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# A Survey Of Women in Sports Media

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## A SURVEY OF WOMEN IN SPORTS MEDIA

A SURVEY OF WOMEN IN SPORTS MEDIA

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Journalism

By

Holly Sullivan  
Westminster College  
Bachelor of Liberal Arts, 2009

August 2012  
University of Arkansas

## **Abstract**

Since 1995 (Miller and Miller), women in sports media (WSM) have been citing the difficulties of balancing their careers and their personal lives, specifically the challenges of family life. Previous research has shown that most WSM are leaving their careers between six to ten years on the job and have cited reasons of work conflicting with their careers (Hardin, Shain and Shultz-Poniatowski, 2008). Work-family conflicts has also been cited a reason for lower job satisfaction (Reindary, 2007). This survey is the first survey to compare work-family conflict to variables of job satisfaction.

This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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## **Introduction**

As early as 1995, women in sports media (WSM) have been surveyed about job satisfaction and their experiences in their careers. Surveys found that female journalists have found it difficult to balance their work obligations with the needs of a family. Various authors have surveyed members of the Association of Women in Sports Media (AWSM) to examine the challenges faced by female journalists, specifically work-related issues, job satisfaction and work conditions (Miller and Miller, 1995; Smucker, Whisenant and Pedersen, 2003; Whisenant Pedersen and Summer, 2004; Hardin and Shain, 2005a, 2005b; Hardin and Shain, 2006; Hardin, Shain and Shultz-Poniatowski, 2008). The purpose of this study is to examine the factors of work-family conflict as they relate to job satisfaction among members of AWSM.

Hardin and Shain (2005a) reported that the average career span for women in sports media is ten years and most never reach management ranks. Previous research has also stated there is a “critical window” for dropping out of sports journalism. This window includes women who have been in the profession for six to 10 years and report that their careers have negatively impacted their families (Hardin, Shain and Shultz-Poniatowski, 2008, p. 69).

According to Rampell (2009), about 65 percent of men and women were satisfied with their jobs. Higher job satisfaction was associated with higher pay for both genders. For women in sports media, Miller and Miller (1995) and Hardin and Shain (2005a) found that about 75 percent were satisfied with their careers. Thus WSM appear to be more satisfied with their jobs than both men and women in general. This survey examines whether they are still satisfied with their jobs at such high levels.

This study reexamines past research that found women in sports media are satisfied with their jobs but are displeased with balancing work and a family. Hardin and Shain (2005b)



reported that 56% of WSM indicated in open-ended questions that their family relationships suffered as a result of their career. This study examines aspects of job satisfaction as they relate to work-family conflict and motivation-hygiene theory to consider why women are satisfied with their jobs despite the conflict of balancing their families. This study is also the first to use work-family conflict items from Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian (1996) to examine job satisfaction among women in sports media. Finally, the results are analyzed to provide suggestions to future female students who are thinking of entering careers in sports media.

By building on previous research, this study is the first to explore whether work-family conflict is a factor of job satisfaction. Using motivation hygiene theory, as well as the Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian (1996) measures of work-family conflict, this survey examines the relationship between job satisfaction and the demands and stressors of work and family life. These variables have not yet been tested together by a survey of WSM.

## **Literature Review**

### **Women in Sports Media**

As early as 1995, women in sports media reported having difficulty with sexism, lack of promotion and lack of respect from colleagues (Miller and Miller, 1995). Miller and Miller (1995) found that women were satisfied with their jobs in sports media but reported their careers resulted in a dysfunctional lifestyle, low pay and long hours. Literature about women in sports media states many possible causes as to why WSM are a minority compared to their male co-workers and why women leave their careers in sports media prematurely.

Hardin and Whiteside (2006) found that women are underrepresented in sports departments compared to the rest of the newsroom, especially in editor and management positions. In other parts of the newsroom where women were present, 35 percent were supervisors compared to the sports department where, only 6 percent of women were supervisors for large circulation publications (Hardin and Whiteside, 2006). Only 10 percent of women are reporters in sports departments where in news departments, 40 percent of women are reporters. A survey measuring the job satisfaction of city newspaper editors found that only 36.7 percent of editors were women (St. Cyr, 2008). According to the research of Hardin and Whiteside (2006) women in sports departments are underrepresented and are working as copy editors or in lesser reporting roles. This research concluded that sports departments should be more like the rest of newsrooms in attempting to recruit, hire and promote more women.

Research also examined the reasons women are underrepresented in sports media. Smith (1999) examined the issue of work-family conflict for women in sports media careers. Smith says male beat writers with families usually have built-in child care in the form of a wife, whereas women with full-time jobs and single mothers have a much more difficult time balancing a job and a family. While women in all types of jobs may be attempting to balance a career and a family, women in sports media face other factors on the job such as discrimination that may amplify the effects of work-family conflict (Hardin and Shain, 2005a). Hardin, Shain and Shultz-Poniatowski (2008) found that young women who had recently entered the career of sports journalism realized that when they started a family they might have to leave their job completely. “Not a single woman interviewed questioned her socially constructed responsibility to sacrifice career mobility for childrearing” (Hardin, Shain and Shultz-Poniatowski 2008, p. 75). This shows that although gender roles may not be enforced in their jobs, women in sports

journalism realized the strain that will be forced upon them when they begin a family. Only one of the participants in the survey was married, but all recognized that the conflict between work and their family would mean that they would eventually have to leave their careers in sports journalism (Hardin, Shain and Shultz-Poniatowski, 2008).

