houdyshell, 2007; Fochtman, 2010; Nobbe & Manning, 1997). As a result, there has been a call for a change in the culture. "The culture of student affairs needs to change if the profession is to retain quality mid-career professionals, especially those Generation Xers who are mid-career and are on the cusp of staying in higher education or leaving altogether" (Fochtman, 2010, p. 182). Collins (2009) called for a reexamination of the profession's "daily regimen and reward structures" (p. 115). Hebreard (2010) argued that workplace inflexibility in student affairs should be adjusted to retain women in the field. The experiences of the women in this study provided additional empirical evidence and reinforced the need to change the culture of student affairs.

Along the same line, findings of this study pointed to a need for a cultural review to retain talented staff. This is particularly important given the fact that members of the Baby Boomer generation retire and more women are positioned to rise in the ranks but may choose to leave because of the demanding environment. Spurlock (2009) shared concern in this regard: "Colleges and universities would be wise to institute changes before the attrition of women becomes too high or worse, women never consider the career path because of the perceived costs of achievement" (p. 123). In this study, while the women participants found much value in their professional roles and had a passion for student affairs, they still questioned their future in the field. Collins (2009) described the conflict with the culture as an

> insidious dynamic that continues to negatively shape the choices of women in student affairs administration, and the unquestioned acceptance of work life imbalance as normal across the field does little to encourage untold numbers of women who are forced to make the only decision left to them. (p. 111)

Therefore, it is in the best interest of the profession to retain the women who are willing and able to navigate the dual roles and to make it a rewarding experience for those women.

Influential factors. Each of the women in the study had a different experience, largely shaped by factors such as the institutional culture, supervisors, and their personal background. First, institutions play a vital role in the women's experience. While underlying the experiences of all of these women was the expectation that staff in student affairs care for others and work toward the development of students, how that work was approached was largely dependent on the institution, division, department, and supervisor with whom the participants worked. Some participants worked long hours and late into the evening just to keep up with their work. While they agreed that they had supportive supervisors, they also noted that they did not have a supportive institutional environment in which certain work approaches were demanded and modeled by their supervisors. Other participants worked at institutions that had supportive institutional policies that allowed for flexibility and work-life balance on all levels. For all participants, the working environment mattered and was influential, both positively and negatively. These findings support Padulo's (2001) study in which she found the following environmental factors to be most influential to women in student affairs: (a) a flexible work schedule, (b) a supportive supervisor, and (c) a manageable job description. Marshall (2002) confirmed that "institutional culture and support 'made a difference' in the lives of these administrative mothers" (p. 194).

In addition to the supportive institution, the supervisor was a key factor in the women's experience. This finding is consistent with Fochtman's (2010) and Marshall's (2002) findings that a supportive supervisor can assist women in negotiating their roles. In this study, supervisors who demonstrated empathy for the multiple roles were held in

high regard. On the contrary, supervisors who did not try to empathize or be supportive negatively influenced the women's loyalty to their institution and their motivation. Hebreard (2010) identified supervision and mentoring as critical contributors to a woman's decision to leave the field. Without the support of their supervisors, many women may feel that their only option is to look for a new position, as one participant of this study (Savannah) was doing. Collins (2009), Supple (2007), and Singh (2011) called for training for supervisors to provide meaningful, individualized support to staff members. Findings of this study highlighted the need for supervisory training.

The third influential factor was an individual's cultural background. While this factor was significant for only one participant (Sue), it is worth considering. Sue came from a southern home, deeply rooted in the gender norms and expectations for women. Her family did not approve of her career choices; as a result, she was continually confronted with reconciling her aspirations with the disapproval of family members. Sue may have been an outlier in this study, but she is not unique among women professionals. An important question can be drawn from Sue's case: How does a woman's cultural background influence her ability to navigate the roles of mother and administrator? While personal cultural background as an influential factor cannot be generalized to the other 14 participants in this study, it is an finding that has not been identified in previous studies and therefore warrants further research.

These women found the experience of navigating the roles of mother and administrator to have the potential to be rewarding, and many of the women experienced rewards as a result of their efforts. Student affairs and institutions of higher education can influence a woman's experience by being cognizant of the factors that can positively or negatively impact the woman with children. Attention to these factors may help

institutions to retain quality staff members who may be considering a career change due to demands of the field.

Acknowledging Role Interconnectedness Is Important

The women in this study valued both of their roles (mother and administrator) and tried diligently to keep the roles separate to minimize the effect of one role on the other. Many of them used compartmentalization as a strategy to keep home and work separate. However, when compartmentalization failed and the roles collided, the women experienced stress and guilt. The findings of the study suggest that trying to maintain separate roles was a very challenging effort, often leading to failure; it is important for women to acknowledge the interconnectedness of the roles in order to maximize the benefits of each role.

The participants found value and benefit in both roles and enjoyed the satisfaction received from work, with the exception of one participant who was willing to give up her professional role. In agreement with other studies (e.g., Fochtman, 2010; Marshall, 2002; Nobbe & Manning, 1997; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004), the women interviewed for this study recognized that the two roles (mother and administrator) were reciprocally beneficial. The women cited numerous examples of how their role of mother had helped them in their professional role and vice versa. For example, many of the women commented that their role as mother made them more efficient at work, which was similar to Ward and Wolf-Wendel's (2004) finding that women faculty with children claimed that their mother role had made them more efficient. By the same token, the participants stated that their professional role had helped them to be better mothers because it provided satisfaction and ways to contribute to something larger than themselves.

Perhaps due to the mutual benefits of the dual roles, in addition to the aid of technology, separating the roles appeared to be almost impossible, a condition that led to frequent role collision. Spurlock (2009) studied women who held chief student affairs positions and found that the women acknowledged that the different domains in their life were not distinctly separated, nor did they want them to be separated. This was the case of women in this study.

Technology was a major contributor to role collision; smart phones and laptop computers enabled participants to have constant access to work from home, making separation between work and home more difficult. This was consistent with findings from Fochtman's (2010) study. When the women were unable to compartmentalize or separate their roles, they were likely to feel stressed and guilty. The cause was often a lack of time to do everything that they wanted to accomplish, which implies a cost or sacrifice associated with having to choose between two roles.

Combining the Two Roles Comes With a Cost

As indicated in the findings, juggling between mother role and professional role had an impact on all of the participants. They realized that they could not do everything and therefore had to make choices based on their priorities (family first for most of the women). Placing a high value on family was noted by Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004). Their findings revealed that, for women faculty members, having children had altered their priorities. For some, the process of making choices and prioritizing was a negative experience; others made personal sacrifices; some thought that they needed to prove themselves to others. All battled feelings of guilt. Many of the women in this study reported making personal sacrifices to fulfill the responsibilities of their dual roles, which is consistent with the findings of Marshall's (2002) study of upper-level administrators with children. Also, in line with Fochtman's (2010) study findings, the

participants in this study did not have as much time to invest in their relationships with friends and in activities in which they had been involved. The relationships with their partners also suffered, which was a common theme in studies of women at the mid-level positions who also had children (Fochtman, 2010; Marshall, 2002).

