

**Fathers, Families and Economic Behavior: Impact of Fathers on Children's
Socialization**

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I. Abstract

The purpose of this research project is to evaluate the determinants of paternal-child time allocation impacts on household behavior. The goal is to evaluate a father's time allocation to interact with his children while engaging in non-market and market activities.

Data for the research was collected during the mid-1990s by Canfield (1995) from a sample of 1,651 fathers who volunteered to complete a self-report instrument in cooperation with the National Center for Fathering. The instrument used for this study, the Personal Fathering Profile (1990), was designed to evaluate fathering practices. It also included family demographics. The target population for this study was the U.S. population based on the 2000 Census data.

The major thesis of this analysis is that the more a father impacts positively and intentionally on the lives of children the healthier will be their socialization process. Father's time allocation for intentional interaction with his children is defined by the National Center for Fathering¹ to include time spent on conversations, playing games, values related discourse and other intentional socialization activities together. This analysis suggests that a father's quality and quantity of time allocation is relevant to the ultimate impact of passing on values and skills to maximize a child's developments and capabilities.

The findings have successfully demonstrated that the father's allocation of interactive time with his children is correlated with his market activities such as income expectation and working hours. Results also demonstrated that a number of demographic variables had a significant influence on the time spent interacting with children by fathers. These included the father's working hours outside of home, mother's working hours outside of home, number of children living with the father at home, total family income, education level, age of the father, and number of father's siblings.

II. Introduction

The positive socialization interaction of parents with their children is one of the crucial elements that contributes to the child's development and contribute to societal and community well-being. The process of socialization has been measured in terms of quality of parent-child relations. Children often internalize the parent's values. Effective parent-child relationships significantly contribute to both short and long term development of children's values and character.²

In general, the social identification of child is significantly based on the quality of parental behavior toward child such as reasoning and values discussions with child. However, such quality of socialization is to be balanced with quantity because even highest quality will have little to no effect if it is not sufficient time allocation available to parents and children. This research considers quantity as one of the critically important factors contributing to the successful socialization process of parents with children.

The study attempts to look at three different variables in the development of effective child parent interactions. First, it assumes the legitimacy of a "cost-benefit" analysis of family intergenerational relationships. Many of the decisions about parent-child interaction are premised on the future intergenerational economic and relational payoffs. Second, the study suggests that four variables modify the cost-benefit analysis issues: income opportunities, educational advancement, "altruism" commitments and religious and moral values. Third, the analysis suggests that one of the variables for effective parent-child interaction is the choices available to "fathers" in a democratic, capitalist society.

Although the study is significantly limited to a survey of middle-class families it can have public policy implications for the larger American society. If positive time-allocation (both quality and quantity) is essential for effective parentel socialization influences on children there is a need to explore ways to enhance and encourage that type of activity.

Some research suggests that father-absence is a causative factor in juvenile delinquency, inadequate sex role identification, drug abuse, lowered school of achievement, poor personal adjustment and other forms of pathology which involve psychosocial dimensions.³ Such studies also found significant correlation between parent's communication and children's mental health. The higher the quality of communication has led to better health, particularly mental health of children.⁴

However, there are some studies of the significance of fathering practices that analyze the impact of father-child relationships on the physical and mental health of children. Some of those studies emphasized apparent educational benefits from father's

interaction with his children.⁵ Such studies provide insightful conclusions describing the consequences of fathering practices.

There is a need to identify factors that contribute to the increase of father's time allocation for children. The purpose of this research is to look for such evidence that contributes to the father's practices. What are the factors that allow fathers to allocate more time interactions with children? What are the factors that limit and decrease a father's ability to be effectively engaged with the children's socialization process? Why is this important?

III. Exploring the impact of economic theory on a father's time allocation to children's socialization

There are many different ways economists approach how members of the family allocate time with children. Generally, any interaction with the children is costly in terms of alternatives one must forgo. Such include number of hours working or extensive adult interactions. Those alternative time allocations are often related to the biological endowments of the family members.

In order to understand how a family chooses to allocate time with children from an economics prospective, one must consider the family as an economic agent. As any economic agent in the society, the primary economic concerns for such an agent are investment, insurance, consumption and income. Additionally, other factors such as marital status, education and age are to contribute to an analysis of a parent's time allocation for interaction with his children. This research will focus on the father's role as an intentional shaper of the lives of children.

Family economics assume that there is a utility or welfare within the family. Family members want to maximize this utility for the benefit of its members. Some economists defined utility-maximizing behavior in the following manner: parents allocate their resources optimally between consumer goods and investment in their children.⁶ For simplicity, if it is assumed that each person lives for two generations then a father's utility is a function of their own consumption and the expected wealth of one's children as adults. The latter depends on what was invested in them through interaction while they were children. Social interaction as expenditure of parent's time is also an expenditure by other family members such as father's siblings. Those two types of expenditures may carry a degree of substitution where a father's interaction with children is proportionally related to the father's sibling's interaction with father's children. This relationship is part of the results of this research project.

This framework can be used to analyze the role of the family in compensating for or reinforcing differences in social interactive expenditures and analyze the possibly of return rates. For example, as the child becomes older the investments in human capital of children in the form of a father's interaction with his children increases because the child becomes less and less labor intensive and more costly in terms of other family resources such as social interactive expenditures. In most cases, capital infusion yields the rate of return.