Hardin and Shain (2005a) surveyed women from the Association of Women in Sports Media (AWSM), an association for women who hold a variety of jobs in sports media, to find out their attitudes and experiences in their sports media careers as it related to their job duties. Their research focused on the women in sports communication with jobs how they rate their job satisfaction, specifically related to their job duties and respect from audience, management and co-workers and how it relates to past surveys. They also examined why women leave or consider leaving their sports media careers, how these women believe their careers are impacted by gender status and whether these women believe female sports receive enough publicity and coverage. For the purpose of the current survey, it is important to focus on the research questions involving the experiences of women in their sports media careers, how they rate their job satisfaction and why they consider leaving or do leave their sports media careers. The previous research of Hardin and Shain has allowed for the construction of this survey as it related to job satisfaction.

Hardin and Shain (2005a) found that when asked about job satisfaction most respondents (73 percent) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I am satisfied with my current job” (p. 809). Fewer reported they were satisfied with the media outlet in which they worked (66 percent) (p. 809). Conversely, respondents reported that 42 percent disagreed and 22 percent strongly disagreed with the statement, “I have never felt discrimination” in job duties or at the workplace (p. 809).

Hardin and Shain (2005a) also reported that when asked questions involving career change such as “Which of the following would be the foremost reason for leaving your career?” (p.811) 35 percent of women listed “other” as a response. The “other” category included the work variables of hours, pay, lack of advancement, did not like beat, did not get along with boss/supervisors and did not get along with players or coaches they covered. The “other” responses fell into other subcategories: family obligations, on-the-job discrimination, and the desire to move into “more fulfilling” careers (p. 811). It is important to analyze these specific complaints affecting job satisfaction in future research.

Hardin and Shain (2005a) reported that seventy-five percent of female respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “the time and travel demands make it tough for women with families to excel in sports media” (p. 811). Hardin and Shain (2005a) found that women with more experience often said their family life had suffered more than women with less experience, and women within the “critical window” of six to ten years on the job felt the pressure of work-family conflict the most. Therefore, future research should examine the specific factors that would create more fulfilling careers for women in sports media. In addition, research should examine ways to provide more organizational support that might give women in sports media the support they need to excel in their careers while balancing the demands of their family lives because based on Hardin and Shain’s survey, this seems to be what is lacking for them in their career.

Overall, Hardin and Shain (2005a) said that “although women in sports media face the same obstacles to career longevity that they reported in other surveys taken during the past two decades, they are generally satisfied with their career choice” (p. 814). They also found the primary two reasons women are leaving sports media careers seem to be lack of advancement in

the workplace and negative consequences on their lives outside of work. This study will examine the impact of the work-family conflict as a determinant for women leaving their careers in sports media and how it affects their perception of job satisfaction. Hardin and Shain determined work-family conflict to be an issue, but did not elaborate on the specific facets to determine how it relates to job satisfaction.

Hardin and Shain (2005b) conducted a follow-up study that found the continuing problems or discrimination and lack of promotion were still present among women in sports media careers, even though these are not the reasons WSM leave their careers. They used focus groups among women from the Association of Women in Sports Media (AWSM). Participants in these focus groups stated that they were frustrated over sacrificing time and family relationships (p. 31). These women said there were no payoffs financially or through promotion opportunities from the sacrifices they are making for their personal lives.

Hardin and Shain's (2005b) research builds on the previous research that stated the conflict between lack of promotion and strain of performing family roles and work roles. This survey initially uncovered the work-family conflict for women in sports media and that it is the largest factor contributing to why women are leaving their jobs in sports media. Female journalists are also stressing to younger professionals that they should "be prepared to choose between job and family while having to prove yourself over and over" (Miloch et al 2005, p. 230). Women in sports media are struggling to juggle their careers with their family and the need to prove themselves to their male counterparts.

Previous research has uncovered work-family conflict as a primary variable influencing job satisfaction. It appears surveys have provided a way to analyze the conflict of women to make a decision in their career between the demands of their jobs and their demands at home.

Also, factors such as lack of promotion and other job-related issues should be analyzed in future research in relation the overall perception of job satisfaction.

### **Work-Family Conflict**

Work-family conflict has been found to be a major factor as to why women in sports media are leaving or thinking about leaving their jobs. Work-family conflict is defined as an inter-role conflict (Netemeyer, Boles, McMurrian, 1996). “This conflict is viewed as the pressures associated with membership in one organization are in conflict with the pressures stemming from membership in other groups” (p. 401). Specifically, the participation in a work organization complicates and conflicts with the role of the membership in a family. The demands of a role, the time devoted to a given role and the strain produced by a given role are the main elements of work-family conflict. Time-based conflicts occur when the time devoted to the work role interferes with performing the family role (p. 401). Slightly different from time-based conflict is strain-based conflict, which is created when the family role is conflicting with work responsibilities and vice versa. Women in sports media cited this conflict, as seen in previous research, as a factor that lowers job satisfaction and complicates their ability to perform their job.

Grandley, Cordeiro and Crouter (2005) found that work family conflict affects women in their careers more than men. Although WSM were not surveyed, this longitudinal study examined how work-family conflict affected different genders. The study found over time, women felt more of the effects of work-family conflict when it came to their mood about their job and that men were less likely to feel the compounding effects of work-family conflict

(Grandley, Cordeiro and Crouter, 2005). This study also found that a woman's job is perceived by her husband to interfere with the family role. This may explain why a prevalence of work-family conflict has been found among women in sports media and why WSM leave their jobs during the "critical window."