Similar to Fochtman's (2010) findings, women in this study reported the need to prove themselves so that they would not be judged negatively for having children. While they did not always articulate such intent in the interview, their actions spoke of the intent. For example, McKenna and Michelle both worked from home in the evenings in an effort to prove to others that they were still working, since they had to leave the office at 5:00 p.m. Lynn acknowledged that she was the youngest director in her division, felt the need to work hard to prove her place at the table, and did not want to be discounted because of her age or the fact that she was a mother. Houdyshell (2007) noted that women consider the impact of families on their career advancement. Amy was aware of this and described her family situation as potentially holding her back because others might not view her as a serious candidate for career advancement due to family responsibilities. As Baumgartner and Schneider (2010) confirmed, the role of mother could have a negative impact on a woman's career and could impact others' perception of the woman as a hard-working employee.

The perception held by these participants that they had to work harder and prove their capabilities to others suggests that they were highly aware of the workplace barriers still in place for women. These perceptions and their understanding of the field of student affairs influenced their career plans and aspirations.

Career Path Is Shaped by Dual Identities

The career plans of the women in this study had been influenced by the fact that they were both administrators and mothers. For some, their career aspirations had shifted

after they became a mother, but all of them had considered their career in context of their relationships with others. Many of the women in this study did not have plans to advance to higher levels in their organizations; they did not want the demands associated with upper-level administrative positions and they were content with their current level of responsibility. These findings are consistent with those reported by Fochtman (2010), who found that mid-career women identified benefits of staying at their current level. Over half of the women in this study did not have plans to advance to a senior-level position; this supports findings from Collins's (2009) study of women who rejected Vice President positions. Collins found that the women in her study were already subject to significant levels of stress in their current position and thus saw little incentive to take on additional responsibilities. "For reasons of good health and otherwise, they gladly forfeited their dream of reaching the pinnacle" (Collins, 2009, p. 109). Nobbe and Manning (1997) also reported that women changed their career goals once they had children.

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) developed the Kaleidoscope career model to explain the career paths of women. They asserted that women make career decisions from a relational perspective, and the findings from this study support this conclusion. The women participants without advancement plans explained that they did not think that they could meet family needs and work needs simultaneously. In contrast, Kristin's career plan included advancement because she wanted to provide for her daughter. Regardless of the plan details, the participants had developed career paths in relation to others. This approach was described by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) as a lens of relationalism. In their study, these authors found that the participants had made career decisions from a lens of relationalism as they "factored in the needs of their children, spouses, aging parents, friends, and even coworkers and clients—as part of the total

gestalt of their careers" (p. 111). Likewise, the women in this study factored in the needs of their significant others in their career planning.

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) noted that women in their study were more interested in designing a career that met their needs and their life, as opposed to progressing up the male-constructed career ladder. Ample evidence from this study supports those observations. The women in this study were cognizant of their wants and needs in relation to the others in their lives and were planning their careers accordingly. This has major implications for HRD professionals and career counselors.

Personalized Strategies Are Key to Success

The women in this study identified a wide range of strategies that suited their individual needs for navigating the roles of mother and administrator. They had actively built support systems, set clear boundaries, relied on paid services, striven for better time management, sought continuing education, and supported the concept of self-advocacy. Without well-developed strategies, these women might not have been able to manage their roles. Kristin presented herself as someone who had navigated the roles well without significant negative conflict. All of her strategies were rooted in her core values. The women who could clearly articulate their priorities and values navigated their roles using strategies that allowed them to reach individualized success. These findings reinforce Marshall's (2002) position that there is no "magic bullet" and that each woman must identify the strategies that work best for her.

Support systems were critical for the participants in this study in their navigation of the dual roles. Their support systems came in different forms and involve multiple parties (partners, family, and friends). Having a strong support system was identified by participants in other studies (Collins, 2009; Marshall, 2002; Nobbe & Manning, 1997). For example, Collins's (2009) study participants relied heavily on their partners and

supervisors for support. The women in Nobbe and Manning's (1997) study identified having a supportive partner as an important strategy for women in student affairs who had children.

Boundary development was another important strategy utilized by many of the women in this study. Guthrie et al. (2005) noted that it could be challenging to establish boundaries in a caring profession such as student affairs. The participants' experiences supported this statement. For many of them, their attempts at boundaries had failed. For example, Sloane had made a commitment not to work from home but had failed to maintain that boundary; however, she had limited role collision caused by telephone calls by limiting the number of persons who had her telephone number. Boundaries took many different forms based on the individual but all were important for giving the participants the perception of separation of roles and domains.

Many of the women in this study utilized the college campus and activities to integrate their family life with their work life. They brought their children to work; they discussed the benefits of exposing their children to the cultural opportunities offered on a college campus. This practice was reported in other studies (Fochtman, 2010; Marshall, 2002). For some of the women, such as Sue and Kristin, not being able to bring their children to work would have created a significant barrier to successful navigation of their roles.

Some participants employed others to help with household responsibilities, such as cleaning and lawn care. Some were pursuing terminal degrees in preparation for changing careers to a less demanding field or advancing to higher positions in student affairs. They all shared that it was important to recognize one's goals and to be an advocate for individual needs.

Marshall (2002) found that the upper-level administrators in her study served as trendsetters, breaking barriers for the women who would come after them. Self-advocacy was critical to their success; they were often researching policies and procedures and submitting plans and requests because no one had done it before them. If women want to be both mothers and administrators and want to approach work from a new paradigm, they must take the lead and serve as advocates for themselves. Fochtman (2010) described her participants as trailblazers, laying the foundation for women who came after them.

The participants in this study did not describe themselves as trailblazers; however, they acknowledged the need for self-advocacy. Specifically, the women did not articulate how their actions were laying a path for others to follow, but they recognized their individual influence. For example, Jody, Kylie, and Savannah had used their experiences to become more effective supervisors of their staff. Based on their perceptions of students affairs and lessons that they had learned earlier in their careers, the participants emphasized the need to make mental, emotional, and physical investments in order to be effective in their dual roles. Despite such awareness, surprisingly, these women did not describe themselves as change agents who could have a larger impact on their organizational culture. This finding is concerning for a profession for which researchers have made calls for a cultural reevaluation (Boehman, 2007; Collins, 2009; Houdyshell, 2007; Fochtman, 2010; Nobbe & Manning, 1997).