Reinardy (2006) found that work-family obligations and work demands could possibly drive sports editors from their jobs due to factors such as exhaustion and cynicism (p.50). Exhaustion and cynicism, as it is related to burnout, were measured in relation to work-family conflict and this oftentimes creates job turnover. These factors are associated with the conflict of women in balancing their careers and their family obligations.

In later research, Reinardy (2007, 2009) examined the relationship between work family conflict and job satisfaction using Herzberg, Mausner and Syderman's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory. The theory states that although the factors that are dissatisfying in the job can lead to burnout, the intrinsic influences such as recognition for a job well done can lead to a perceived job satisfaction. The motivation-hygiene theory suggests that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are linked to intrinsic and extrinsic influences.

The theory also posits that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two separate factors. For example, "intrinsic or motivational elements, such as recognition or achievement, are instrumental in motivating workers to do the work, and are directly connected to job satisfaction. Extrinsic or hygiene factors, such as salary or company policy, are instrumental in job dissatisfaction" (Reinardy, 2009, p. 127). This present study focuses on job satisfaction as it was found to be important to work family conflict.

Reinardy (2007, 2009) said that the six intrinsic factors or motivators of job satisfaction include achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth. The

theory counters the previous idea that a salary increase, an agreeable supervisor or acceptable company policies increase the employee's level of job satisfaction. Instead, factors such as enjoying the work itself and recognition for a job well-done influence the employee's level of job satisfaction.

Reindary (2009) found that journalists who intended to leave the field reported having significantly higher rates of work-family conflict and significantly lower rates of job satisfaction. In an open-ended question asking why they intended to leave newspaper journalism, the highest frequency or 30.2 percent of respondents said they planned to leave the field because of industry issues/job satisfaction. The study's results supported the motivation-hygiene theory. Journalists who said they intended to leave the profession due to intrinsic factors such as a lack of support and encouragement.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction for women in sports media is dependent on many factors. St. Cyr (2008) measured the job satisfaction of city editors and found factors regarding job satisfaction varied depending on the rank of the editor as well as the quality of the writing and work produced. These editors valued their level of self-satisfaction with their jobs more than their satisfaction with the reporters they supervise or their own supervisors. These results also support the motivation-hygiene prediction that intrinsic factors are important to job satisfaction.

Keith (2005) surveyed copy editors and found job satisfaction is a very important variable to study in regard to journalists because it is central to whether a journalist will plan to leave or will leave the field, and that job satisfaction also affects the work journalists produce. If journalists are satisfied with their jobs, their work will show their satisfaction. Job satisfaction



has previously been measured with variables such as salary, supervisors, job autonomy, journalist's perception of the quality of the news organization and chance for promotion (Keith, 2005).

Keith (2005) reported that only 23 percent of copy editors surveyed strongly agreed with the statement, "I am satisfied with my current job." Keith found differences in job satisfaction depending on the type of job. For example, depending on the type of job, different factors of the quality of work, pay or job autonomy will be more important. Therefore future research should examine such intrinsic and extrinsic job factors that affect job satisfaction the most.

Smucker, Whisenant and Pedersen (2003) found that women in sports journalism are generally satisfied with their jobs, but that extrinsic factors, such as pay are more influential to job satisfaction. The most important extrinsic factor in the 2003 survey was the chance for promotion. This is important to note because the chance for promotion is one of the most important factors for women leaving their careers in sports media.

Whisenant, Pedersen and Smucker (2004) analyzed job satisfaction of women in sports media as it related to their referent-selection process, where women compare their jobs to other people, thus their job satisfaction is based on how they feel they fare in comparison to others. Specifically, their survey determined the level of satisfaction in five specific content areas including pay, promotional opportunities, supervision, co-workers and work itself. This research stated that job satisfaction is based on various factors such as promotion, benefits and pay, and that job satisfaction can be shaped by how it is referent to others. The findings stated that making market-pay comparisons resulted in low job satisfaction and making job comparisons also resulted in low job satisfaction. When WSM compared themselves to people and found that they were not paid as well, their chance at promotion was lower or their work suffered, their job

satisfaction also decreased. The study also found that the women surveyed had been in their jobs less than five years and had previous employment experiences to make referent comparisons (Whisenant, Pedersen, and Smucker, 2005). This is important because the factors of job satisfaction are clearly dependent on the perceptions of the women in these jobs and that job satisfaction can be swayed. These variables of job satisfaction are important to analyze in future research.

Beam (2006) also found that job satisfaction is dependent upon many variables for journalists and newsrooms supervisors. Specifically, individual goals and priorities are indicators of job satisfaction. The perceptions of journalistic goals and their quality to the organization are a main determinant in job satisfaction. Beam also found that journalists in different jobs have different predictors of job satisfaction. Beam concludes that the most satisfied journalists are those who feel a great deal of autonomy in their work and they feel they are receiving regular feedback from their supervisors. Beam's conclusions are based on job satisfaction as it relates to intrinsic variables.

When surveyed, women in sports media said they were satisfied with their jobs, but there are certain factors of their jobs in which they were dissatisfied. Miller and Miller (1995) surveyed women in sports media and said that three-fourths of the women surveyed were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their jobs. The respondents are satisfied with their jobs, but made comments concerning, "a glass ceiling in their current job, low pay, followed by long hours and dysfunctional lifestyle" (p.886). These are considered intrinsic job factors and will affect job satisfaction.