Supple (2007) concluded that women have a tri-focused identity: "valuing self, valuing work, and valuing motherhood" (p. 195). The findings from this study support her conclusions and were instrumental in developing a new conceptual framework to understand how women navigate their roles of mother and administrator and strive for work-life balance.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that, while the participants came from a variety of student affairs functions and differed in age, race, ethnicity, number of children, and relationship status (as depicted in Table 2), these individual differences did not appear to make a noticeable difference in the findings elicited from a thorough data analysis. For example, participants who had only one child did not perceive the field of student affairs to be less challenging than participants who had three children. What appeared to have more significant influence on the women's experiences in student affairs were common external factors such as institutional culture, available support, and the participants' ability to identify strategies that suited their unique needs and situation.

A New Conceptual Framework

As discussed in Chapter II, Gilligan's theory of women's moral development and Clark's (2000) work/family border theory informed the design of this study. Examining the data from these theoretical frameworks allowed for emergence of a new conceptual framework that sheds light on the experiences of women who have children and work in mid-level student affairs positions.

As revealed in this study, all of the women experienced guilt in their navigation of dual roles. They felt guilty when they were at work and they felt guilty when they were at home because they never felt that they were providing the level of care and attention to the priorities of both roles. In studies of women administrators, guilt is a common theme (Collins, 2009; Guendouzi, 2006; Marshall, 2002; Spurlock, 2009; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004).

Gilligan's theory can be very useful in explaining the guilt that women experience as their roles compete. Gilligan (1977, 1993) found that women approached moral decisions through a context of self with others. The highest level of moral development was Level 3, the morality of nonviolence; at this level care becomes central

to decision making: both care for self and care for others (Evans et al., 2010; Gilligan, 1977). Before women reach this level and value care of self in relation to care of others, it can be challenging for them to put their needs ahead of those of others. This conflict of care was evident in the experiences of the women in this study. Both the roles of mother and administrator required care for others and often presented competing needs. When women had to choose one or the other, they battled perceptions that they could be inflicting harm on the others involved. Gilligan (1977) described the conflict as a "dilemma—the conflict between compassion and autonomy, between virtue and power—which the feminine voice struggles to resolve in its effort to reclaim the self and to solve the moral problem in such a way that no one is hurt" (p. 491). Gilligan's conceptualization of moral decision-making processes can be used to help women to balance the needs of self with the needs of others to minimize conflict and guilt regarding the decisions that they must make.

Another useful theory for understanding the women's battle between work and home is Clark's work/family border theory. The basic premise of this theory is that people cross from one domain (work) to the other (family) on a daily basis and that there is a connection between the two domains. People tailor their focus, goals, and interpersonal styles to fit the individual demands of the two domains (Clark, 2000). Each domain has a distinct culture that influences the context of the domain. In this study, the women administrators with children were forced to be border crossers on a regular basis, moving back and forth between the two domains, as was indicated in Collins's (2009) study as well. Further, the women experienced stress and conflict when the boundaries became blurred, a finding that was supported by findings reported by Desrochers and Sargent (2004).

Although many of the women in this study reported that they relied on compartmentalization to navigate their roles, the reality was that their two roles frequently overlapped. Although the dual domain description provided by Clark (2000) could be used to describe the women's experience, the concept of border crossing implies that one can move back and forth between the two domains, leaving the other domain behind. However, this concept was not supported by the reported experiences of these women in this study. These women, especially with the assistance of technology, were constantly engaged in activities in both domains, with rarely a clear separation between the two.

All of the women in this study reported feeling guilty and torn between their two roles. They felt torn because they assumed that they were required to operate in two worlds, as Lynn described, or to compartmentalize, as described by Amy, McKenna, and Victoria. Many years ago, two distinctly separate domains may have been possible, before the introduction of computers, email, laptop computers, Apple I-Pads, and smart phones. Prior to this type of technology, the workplace moved at a slower pace and workers were able to leave work at work and go home to be with family. That is no longer the case today. Work travels in purses or brief cases; if permitted, every new email message is announced by a "ding," presenting almost constant reminders of the work role. This consistent presence of one domain in the other domain moves beyond Clark's definition of domain permeation: elements from one domain in the other. It is not uncommon to see a woman sit in the living room with her family for some family activities, with the laptop computer open as she tries to complete a work assignment. The modern technology has made boundaries hard to define and maintain, resulting in the likelihood of more stress than has ever been experienced.

Several studies, including this study, support Clark's (2000) propositions (Donald & Linington, 2008; Lambert et al., 2006; Singh, 2011). However, Clark's theory does not account for the nuances of student affairs or for technological advances in the workplace, and it may encourage women to seek a concept of balance that is unattainable. Attention must be paid to the definition of balance for women and professionals in student affairs. Many of the participants in this study sought a distinct separation between work and home, a condition that may not be realizable. "It is likely that a person can be satisfied at both work and home and function well in each, but not without some role conflict. The synergistic relationship between home and work that balance implies may be, at most, a rare occurrence" (Clark, 2001, p. 362). The work of student affairs extends beyond the work domain, and this will remain true as technology continues to advance. Therefore, women who seek to thrive in their roles of mother and administrator are challenged to reshape their paradigm of balance.

It is unrealistic to assume that balance can be precisely measured or maintained at all times, especially as technology becomes an increasingly integral part of professional and personal life. Women must learn how to manage the collided roles. Based on the findings of this study, there is a need to reconceptualize balance and management of multiple roles so they can be realistic for women to achieve. Just as Fochtman (2010) noted in her study of mid-career women with children, "Work-life was a fluid relationship, or a multi-faceted reality, that they constantly negotiated" (Fochtman, 2010, p. 180). Supple (2007) also moved beyond the typical definition of balance and described the process as an attempt to find balance in the way that a gyroscope requires constant movement to function; "all of the 'wheels' must continue in motion to keep the gyroscope of women's lives in balance" (p. 194).

Reconceptualizing balance means moving beyond the known paradigm. The KCM (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008) provides an example of conceptualization from a new paradigm. The model uses a metaphor of a kaleidoscope to describe women's career development. The model posits that women's career development is composed of three important parameters: authenticity, balance, and challenge. These parameters come in and out of focus depending on life stage and circumstances (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Similar to this, the women in this study had different priorities in their lives depending on specific points in their days, weeks, or months. Unlike the KCM, the priorities for these women were constantly present and required focus and attention.

Recognizing the limitation of the KCM model (which addresses only one component of the women's experiences: career development), it may be reasonable to propose the metaphor of a sliding puzzle to describe holistically the experiences of women who have children and who are also mid-level administrators. The goal of a sliding puzzle is to move the pieces around within a fixed frame to align the squares into a designated design. Figure 2 presents a sample sliding puzzle (SmartKit.com, 2009).

Depending on how the pieces are moved, the picture may become closer to or further from completion. The experiences of the women in this study could be described by applying this metaphor of the sliding puzzle. Each woman had a number of distinct priorities in her life, each represented by a square (Figure 3). The priorities were different for each woman and the numbers may have varied, but all were present. As a result, each woman's puzzle was different. Figures 4 and 5 provide examples of puzzles for two women who participated in this study. They are different, based on priorities reported by the participants in their interviews.