Willard (2007) also found reasons of too heavy of a workload, believing there was no chance for promotion and wanting more personal time. The study surveyed women working in

newspaper print jobs. When asked why a woman left her previous job, she answered, “I was having consistent conflicts with my supervisor, (and) wanted more autonomy and creative challenges. I also felt that the assignments given were too numerous to do a good job on any one of them. Little guidance or chance for learning was available. No chance for real career advancement” (Willard 2007, p. 23). The intrinsic variables such as career advancement and quality of assignments are work are shown here to effect job satisfaction of WSM.

Price and Wulff (2005) compared job satisfaction among men and women working as television news correspondents and found that intrinsic factors such as quality of work, and extrinsic motivators such as pay and organizational support determined job satisfaction. The study found that women who worked the same number of years as their male counterparts were less satisfied. Both men and women were satisfied with the intrinsic part of their job, the journalism part or the actual writing and work part of their job, but that women were more sensitive to the perception of the news and how it related to job satisfaction. The extrinsic factors of job satisfaction such as feelings toward superiors and pay were found to be lower for women, specifically, ones dealing with organizational support.

When asked open-ended questions about job satisfaction, Price and Wulff (2005) found that one woman said, “she wasn’t respected for her abilities” (p.224). Another woman said, “Not being given the time, support or resources to cover a story properly, as well as being forced to work long hours and hence see my work suffer” (p. 225) had effected her perception of job satisfaction. This study compared salaries, numbers of years worked, and job satisfaction between men and women, and found a significant difference in the number of years worked and their salaries. The difference was attributed to women reporting they did not want to be promoted to senior correspondents and news anchors (p.226). Even a male correspondent admitted that his

life is different than his female co-workers, “I believe that their perspective would be even stronger towards the idea of making room for the family and personal life” (p. 226). These variables are important because they are correlated to the intrinsic and extrinsic job factors of job satisfaction and are specific depending on gender. Each of these studies addressed different groups of journalists and sports journalists in different media and job types.

***Burnout.*** Reinardy first studied burnout as a variable for job satisfaction for sports journalists in 2006. Burnout, as defined by Reinardy (2008), is an emotional conflict of personal and job values. The tasks associated with work are a conflict with the personal things that a journalist would like to get done in their life. The most susceptible people to burnout are young, inexperienced journalists who are multitasking, receiving a below average salary and often have a low job satisfaction.

Reinardy (2006), using the Maslach Burnout Scale, found that “sports journalists demonstrate a moderate rate of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization while reaching a high level of personal accomplishment” (p.405). The study also found that sports writers and desk workers such as copy editors had lower levels of burnout than sports editors. Reinardy (2006) explained that burnout is an important variable because, “burnout can lead to employee turnover, reduction in quality and quantity of work, and conflict in the home and work environment, it is an issue newspaper organizations need to address to maintain a happy and healthy staff” (p. 408). The study found that low rates of job satisfaction could contribute to burnout because low job satisfaction increases exhaustion and cynicism towards the job. Burnout is an important variable to women in sports media because they have to balance work and family

stressors. Burnout is directly related to job satisfaction because low job satisfaction can increase the chances for burnout.

Reinardy's (2006) study draws a relationship between organizational support and burnout. Again, autonomy was found to be an important variable in determining job satisfaction. Specifically, burnout and job satisfaction were linked because low job satisfaction can create burnout. The higher the overall level of job satisfaction, the less journalists will report the effects of burnout. Job satisfaction was also a predictor of personal efficacy which means that the job will provide a positive outlook to the person's life. It is important to understand burnout as a factor of job satisfaction because work-family conflict can add to burnout. That is because work-family conflict is related to job satisfaction and can eventually lead to leaving a job in journalism.

Reinardy (2007) found that the only buffer to burnout in journalists is personal accomplishment or the feeling that a person is doing a good job in his/her career. Reinardy states, "after emotional exhaustion and depersonalization take hold, personal accomplishment remains a buffer against burnout" (p. 408). Personal accomplishment is directly related to job satisfaction and is the only buffer against other stressors that lead to burnout (Reinardy, 2007). Personal accomplishment allows people to feel good about their jobs, regardless of the other factors that may be unpleasant. This study is also important because it was not gender-specific and found that women have a more difficult challenge of balancing work and family. Yet, if the stress of work and family is that strong with male journalists and editors, work-family conflict is a stressor that can lead to burnout and eventually lead employees to leave their jobs in sports media. Grandley, Cordeiro and Crouter (2005) found that work-family conflict is more prevalent among women working in a variety of job types. Perhaps WSM are leaving their careers because

these stressors are more challenging for women; WFC is more prevalent among women, and burnout is associated with the stresses of work-family conflict.

***Organizational Support.*** Daniels and Hollifield (2002) defined organizational support as the perceived support of the organization that a person works for. They found that a change in organizational support and goals of a news organization can have profound effects on job satisfaction. Daniels and Hollifield surveyed employees during a two-year period at CNN Headline News where major organizational changes were being made such as change in management, downsizing staff and changing organizational goals. They found that job satisfaction is related to how employees perceive the organizational change. If journalists feel they are not being considered in organizational changes and consequently, the quality of their work suffers, they will feel less satisfied with their jobs. Employees were most unhappy with changes such as staff reductions and management that would hinder their ability to perform their work. Job commitment was related to the ability to perform work; therefore when employees felt that their ability to perform their work would suffer, their commitment to their job lessened, and so did their job satisfaction.

Specifically, the effects of organizational changes may lessen over time, but the initial response to change that may affect the work of the journalist will be seen as negative and effect job satisfaction (Daniels and Hollifield, 2002). Overall, the employees of CNN Headline News believed they were less satisfied with their jobs after the changes than before, regardless of what the tabulated responses show. This is important to note even though there were not specific correlations with the changes and organizational support.

It is important to note the organizational changes and support as it correlates to job satisfaction in a survey as it was found to be a reason why WSM are dissatisfied with their jobs (Hardin and Shain, 2005a). Although CNN Headline News employees reported in their survey responses that their level of job satisfaction had increased, the employees themselves did not believe this to be true because the operational definition of job satisfaction as measured in surveys is different than employees perceive it to be. This is important to note because WSM state that they are dissatisfied with many aspects of their jobs and eventually leaving their careers, but still say they are overall satisfied with their jobs. Daniels and Hollified (2002) concluded, “the *perception* of being less satisfied with one's job as the result of change may be as important to employee morale and retention as the reality” (p. 676). Job satisfaction is more important to the employee than changes in organizational support, management or the way things are done at a job and will cause job satisfaction to waver depending on changes in the organization and the ability to perform their work. Reinardy (2007) noted that perceived organizational support had a direct correlation to job satisfaction.

Motivation-hygiene theory explains why women in sports media are generally satisfied with their jobs even though they are dissatisfied with many facets of their current career. Herzberg, Mausener and Snyderman (1959) argued that the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are linked directly to job satisfaction. The intrinsic motivators such as recognition and achievement are important to motivating workers to perform their work. Specific factors related to intrinsic motivation are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement and growth. When examining these factors, job satisfaction was found to be related to performance of work and the possibility of personal growth and achievement. Extrinsic features seen in previous research of women in sports media (Smucker, Whisenant and Pedersen, 2003;

Whisenant, Pedersen and Smucker, 2004; Price and Wulff, 2005) are salary, relationship with a supervisor, relationship with peers, work conditions, and personal life. Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction will be associated around the factors of the job, not the work or the job itself.

As seen from previous research, job satisfaction is based on many variables. These variables are all dependent on the perception of the employees, how they feel they are being supported and how they are able to do their work. As work-family conflict has been found to be a reason that women are leaving their careers in sports media, and levels of job satisfaction vary, these two factors need to be considered when examining why women are leaving their careers prematurely. Also, to extend past research, these factors should be considered in a current study to assess whether and how they have changed in relation to the current state of women in sports media.

### **Hypotheses and Research Questions**

Major studies have found that work family conflict was consistently associated with job satisfaction for women in sports media. Although work-family conflict has been a constant stressor for WSM, about 75 percent report they are satisfied with their jobs. As mentioned above, motivation-hygiene theory helps to explain the tug-of-war between work family conflict and job satisfaction by predicting that employees balance internal issues such as interrole conflict and family stress with extrinsic motivators such as satisfaction in their jobs and a job well done.

Previous research also suggested that perceived organizational support and chance for promotion help to balance perceived job satisfaction and work family conflict. Women who have



positive perceptions of co-workers and supervisors, opportunity for promotion, pay, satisfying and challenging work and recognition are more likely to report job satisfaction and less work family conflict. Therefore the following hypotheses are suggested based on past research.

Hypothesis 1: Women in sports media (WSM) who perceive positive work conditions will report that they are satisfied with their jobs.

Motivation hygiene theory states that if the intrinsic job variables are positive for an employee, overall job satisfaction will be high. Hypothesis 1 tests whether the women who perceive the intrinsic part of the job to be positive, such as the relationship with their supervisor and their co-workers and the ability to perform their job well, will report that they are more satisfied with their jobs. This hypothesis tests motivation hygiene theory as it relates to WSM and their job satisfaction as measured by positive intrinsic job variables. Based on previous research (Beam 2006, Price and Wulff 2005, Whisenant, Pedersen, and Smucker 2005), women who feel satisfied with the feedback they receive from their supervisors, their relationships with their co-workers and their work itself, are expected to be more satisfied with their jobs.

Hypothesis 2: Women in sports media (WSM) who perceive negative work conditions will report work-family conflict as a problem.

Hypothesis 2 predicts that WSM who perceive negative work conditions, such as a lack of chance for promotion, dissatisfaction with their salary and other extrinsic factors of their job, will report work-family conflict as a problem. As seen in previous research (Daniels and Hollifield 2002, Reinardy 2007) perceived organizational support and salary are important factors for determining job satisfaction. Previous research also found that those who have low

job satisfaction have cited high work-family conflict (Reinardy, 2007). This hypothesis tests whether women who are displeased with their jobs will report that work-family conflict appears to affect job satisfaction. Based on previous research, women in sports media have cited work-family conflict as a reason for dissatisfaction in their job (Hardin and Shain 2005a, Willard 2007). Consequently, a negative correlation between job satisfaction and work-family conflict is expected.

The following research questions are also posed.

1. Has the percentage of WSM who report that they are satisfied with their jobs changed from the levels in previous research?
2. Is work family conflict (WFC) still a major issue for WSM?
3. Which factors (other than WFC items) are associated with WFC?

The findings of this survey should shed light as to whether work family conflict is correlated with job satisfaction and whether there are other intrinsic or extrinsic variables that affect job satisfaction among WSM. This study also examines work-family conflict items from Ahmad and Omar (2010) and Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian (1996) that have not been assessed together with the variables typically used in previous research on WSM. The results of this study will analyze these variables and make suggestions for future research.