Figure 2. Sample sliding puzzle. Source: *Four Color Rings,* by SmartKit.com, 2009, retrieved from http://www.smart-kit.com/s1083/four-color-rings/

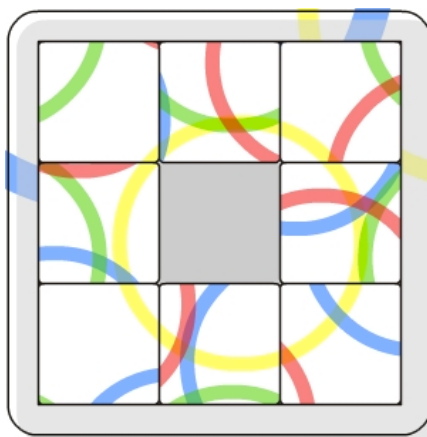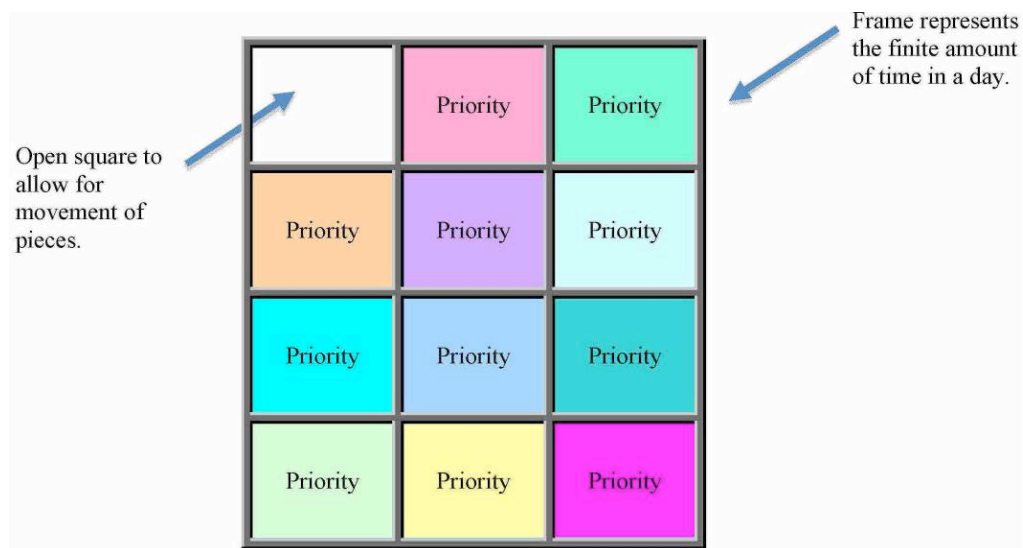*Figure 3*. Sliding puzzle conceptual framework for women's experiences.

Although the priority pieces may be represented as equal in size, priorities are at times more or less important, depending on how the priority is adding to or taking away from the participant reaching the desired picture: effective mother and administrator. All pieces are interconnected and affect all others in various ways as they are shifted.

Figure 4. Amy's puzzle.

Extended Family	Associate Director Position	Children's Activities
Professional Organization Involvement	Investment in Partner Relationship	Spending time with Family
Work Crisis	School	

Figure 5. Veronica's puzzle.

Program Coordinator Position	
Children's Activities	Spending time with Family
Volunteer Roles	Extended Family

Many existing frameworks of women's experiences do not capture the finite amount of time available to women in a day. The participants' reports of their experiences and their stories clearly reflected that time is a precious asset and that it had a strong impact on how the women approached their work. The frame of the puzzle represents the finite amount of time women have in a day. As described earlier, the women's days were demanding and full, almost every hour accounted for by some

priority. Resources were limited to the time and energy available to give to any specific priority.

Unlike many previous models, this framework integrates roles, priorities, and elements in both work and home domains within one frame. The underlying belief revealed by many participants in this study was that separating the roles into multiple domains is challenging. With only 24 hours in a day to do everything that is required and desired, and especially because of role overlap and collision that are exacerbated by use of modern technology, separating the two worlds is an unrealistic expectation.

Women make decisions about which pieces to focus on or to move into the line of focus based on a relational perspective (Gilligan, 1977; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). They consider how moving the piece will affect others in their lives, such as family members, friends, co-workers, and students, because the ethic of care is important to them as they approach their work. Some of the women identified what their puzzle picture should look like and had arranged their priorities accordingly; they had set firm boundaries between the pieces in order to keep them in place. Others saw their pieces shift back and forth continuously, changing the picture on their puzzle and creating stress for them. The women who put firm boundaries in place did not stay in one domain. They were comfortable with how their priorities were aligned in their lives, which allowed them to address the needs of each priority without feeling that another priority was being neglected.

Using the sliding puzzle to describe women administrators' experience has advantages that are not provided by other frameworks. The priority squares are fluid and dynamic, given particular circumstances; they can grow or shrink. For example, if a child becomes ill, that priority square expands and may even partially or fully cover

other squares because of the immediate care and attention that is required to address the child's needs. The dynamic nature of the puzzle is illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Sliding puzzle conceptual framework when a priority expands.

	Priority	Priority
Priority	Priority	Priority
Priority	Child gets sick at daycare	Priority
Priority	Priority	Priority

The conceptual framework illustrated by the sliding puzzle allows for identification of multiple priorities and can reflect the amount of time and energy allocated by the women according to circumstances. Within the fixed timeframe (the outer frame of the puzzle), the investment that women decide to make in one role (square) in terms of time and energy will have an impact on the other roles (squares) and how the women can function in those roles. Women in this study reported that they experienced guilt when one priority expanded more than they expected it would or

thought it should. This framework provides a visual aid for women in their decision-making process as it allows them to shift priorities while maintaining a focus on the larger picture.

In summary, Clark's (2000) work-family border theory defines two distinct domains—work and home—indicating a separation, or desired separation, between the two. Unlike Clark's theory, this study revealed a quite different reality of the contemporary world. That is, with the advancement of multiple technologies, work and home are no longer separate domains and maintaining these domains as separate is next to impossible in the field of student affairs. The sliding puzzle framework provides a visual aid to help women to set priorities within a fixed boundary. It offers a unique lens to reconceptualize women professionals' struggles in technology-based society. It can help women to set an obtainable goal, which Clark's theory no longer provides due to changes in the modern workplace.

Practical Implications

This study is one of few (Fochtman, 2010; Hebreard, 2010; Marshall, 2002; Supple, 2007) that have explored the experiences of women who serve in the roles of mother and administrator in the student affairs profession. The findings provide insights into the experiences of women who are at a greater risk of leaving the profession than are their male counterparts (Bender, 1980; Blackhurst, 2000; Hebreard, 2010). This section discusses areas in which HRD professionals may contribute toward enhancing women's positive experience in the profession and facilitating their endeavor to attain work-life balance. Opportunities are presented in the areas of career development, supervisor training, role models and supportive resources, and institutional policies.