## **Methods**

### **Survey Design**

The survey included demographic questions about age, education, in which type of outlet they worked, their current job title, and marital status. Respondents reported their number of children and years of experience in sports media and their job. Five point Likert scale items were used to measure job satisfaction (e.g., “I am satisfied with the media outlet in which I work”), work-family conflict, and work conditions/perceived organizational support (Hardin and Shain, 2005a; Ahmad and Omar, 2010; Whisenant, Pedersen and Smucker, 2004; Netemeyer, Boles, McMurrin, 1996; see survey attached- Appendix B). Respondents indicated their level of agreement from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” using these 5-point Likert scale items, which were analyzed using one-tailed bivariate correlations.

### **Survey Distribution and Response**

An Internet survey was conducted using the member directory of the Association of Women in Sports Media (AWSM). Permission was gained from AWSM and the member directory was used to gather e-mail addresses. Some e-mail addresses were provided through the directory, but others had to be found through the members’ personal blog or media outlet websites. The survey was sent through e-mail with a cover letter. A follow-up e-mail was sent three weeks later.

### **Results**

A total of 115 members were sent the survey via e-mail. Of the 115 surveys sent, there were 47 completed responses for a response rate of 40.86 percent. All of the members have either worked in sports media, are currently employed in sports media or are students pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in journalism, public relations or media relations. Of the

student group, many had internships in sports media departments of their respective universities. By including students in the sample, the responses of women who have just entered the field as well as women who are more experienced in their careers can be considered.

Of the 47 AWSM responding to the survey, most reported holding jobs in print (25 women, 53%), followed by 11 in Internet (23%), 7 in broadcast (15%), and 4 in “other” media. For all media, most or 25 women identified their current positions as writers (53%), 8 as editors (17%), 4 as managers (9%), 1 as a columnist and 9 (19%) as “other,” which includes jobs such as ad sales, talent, sports information, assignment editor/producer and anchor. Of the survey respondents, 29 (62%) were single (never married), 17 (36%) were married and 1 (2%) was divorced. The majority of respondents had a Bachelors degree (31 respondents, 66% of the population). Six respondents had some college (13%) and 10 (21%) had a master’s degree. The average age of respondents was 36 years old.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that WSM who reported positive work conditions in their jobs would be satisfied with their jobs. Job satisfaction was found to have positive correlations with “When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive” (.552,  $p=.000$ , Table 1), and negative correlations with “There is really too little chance for promotion at my job” (-.461,  $p=.001$ ; Table 2). These results are consistent with the motivation-hygiene theory that states intrinsic rewards such as job as recognition and opportunities for advancement are associated with job satisfaction. Table 4 shows statistical significance for the intrinsic job variables evaluated in the survey. WSM also reported, “My work is challenging,” which had a positive correlation with job satisfaction (.484,  $p=.001$ ). These results are consistent with the research of Price and Wulff (2005).

Hypothesis 2 predicted that WSM who report negative work conditions will report that WFC is a problem. Four of the six WFC items were significantly correlated with job recognition and little chance for promotion (see Table 2). “The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life” had a significant positive correlation with little chance for promotion (.346,  $p=.009$ ), and a significant negative correlation with job recognition (-.302,  $p=.020$ ). “My work takes up time that I’d like to spend with my family” had a significant positive correlation with little chance for promotion (.282,  $p=.027$ ). “My family dislikes how often I am preoccupied with work while I’m at home” was positively correlated with little chance of promotion (.406,  $p=.002$ ). “My family is supportive of my career” is negatively correlated with little chance of promotion (-.377,  $p=.005$ ). The responses to this survey suggest work-family conflict appears to have some impact on job satisfaction.

WFC factors had other significant correlations with work condition factors (Table 3). “My family dislikes how much I’m preoccupied with work while at home” was positively correlated with “WSM have a more difficult job than men” (.245,  $p=.048$ ) and negatively correlated with “WSM are taken seriously by their supervisors/management” (-.259,  $p=.039$ ). “Family related strain interferes with my ability to perform work-related duties” had a significant positive correlation with “WSM have a more difficult job than men” (.317,  $p=.015$ ). “Demands at work interfering with home life” had a significant positive correlation with “WSM have a more difficult job than men” (.288,  $p=.025$ ).

Research Question 1 asked whether the percentage of WSM who reported they were satisfied with their job had changed from previous research. This study found 55.3% agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their current job (Table 4). This is a change from previous research that found about 73% of women were satisfied with their jobs (Miller and

Miller, 1995; Hardin and Shain 2005a). While most women are still satisfied with their jobs, this is a significant decline from previous research that involved members of AWSM.

Research Question 2 asked whether WFC still appears to be a major issue for WSM. For three of the six WFC items (e.g., demands of work interfere with home life, things at home are not done due to job demands, and work takes away from family), more than half of the respondents agreed that work-family conflict was still an issue (Table 5). Although many respondents still identified work-family conflict as an issue, 87.9% of respondents agreed that their family was supportive of their career.

Five of the six measures of WFC had significant positive correlations with all the other WFC items (Table 5). Only “My family is supportive of my career” had few significant associations with other WFC items. This variable had significant negative correlations with “family related strain interferes with my ability to perform work-related duties” and “My family dislikes how often I am preoccupied with work.”

Research Question 3 asked which factors (other than WFC factors) are associated with WFC. In addition to the correlations discussed for Hypothesis 2, the WFC items most often had significant correlations with “There is too little chance for promotion” and “Females in sports media careers have a more difficult job than men in sports media careers” (Table 3). Job satisfaction was not significantly correlated with job WFC items with one exception. “I feel that the work I am given is challenging and appropriate for my abilities” was positively associated with “My family is supportive of my career” (.367,  $p=.006$ ; Table 1).

## **Discussion**

The results of this survey suggest that women in sports media are still dealing with different aspects of work-family conflict and that job satisfaction has decreased since previous surveys. Hardin and Shain (2005a) found that 75% of women agreed that “Opportunities for women in sports media are better than ever,” while this survey found that only 53% of women agreed. Only 19.1% or 9 women agreed or strongly agreed that, “Females in sports media are taken as seriously by their audience as men in the same job.” Apparently, many women in sports media feel a lack of respect from the audience to which their efforts are directed.

The results also replicate Hardin and Shain’s (2005a) finding that most women never reach management ranks. Only 17% of respondents were editors, and even fewer or 9% ,were managers. It appears women are still not advancing in the management ranks, just as previous research has shown. These findings suggest that Hardin, Shain and Poniatowski’s conclusions regarding a “critical window” may still hold true with the current group of women in sports media. Further research should examine what special problems are unique to WSM in this “critical window” to find out exactly why women are leaving their careers during this time.

***Job Satisfaction.*** The results support previous research on motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, Mausener and Synderman, 1959) as well as Smucker, Whisenant and Pedersen’s (2003) finding that women who are pleased with intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are more likely to report job satisfaction. Smucker, Whisenant and Pedersen’s research was found to still be relevant in determining job satisfaction for women in sports media. The perceived chance for promotion was correlated with several variables of job satisfaction and work family conflict supports its role as an important intrinsic motivator in determining job satisfaction.

Results also suggest that motivation-hygiene theory explains overall job satisfaction despite the lack of chance of promotion, being displeased with pay and other extrinsic job factors. This data supports the findings of Miller and Miller (1995) and Willard (2007) that women in sports media are dissatisfied with their workload and lack of personal time, but find the work itself satisfying despite all the other organizational and extrinsic factors. This study also supports these findings because of the positive correlations between job satisfaction and intrinsic factors such as receiving recognition, but displeasure with their pay and other extrinsic factors.

Future research should examine specific variables such as pay and chance for promotion as it related to job satisfaction for WSM. Women stated the sacrifices they make for their jobs are not rewarded with an equal payoff in the form of a promotion. Thus, future studies might expand the research of Whisenant, Pedersen and Smucker (2004) to determine whether job satisfaction is an intrinsic factor or feeling of the individual, or is an extrinsic factor dependent on outside sources. Specifically, is job satisfaction solely based on intrinsic factors, or can it be affected by comparing one's job to a referent?

***Work Family Conflict.*** These results support the findings of inter-role conflict as defined by Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian. Work and family complicate the lives of women in sports media. Although WFC does not significantly correlate with job satisfaction, it is still an important factor in the lives of women working in sports media.

Job satisfaction variables were correlated with work-family conflict variables, suggesting that these variables can be dependent upon one another. These variables should be considered in future research as a specific reason why women leave their careers in sports media. Future



research should also examine whether and how these factors affect an employee's decision to leave the field during the "critical window."

Future research should examine the specific inter-role conflicts that women experience in their careers, specifically, their family obligations in the "critical window" of their careers. By finding more specific information about work-family conflict during this critical window, more organizational support could be given to the women experiencing this stress and perhaps fewer women would leave their careers. More information about work-family conflict roles could lead to better benefits and understanding for employers and possibly increase job satisfaction.

This study was among the first to use work-family conflict measures as defined by Ahmad and Omar's (2010) measures of work-family conflict with job satisfaction measures used in previous research (Hardin and Shain, 2005a). These items were found to be a good measure of the correlations between work-family conflict and job satisfaction and should be used in future research. The work-family conflict variable "My work takes up time that I'd like to spend with my family" had a significant positive correlation with "work demands interfere with home life" (.636,  $p = .000$ ), "things at home don't get done" (.560,  $p = .000$ ), and family strain (.434,  $p = .001$ ). It also had a positive correlation with the work conditions factor, little chance of promotion (.282,  $p = .027$ ).

"My family dislikes how often I am preoccupied with my work while I'm at home" was positively correlated with other WFC factors such as "demands interfere with home life" (.507,  $p = .000$ ), "Things at home don't get done" (.331,  $p = .011$ ), "family strain" (.494,  $p = .000$ ), and negatively correlated with "My family supports my career" (-.352,  $p = .008$ ). This item was positively associated with the work condition factor, "little chance of promotion" (.406,  $p = .002$ ). Work-family conflict is not directly linked to the term job satisfaction as women in sports

media see it, but it is positively correlated to aspects of job satisfaction as it related to work-family conflict and intrinsic and extrinsic measures of job satisfaction as a whole.

Young women who are thinking of entering a career in sports media should be prepared to face being discriminated against because of their gender. They must realize that there may be a lesser chance for promotion because they leave their jobs prematurely or because sports departments are not as actively recruiting women. Additionally, they must expect difficulty in proving themselves to the audience they serve; respondents to this survey reported they perceive that women are not as respected as their male co-workers. According to research, they may also leave their careers prematurely due to unchanging gender roles. Smith (1999) said that men are fortunate to have built in childcare in the form of a wife, whereas women must juggle work and family.

### **Limitations**

The Association of Women in Sports Media has been used to measure job satisfaction, but there are limitations to using this group. Hardin and Shain (2005a) noted that the members of AWSM have sought out membership as a sort of support group and are either experienced members of their profession or new members just beginning their careers. Non-members may be less likely to need a national advocacy group or organizational support for their professions (Miller and Miller, 1995). Because only members of the organization, especially those who provided an e-mail address or whose e-mail addresses could be found, received the survey, the population is then limited to the group with e-mail addresses and e-mail access. Therefore, it may not be possible to generalize these results to all members of the women in sports media (Smucker, Whisenant & Pedersen, 2003).