Career Development

Career planning and development has been an area of opportunity for student affairs for many years. In 1980 Bender issued a charge to CSAOs to focus on career planning. She called for administrators to "seek out innovative ways of providing formal opportunities for advancement" (p. 213). However, not much has changed since then. Today, career development continues to be an area of concern for the field. Spurlock (2009) called for "chief student affairs officers, human resources professionals and presidents of colleges and universities [to] revisit their preconceived ideas about career profession in order to offer alternatives that will be more attractive to women in the field" (p. 155). The findings from this study provide additional evidence that supports the call for career development for women. The majority of the women in this study did not have a career plan. They either did not know where they wanted to go or what they could do, or they were satisfied with their current position because positions higher on the ladder were not aligned with their priorities. HRD practitioner and career counselors should take a leadership role in helping this group of professionals to think about a career path that would meet not only their career aspirations but also their family needs. The model developed in this study can serve as a framework to guide women professionals and HRD professional in designing a customized career plan.

Career development efforts should include sessions on helping women to identify their decision-making processes along Gilligan's levels (Gilligan, 1977). This would allow women to determine how they make decisions and whether the concept of relationalism is embedded in their approach. If so, they may be challenged to make decisions about how their time is spent within the context of student affairs, which requires a considerable investment of care. As women progress toward Gilligan's Level

3, their decisions will a have lesser impact on self. Career development should also build self-advocacy skills.

When sharing advice for new mothers, all of the women in this study stated that these women should know what they want so they can ask for it. Ironically, most of the women in this study had not asked because they had assumed that the institution would not support their ideas. Career development interventions based on the sliding puzzle conceptual framework should allow women to develop customized career plans, have the skills to ask for what they need, and find institutions that will support those needs so they can flourish in their roles.

Career development interventions should also focus on helping women to identify themselves as trailblazers for the women who are climbing the career ladder behind them. Contrary to findings from Marshall's (2002) and Fochtman's (2010) studies, the women in this study did not articulate their role with power, as someone with potential to promote and lead a much-needed cultural change at both the institution and profession levels. Helping women to become more aware of the role and attributes of change agents and providing them with skills to serve in this capacity will be an important first step.

Fochtman's (2010) recommendation that professional organizations take the lead in providing career development opportunities for women is supported by this study, but institutions should be aware of the needs of women in their organization. National conferences, institutes, webinars, and knowledge communities should be used to provide support and career development opportunities for professional women with children. Professional associations should not be the only place for career development. Institutions should also encourage women with similar experiences to come together to develop a support network (Fochtman, 2010). Kristin mentioned that it would be helpful

to have a support network on her campus but she had not taken the initiative to initiate such a network. Understanding the experiences of women with children can guide institutions to put support mechanisms in place to increase retention of staff.

Supervisor Training

As in several studies that called for training and professional development for supervisors (Fochtman, 2010; Houdyshell, 2007; Marshall, 2002; Singh, 2011; Supple, 2007), this study highlighted the vital role that supervisors can play in shaping women's experience as they navigate dual roles. Supervisors influenced how the women in this study perceived institutional policies regarding family support. The supervisors set the tone for work expectations and had control over the support that women perceived coming from the institution. Therefore, understanding and knowledgeable supervisors are critical to women's positive experience. Training can be provided to educate supervisors on work-life balance issues and challenges that women professionals face at work and home. Such training would benefit not only women with children but also parents or other staff members who are negotiating multiple roles, because it would increase supervisors' empathy for staff experiences. In addition to helping supervisors to understand the challenges and experiences faced by women with dual identities, the training could serve to educate supervisors regarding organizational policies and procedures related to women employees. Supervisors may not advocate for their female staff because the supervisors are not familiar with maternity leave processes or flexible schedule options. Equipping supervisors with this institutional knowledge can assist them to serve as advocates and champions for their staff.

Role Models and Supportive Resources

Many of the women in this study expressed a desire for role models and reported difficulty in identifying other women who were navigating similar roles. Some did not

know many other women with children who were employed at their institutions; others had not made an active effort to form connections with other women. Hebreard (2010) and Padulo (2001) confirmed a lack of role models for women in the profession who have children. Lack of role models in the field can lead women to leave the field, reinforcing the cyclical challenges of finding role models. This provides organizations and HRD professionals an important area for consideration. They can assist in identification of role models for women through various channels, including sponsoring women to attend professional conferences, forming specialized knowledge/learning communities, and organizing social events and other sponsored activities to connect women with other women who share similar experiences or examples of success.

Professional organizations should consider what resources they can provide to women who are considering leaving the field but might eventually want to return, as reported by Sloane. There is very little information available for women who are considering leaving the field regarding how they could stay connected and current and then make a successful return. For example, the Women in Student Affairs Knowledge Community in NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education could sponsor a webinar for women who are seeking to return to the field. Professional organizations such as NASPA and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) could offer a specialized membership type for professionals who are taking time out but plan to return. Within organizations, HRD practitioners can lead efforts to design a mentoring program to provide senior-level mentors (male or female) who can help women to navigate various challenges.

Institutional Policies

As highlighted by the study, institutional culture can have a significant impact on a woman's experience. HRD practitioners should take a proactive role at helping their

organizations to formulate policies and procedures that can benefit women administrators with children. These institutions must become more sensitive to women employees' needs and set more realistic expectations to allow them to be successful at work. Some organizations may have family-friendly policies, such as flexible scheduling, but the expectations throughout the organization are that only the non-achievement focus staff utilizes those policies, discouraging staff to take advantage of the policies. Rogier and Padgett (2004) found that women who worked a flexible work schedule had a lower perceived potential for career advancement than women who did not. The women in this study were aware of the limitations that could be imposed on them because they had children and they worked diligently not to be judged because of their role of mothers. Without institutional support for use of these resources, they will continue to be a useless tool for staff members who truly have a desire to succeed in all of their roles.

Collins (2009) recommended exploration of part-time positions in student affairs. The findings from this study support that recommendation, as many of the women would have welcomed the option to work part-time and meet the needs and demands of their families. The women would have appreciated a position, such as Tina's, that allowed her to work only 30 hours a week but they did not request such an arrangement because they assumed that their departments would not support the proposal or they considered it infeasible for their position.

Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) stated, "Progressive companies are already measuring and rewarding actual performance, regardless of where or when the work is done" (p. 39). Institutions should consider shifting the paradigm of how work is completed and be open to new and innovative approaches to work. This should be done with the best interest of the employee in mind. Tina worked 30 hours per week and took

a reduction in salary when she reduced her hours but she fulfilled all of her job duties. Tina reported feeling very supported by the institution; however it is questionable whether this institutional decision should be a role model for others, since the department essentially realized the same amount of work completed but paid less for the same work. Policies and procedures should be developed to support women equitably.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study adopted a naturalistic, particularly phenomenological research approach. While this methodology allowed for collection of rich and descriptive data, it does not allow generalization of findings to a large population (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). This methodological limitation can be viewed as presenting more opportunities for future research on this topic.

Due to time and financial constraints, the study was bounded to a specific set of criteria. First, this study focused on 15 women. Future research should include more women in student affairs to gain additional insights. The women in this study were diverse in terms of age, functional unit, and number of children but they were not very diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, organizational level, or relationship status. Further exploration of these characteristics could provide additional empirical evidence to enrich understanding of women's experiences.

Second, this study focused on women's experiences only. By no means did this delimitation indicate or imply that men do not face challenges in navigating the role of father and administrator or face work-life balance issues. Researchers are encouraged to include both genders in future studies, to compare their experiences for more balanced, holistic perspective. It is worth noting that efforts have already been made along this line. Singh (2011) studied the work-life balance of men in student affairs, and his participants were not limited to fathers. Based on his findings, Singh presented a new

conceptual framework that explained how male student affairs professionals found balance. More studies in this direction are needed.

Third, this study focused on mid-level management position in the organizational hierarchy. Such a narrow focus was in response to concern documented in current literature than the mid level would benefit from more research attention as women at this management level are more likely to leave the field than women at other levels (Bender, 1980; Blackhurst, 2000). Several studies have focused on senior-level administrators (e.g., Jones & Komives, 2001; Marshall, 2002; Spurlock, 2009) and few have focused on entry-level professionals. A similar study of mothers who are working in entry-level positions is warranted, as entry-level positions can also be very demanding (Nobbe & Manning, 1997). Future studies could compare women at all three levels to identify common and different experiences.

Fourth, this study focused on a specific geographical region. Due to time and financial constraints, participants were recruited only from public and private colleges and universities in the state of Texas. As a result, the diversity of experiences may have been compromised, compared to studies focusing on participants across the country. Based on the findings from this study, it remains unclear whether geographical differences affect individual experiences in student affairs or individual cultural matters, as reflected by one participant's experience. This warrants further exploration.

Fifth, while numerous studies have called for an examination of the culture within the profession of student affairs (e.g., Boehman, 2007; Collins, 2009; Houdyshell, 2007; Fochtman, 2010; Nobbe & Manning, 1997), this study did not generate relevant data. The participants identified the need for self-advocacy but there was no evidence to suggest that they felt empowered to make cultural changes in their organizations. Therefore, researchers who are interested in this line of research are encouraged to

explore mid-level women professionals' perceptions of themselves in the power dynamics. Some questions worth examination are (a) Do women in mid-level positions identify themselves as organizational change agents? (b) Do women who are positioned to rise to the ranks of senior leadership identify themselves as trailblazers? and (c) Who do these women think are responsible for making cultural changes?

A new conceptual framework, the sliding puzzle, was presented to describe and explain the experiences of women who are both administrators and mothers. The framework presents a unique perspective from which to view work-life balance within student affairs. More empirical studies (both qualitative and quantitative) are needed to test the validity of this conceptual framework.

Conclusion

Navigating the roles of mother and administrator in student affairs mid-level positions is not an easy task. The women who serve in these roles must make choices daily about how they spend their time and energy and must address feelings of guilt that result from the choices that they make. Although their commitments are taxing, challenging, and demanding, these women administrators reported finding great joy and reward in their professional positions. They are committed to the profession and to helping students grow and develop. However, they find themselves questioning whether student affairs is the right profession, not because of the type of work they do but because of the physical, emotional, and mental demands that the profession places on them due to the strong ethic of care in their work. These women administrators are at risk of leaving the field, but they have a strong commitment to maintaining a professional role and they value the contributions that they make through those roles.

Navigation of the dual roles was made possible by personalized strategies that had been adopted by these women administrators. These strategies helped to keep their

priorities aligned with their values and beliefs. The use of support systems (the most widely adopted strategy by the women in this study) allowed the women to juggle various demands and responsibilities and to manage time efficiently and strategically. This group of professionals had high career aspirations and was striving to make a positive impact through the roles that they had assumed. It is the obligation of organizational leaders and human resource developers to seek means to facilitate the success of these women as mothers and professionals.

A new conceptual framework, the sliding puzzle, was proposed as a metaphor to describe the experience of being a mother and an administrator. As a unique contribution to scholarship on women in student affairs, this framework provides an opportunity to reconceptualize work-life balance issues in the modern technology-based society. The sliding puzzle moves away from the previously accepted concept of balance, with the goal of seeking equilibrium from multiple domains (Clark, 2000), and invites an integration of multiple domains into one frame. The framework can serve as a guide for several practical implications, including career development interventions, as well as multiple areas for future research.

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APPENDIX A

APPROVAL BY THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES - OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

1186 TAMU, General Services Complex
College Station, TX 77843-1186
750 Agronomy Road, #3500

979.458.1467
FAX 979.862.3176
http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu

Human Subjects Protection Program

Institutional Review Board

DATE:	29-Mar-2011	
MEMORANDUM		
TO:	BAILEY, KRISTA	
FROM:	Office of Research Compliance Institutional Review Board	
SUBJECT:	Initial Review	

Protocol Number:	2011-0180
Title:	Women in Student Affairs: Navigating the Role of Mother and Administrator
Review Category:	Expedited
Approval Period:	29-Mar-2011 **To** 28-Mar-2012

Approval determination was based on the following Code of Federal Regulations:

45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) - Some or all of the research appearing on the list and found by the reviewer (s) to involve no more than minimal risk.
----
(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation or quality assurance methodologies.

(Note: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b) (3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Provisions:

This research project has been approved for one (1) year. As principal investigator, you assume the following responsibilities

1. **Continuing Review:** The protocol must be renewed each year in order to continue with the research project. A Continuing Review along with required documents must be

submitted 30 days before the end of the approval period. Failure to do so may result in processing delays and/or non-renewal.

2. **Completion Report:** Upon completion of the research project (including data analysis and final written papers), a Completion Report must be submitted to the IRB Office.

3. **Adverse Events:** Adverse events must be reported to the IRB Office immediately.

4. **Amendments:** Changes to the protocol must be requested by submitting an Amendment to the IRB Office for review. The Amendment must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.

5. **Informed Consent:** Information must be presented to enable persons to voluntarily decide whether or not to participate in the research project.

This electronic document provides notification of the review results by the Institutional Review Board.

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT EMAIL—COLLEAGUE REFERRAL

Dear <Name >:

I am writing to invite you to participate in a study of women in student affairs with children. The research project is for my doctoral dissertation through the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development at Texas A&M University. < Refer Name > shared your name as someone who meets the study criteria and therefore may be interested in participating in my study.