## **Conclusion**

The job satisfaction levels of women in sports media have declined in the years since the surveys of Hardin and Shain (2005a). Work-family conflict is still an important variable to be considered in future research among women who are thinking of entering a career in sports media. Job satisfaction is still a complicated issue as it is dependent on many factors. Future research among WSM should consider the extent to which work-family conflict is directly related to women leaving their careers in sports media and whether job satisfaction is truly related to these variables.

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*Appendix A*

Table 1  
Job Satisfaction Variables

	I am satisfied with my job	I receive recognition when I do a good job	I am satisfied with the outlet I work for	I am paid as well as others	My work is challenging	I feel comfortable with my co-workers	Little chance for promotion
I am satisfied with my job	1	.552***	.558***	.114	.434**	.376**	-.461**
I receive recognition when I do a good job	.552***	1	.567***	.351**	.464***	.281*	-.516***
I am satisfied with the outlet I work for	.586***	.587***	1	.373**	.347**	.265*	-.342**
I am paid as well as others	.114	.351**	.373**	1	.382**	.089	-.364**
My work is challenging	.434**	.484***	.347**	.382**	1	.108	-.078
I feel comfortable with my co-workers	.378**	.281*	.265*	.089	.109	1	-.012
Little chance for promotion	.461**	.520***	.516***	.342**	.364**	.078	1

One-tailed bivariate correlations. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

Table 2  
Job Satisfaction and Work-Family Conflict Variables

	Work Interferes with my home life	My family supports my career	Things at home don't get done	Family strain interferes with work	Work takes time from my family	My family dislikes how much I work
I am satisfied with my current job	-.123	-.202	-.018	.024	.024	-.124
I am satisfied with the media outlet I work for	-.116.	-.029	-.018	.039	-.013	-.069
I feel that I am paid a well as others in my field	.028	.239	.078	.173	-.078	-.057
I feel that the work I am given is challenging and appropriate for my abilities	-.078	.367**	.108	.055	.002	-.040
I feel comfortable with my co-workers	.074	.198	.071	.077	.202	.067
Little chance for promotion	.346**	-.377**	.145	.233	.282*	.406**
Receive Recognition	-.302	.217	.217	-.017	-.079	-.222

One-tailed bivariate correlations. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

Table 3  
Work Family Conflict and Work Conditions

	Work Interferes with my home life	My family supports my career	Things at home don't get done	Family strain interferes with work	Work takes time from my family	My family dislikes how much I work
Opportunities for women are better than ever	-.153	-.195	-.157	-.241	-.125	-.122
WSM have a more difficult job than men	-.288**	-.101	.049	.317**	.193	.245**
WSM are taken seriously by their audience	-.168	.233	.042	.034	.027	-.129
WSM are Taken Seriously by peers	-.174	-.161	.107	-.112	-.031	-.116
WSM taken seriously by mgmt./supervisors	-.100	-.167	.056	-.142	-.088	-.259*

One-tailed bivariate correlations. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001



Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Job Satisfaction, Work-Family Conflict and Work Conditions  
(n = 47 for all items, except for Family Supportive of Career where n = 46)

	Mean	Number and Percent Strongly Agree/Agree
<u>Job Satisfaction</u>		
I am satisfied with my current job.	3.43	26 (55.3%)
I am satisfied with the media outlet for which I work.	3.55	28 (59.5%)
I feel that I am paid as well as others in my field.	3.02	17 (36.2%)
I feel that the work I am given is challenging and appropriate for my abilities.	3.57	34 (72.3%)
I feel comfortable with my co-workers.	4.17	42 (89.4%)
<u>Work-Family Conflict</u>		
The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life.	3.72	32 (68.1%)
Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands of my job.	3.48	31 (66.0%)
Family related strain interferes with my ability to perform work-related duties.	2.25	3 (6.4%)
My work takes up time that I'd like to spend with my family.	3.40	26 (55.3%)
My family dislikes how often I am preoccupied with my work while I'm at home.	2.85	14 (29.8%)
My family is supportive of my career.	4.30	40 (87.0%)
<u>Work Conditions/Perceived Organizational Support</u>		
Opportunities for women in sports media careers are better than ever.	3.36	25 (53.2%)
Females in sports media careers have a more difficult job than men in sports media careers.	4.11	39 (83.0%)
Females in sports media are taken as seriously by their audience as men in the same job.	2.32	9 (19.1%)
Females in sports media are taken as seriously by their peers in the same job.	3.13	22 (46.8%)
Females in sports media are taken as seriously by their supervisors and management.	3.32	29 (61.7%)
There is really too little chance for promotion at my job.	3.34	26 (55.3%)
When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	3.19	26 (55.3%)

Table 5  
Work-Family Conflict Variables

	Work Interferes with my home life	My family supports my career	Things at home don't get done	Family strain interferes with work	Work takes time from my family	My family dislikes how much I work
Work Interferes with my home life	1	.053	.455**	.282*	.636***	.507***
My family supports my career	.053	1	-.021	-.378**	-.141	.352**
Things at home don't get done	.455**	-.021	1	.337*	.560***	.331*
Family strain interferes with work	.282*	-.378**	.337*	1	.434**	.494***
Work takes time from my family	.636***	-.141	.560***	.434**	1	.527***
My family dislikes how much I work	.507***	-.352**	.331*	.494***	.527***	1

One-tailed bivariate correlations. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001