I am looking for women who hold mid-level student affairs positions and are also mothers of at least one child who currently lives in the same residence. For the purpose of this study, the mid-level is defined as a position, which supervises both professional staff and programs and does not have a direct reporting line to the Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO). Findings from this study should provide more information on the experiences of women with children in the student affairs profession.

Participation in the study will signify consent and there will be no repercussions if you choose to withdraw from the study at any time. The risks associated with this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. The information collected will be kept secure and will only be accessible to the primary researchers. Your identity and institution will not be published.

I know that balancing the roles of mother and administrator can be demanding and your time is very valuable. The time required for involvement in this study is minimal. If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to engage in a 60-90 minute interview, with a possible follow-up only if there is a need for clarification. In order to ensure accuracy of the information collected I will audio record each interview and take hand-written notes.

I hope you will consider participating in this important research study. If you are interested in participating please contact me by < date > at kristabailey@tamu.edu.

Thank you very much in advance and I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Krista Bailey
Ph.D. Candidate, Texas A&M University

This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

APPENDIX C

RECRUITMENT EMAIL—PERSONAL CONTACT

Dear <Name >:

I am writing to invite you to participate in a study of women in student affairs with children. The research study is for my doctoral dissertation through the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development at Texas A&M University.

I am looking for women who hold mid-level student affairs positions and are also mothers of at least one child who currently lives in the same residence. For the purpose of this study, the mid-level is defined as a position, which supervises both professional staff and programs and does not have a direct reporting line to the Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO). Findings from this study should provide more information on the experiences of women with children in the student affairs profession.

Participation in the study will signify consent and there will be no repercussions if you choose to withdraw from the study at any time. The risks associated with this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. The information collected will be kept secure and will only be accessible to the primary researchers. Your identity and institution will not be published.

I know that balancing the roles of mother and administrator can be demanding and your time is very valuable. The time required for involvement in this study is minimal. If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to engage in a 60-90 minute interview, with a possible follow-up only if there is a need for clarification. In order to ensure accuracy of the information collected I will audio record each interview and take hand-written notes.

I hope you will consider participating in this important research study. If you are interested in participating please contact me by < date > at kristabailey@tamu.edu.

Thank you very much in advance and I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Krista Bailey
Ph.D. Candidate, Texas A&M University

This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

APPENDIX D

INFORMATION SHEET

Women in Student Affairs: Navigating the Role of Mother and Administrator

Introduction
The purpose of this form is to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research.

You have been asked to participate in a research study that seeks to understand the experiences of women with children who hold mid-level positions in student affairs. The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of women with children in mid-level positions. You were selected to be a possible participant because you were identified as a mother in a mid-level student affairs position.

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to provide a copy of your departmental organizational chart, your position description and a copy of your personal and professional calendar for the months of June, September and April. You will also be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview that will last 60 to 90 minutes. You may also be contacted later for clarification purposes. In order to ensure accuracy of the information collected the interview will be audio recorded and hand-written notes will be taken.

What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated with this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the information gained in this study has the potential to assist Human Resource Development professionals to provide meaningful career development interventions to support women with children in student affairs to maintain work/life balance.

Do I have to participate?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University being affected.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?
This study is confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report. Research records will be stored securely in an on-campus office locked file cabinet and only Krista Bailey will have access to the records. The final report will be published in the form of a dissertation.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be audio recorded. Any audio recordings will be stored securely in an on-campus office locked file cabinet and only Krista Bailey will have access to the recordings. Any recordings will be kept for three years and then erased.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact:

Krista Bailey, Principal Investigator
kristabailey@tamu.edu

or

Dr. Jia Wang, Dissertation Chair

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?
This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Participation
Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. If you would like to be in the study, please contact Krista Bailey at kristabailey@tamu.edu.

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHEET

Women in Student Affairs: Navigating the Role of Mother and Administrator

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research study about women with children in student affairs. In order for me to select a group of participants, please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Your name and responses will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone else in association with your real name. Any information shared will be done so only through the use of your pseudonym. Please include a copy of your current position description, departmental organizational chart, and your personal and professional calendars for the months of June 2010, September 2010, and April 2011.

Name:

Mailing Address:

Telephone Number: **Email Address:**

Institution Information

    Institution Name:

    Check One: ☐ Public   ☐ Private

    Full-time enrollment:

Work Experience

    Position Title:

    Positions that you supervise:

    Programs that you supervise:

    Number of Years in Current Position:

    Number of Years in a Mid-Level Position:

    Number of Years in Student Affairs:

Personal Information

Relationship Status (e.g. single, married, committed, etc.):

Number of children and their respective ages:

How many children still reside at your home and what are their ages:

Demographic Information

Age:

Race/ Ethnicity:

Pseudonyms

Please select a pseudonym for use in the study:

Please select a pseudonym for your current institution:

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Women in Student Affairs: Navigating the Role of Mother and Administrator

Interviewee: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____   Location: _____

Welcome and Introduction
- Introductions
- I will be recording this interview and taking hand-written notes.
- Following each interview I will have the interviews transcribed. A copy of the transcription will be sent to you for review and revision.

Overview of the Interview Purpose and Consent Form
- The purpose of this interview is to learn about your experience as a mother and a mid-level administrator.
- Review the consent form and obtain signatures
- I may contact you later for clarification purposes.

Interview Questions – the following interview questions will be used to guide, not limit, the conversation.

1) You are a mother a professional in a very demanding field, what is it like for you?
2) How would you describe a typical day for you?
3) How does serving in the two roles affect you?
4) How does serving in the two roles affect significant others in your life?
5) What strategies do you use to manage the demands of both roles?
6) Do you have any additional information you would like to share?
7) Do you have any recommendations for additional women to participate in this study?

Following the Interview
- I will briefly summarize the major discussion points
- Following the transcription of our interview I will send you a copy to review and edit as needed.

APPENDIX G

CONSENT FORM

Women in Student Affairs: Navigating the Role of Mother and Administrator

Introduction
The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. If you decide to participate in this study, this form will also be used to record your consent.

You have been asked to participate in a research project studying women with children in student affairs. The purpose of this research project is to understand the experiences of women with children in mid-level positions. You were selected to be a possible participant because you hold a mid-level student affairs position and are a mother. This study is being conducted to fulfill the requirements for the completion of a dissertation.

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to provide a copy of your departmental organizational chart, your position description and a copy of your personal and professional calendar for the months of June, September and April. You will also be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview that will last 60 to 90 minutes. You may also be contacted later for clarification purposes. In order to ensure accuracy of the information collected the interview will be audio recorded and hand-written notes will be taken.

What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the information gained in this study has the potential to assist Human Resource Development professionals to develop meaningful career development and work/life balance interventions for women with children in student affairs.

Do I have to participate?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University being affected. You may also refuse to answer any questions throughout the course of the interview.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?
This study is confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report. Research records will be stored securely in an on-campus office locked file cabinet and only Krista Bailey will have access to the records. The final report will be published in the form of a dissertation.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be audio recorded. Any audio recordings will be stored securely in an on-campus office locked file cabinet and only Krista Bailey will have access to the recordings. Any recordings will be kept for three years and then erased.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Dr. Jia Wang or Krista Bailey

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?
This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at 979-458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Signature
Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to participate in this study.

Signature of Participant: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name:
_____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name: _____

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE PEER DEBRIEFER

One of the strategies I used to ensure the rigor of research findings is to use peer debriefer. My dissertation chair, Dr. Jia Wang, served in this role. Immediately following an interview with a participant, I summarized the interview with my personal observations and reflections. I then shared my debriefing with Jia via email. Below is an example.

Interview #7

From: kristabailey@neo.tamu.edu

▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉

Jia –

▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉

Overall I think the interview went well and I got a lot of good, rich data. I think I could have spent a little more time at the beginning getting acquainted with each other and I realized that I didn't ask anything about what her background was to start the interview. For example, I probably should have asked her some about her position and the work she does on campus. I have her position description, but it may have been a nice way to get some additional context.

Her interview was the most emotional interview I have had so far. She had a lot of emotion related to balancing the two roles and I could tell through our conversation that it has been a continual struggle for her to be a good mom and a good administrator because she has a strong desire to excel in both roles. I can tell that tears make me a little nervous and I may pull back some when the tears start to come. I tried to just listen, be empathetic and acknowledge my appreciation for her sharing and the emotion.

I think I am doing much better in really digging into the questions and getting deeper information. My tracking process I have started is helping me to find areas that I want examples or further information. This interview went for over an hour, so it was my longest. ▉▉▉

▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉ and her relationship with God was a very prevalent theme throughout. There have been other participants who have referenced religion, but not to the same extent as this individual.

Similar themes emerged from this interview. The guilt of balancing both roles, wanting to excel in each and never really feeling like you are, trying to compartmentalize. She has considered leaving student affairs and she is one of the first people who shared that information with me.

I found this interview to be very authentic and genuine and full of real struggle between the two roles.

Krista

APPENDIX I

SAMPLE TRANSCRIPT MEMBER CHECK

One strategy I used for ensuring rigor of research findings is member checking. I sent all interview transcripts to the participants in order for them to verify accuracy and add additional thoughts or comments. Below is an example of the interview transcript which was sent to and reviewed by the participant. The line in red is a follow-up question I sent to the participant and the purple text is her response. Participants' response to my follow-up questions and additional comments or edits they made were highlighted in the color of purple.

Veronica: I think I would – I think I would hope that people would think enough of me that they would invite me to come facilitate things or go to retreats. I think I would definitely stay involved in my sorority as an alumni, and also as one of their ~~–~~ ~~.~~ advisors right now I don't get to be one of their chapter advisors – we have like 6 for different roles – because I don't have enough time to give to that. And I've tried to do that and work and children, and I can't give 100% to that, so I'm like no, I'm not gonna do it at all.

So I would love to be able to get involved with that and instill into those Greek women what I'm able to do for my students, because I think that it would make a really big impact. So I would definitely do something like . . . whether that be through Greek involvement or continuing doing stuff with the ███████ and coming up with a way to stay connected. And I think eventually I would wanna come back, or hopefully at that point maybe there is a 20-hour-a-week job that I could do and manage it all. And I don't know that student affairs is open to that.

What makes you think that student affairs isn't open to creative scheduling?

I believe that student affairs is probably open to creative scheduling in administrative roles, but as far as practitioners that work with students on a daily basis, I'm not sure how successful that plea would be. In particular the department that I work in. It's a struggle with me, because I value what I do with my students so much and have a great fit with these two groups, but I don't always have a great fit with my department.

I've loved, now more than when I was little, *9 to 5* the movie, and thinking about like just shifting that paradigm of what a workspace can look like. And as silly as it seems, we were watching Oprah last night . . . because there's only 22 episodes left, and I'm just gonna tell you that's an historic moment for our generation, so ███ and I are going to watch all 22 episodes.

But they did a quick interview with the guy that owns Nike. And they showed the Nike facility, and you can't even imagine like how awesome it is. And we were like, "Okay, let's quit our jobs and move to Oregon, and we're going to work for Nike." Because they had 2 daycare centers, and they had like hours that you could . . . like if 2pm to 8pm worked for you, then 2pm to 8pm was your schedule. And like just thinking in terms of that and not like . . . that's what I think student affairs is lacking. And for a profession that's all about people, we sometimes don't take care of our people, in my opinion.

Krista: Can you talk more about a profession that's all about people?

APPENDIX J

EXCERPT FROM REFLEXIVE JOURNAL

Below is an excerpt from the reflexive journal I maintained throughout the research process. There are multiple entries that reflect different portions of the interview process.

April 21 – Today was my first interview and I learned quite a bit both about the participant and the process.

April 25 – I followed up with the participants I hadn't heard back from yet. One of them responded and apologized for the delay – because she's out on maternity leave. What's interesting is that she doesn't have the out of office message on her email. So is she really out?

April 29. I have completed two more interviews this week and I have one more today. I'm finding no surprises and I am still worried about my questions. I think I had an expectation that the information I would collect would be really deep – and it's not. One question I'm not asking is about career plans and I think I need to build that in for the interview I have today. Maybe I need to be asking about what career development plans are.

participant had a lot of guilt – _ – . the one who seemed to take on most of the responsibilities.

to the profession – I think this has only come up in one interview – which isn't surprising since the other 2 participants don't have a background in student affairs.

After my 4th interview I realized I haven't really asked any questions about what it means to be in the middle!

Everyone I have interviewed has had a smart phone.

APPENDIX K

SAMPLE DATA ANALYSIS

Below are two sample index cards used for data analysis. Each unit of data was printed on an index card.

Card #: 4

Lynn, Pg. 1

I feel like there's 2 worlds that I live in, and that sometimes those worlds go very well together, and sometimes they collide and crash.

Card #: 5

Lynn, Pg. 1

And it's a constant feeling of (laughs) like you're living in 2 different worlds, and you have these 2 different roles.

VITA

Name: Krista Jorge Bailey

Address: TAMU 1236, College Station, TX 77843-1236

Email: kristabailey@tamu.edu

Education: B.S., Biomedical Science and Agricultural Development, Texas A&M

University, 1999

M.Ed., Educational Administration, Texas A&M University, 2002

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Associate Director, Student Activities, Texas A&M University, 2007—present

Program Coordinator, Student Activities, Texas A&M University, 2005—2007

Program Coordinator, Student Involvement and Activities, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2002—2005