Human capital is just like any other form of capital that yields a certain rate of return. For example, investments in human capital, like education, have higher returns when past investments are larger. That is to say, the accumulation of knowledge and skills in the past through a father's interaction with his children ease the acquisition of additional knowledge. Therefore, this research focuses on testing the relationship between father's time allocation for his children and the age of a child.

Gary Becker's economic theory, suggests that parents prefer small increases in their own consumption when they are old and larger increases in their children's consumption. However, if the parents in old age make their children feel guilty, then they prefer their consumption to be the same as their children's consumption. This means that such parents under-invest in the children's human capital and therefore there is decrease in father's interaction with his children. Since father's age could be a contributing factor towards time allocation as expenditure on children socialization the relationship between fathers time allocation and father's age is explored in this study as well.⁷

Economic agents, even in the development of family time allocation relationships, consider the opportunity cost of capital investment. In addition to the rate of return, fathers have to consider the opportunity cost of the investment in a child's future. Those fathers gain from financing all investments in the education and skills of children that yield a higher rate of return than the return of alternative investments like savings, stock market, etc.

Fathers who hope to be well attended to by children in old age will devote more resources in the development of a children's skills, habits and values. They will intentionally increase their interaction time with their children. However if the return of alternative investments were higher than return from investments in children, parents would spend fewer resources on children and more on market activities.⁸ Those market activities could include production, consumption and investment, which maximize father's utility and do not increase welfare of growing children. Therefore, it is important to study the relationship between father's time allocation for his children and his market activity such as working hours.

IV. Variables that can significantly impact economic influences on father-child interactions.

A. Income based on number of working hours can have a significant impact on quality time relationships of single parent and low-income dual-income families. Single parent and low-income parents often experience reduced time inputs with children. With diminished income, will be less opportunity for parents to serve as role models or to pass on their knowledge to their children. When family wealth increases, families are likely to choose increased opportunities for their children's socialization. This impact may be modified by the number of children in the family. Children's development experiences are defined to be the amount of human and financial capital inherited per child.⁹

Along with other factors, the quality of father's time with children could be significantly constrained when monetary resources are inadequate. It takes time to teach children values, skills and traditions. Quality time with children is a part of the parent's utility function. Time allocation for children is often an opportunity cost of working more hours and consequently a casualty of an effort to achieve higher income. It is interesting to find out if there is significant relationship between income and father's time allocation, particularly, if both contribute substantial weight to quantity and quality time with the children. The research attempts to explore the relationship of income and a father's time allocation. Arguably, if quality of interaction time with children matters to parents then there should be a statistically insignificant relationship between income and allocation of time.

The role of worker and the role of parent may compete for the time and energy of individuals who occupy both roles. Faced with competing demands, these individuals are forced to decide how they will allocate their scarce time resources between their roles. Identity theory¹⁰ offers a useful framework for understanding how choices are made. When individuals have multiple identities (e.g., spouse, parent, worker), they tend to order these identities hierarchically. The ordering of identities is important, because behavior will be more consistent with the role expectations of the more salient identities than with those of the less salient ones. Or, the relative saliency of competing identities will influence how much time is given to performing each role.

In America the rise in dual-earner families is associated especially with the increase labor force participation of mothers with young children and increased involvement of fathers in child rearing.¹¹ Fathers working long hours are concerned about not seeing their children every day, particularly if they had to be away from home for periods of time. Mothers tended to speak about feeling “guilty” or not feeling like a “proper mother” if they felt they were not spending “enough” time with their children.¹²

The number of dual earner income families is increasing over time in America. It forces many families to make trade offs between work and interaction with children. Fathers and mothers have to work out opportunities of work and interaction with children between each other. This becomes a more difficult task for families if firms are enforcing rigid work schedule. This research paper tests the relationship between father’s working hours and mother’s working hours as substitutable components to sustain the family welfare. It especially explores the impact of dual-working family on a father’s time allocation for his children.

B. Impact of educational advancement on father-child time allocation.

Some researchers found that the education levels of the parents can significantly influence the behavior of children. Given the changing nature of our society, parents with low educational attainment are likely to have increasing difficulty in today’s labor force.¹³ These parents will often struggle to provide the economic and human resources that lead to successful child development. The requirement for parents to work extended hours to maximize income can limit the ability of parents, especially fathers, to have quality time with children.

C. Impact of "altruism" commitments and father-child time allocation.

The rate of return on investment in children is not the sole factor why a father interacts with his children. Altruism, the willingness to seek the well-being of others from a non-selfish perspective, is also a factor in parent choices and time-allocation with children. The children’s skills, habits and values can be influenced by parents who altruistically desire the well-being of the children and choose to spend time, money and resources in accomplishing socialization tasks.

In either case, whether a father invests altruistically or in pursuit of the rate of return on his investment, the interaction with his children is costly in terms of the “other” opportunities given up during the socialization process with children. Since father’s interaction with his children is time intensive, the cost of this interaction is positively related to the value of father’s time. Fathers choose optimal values of their own

consumption while taking into account the cost of this interaction and the dependence of their welfare on the welfare of children.

D. Impact of religious and moral beliefs and father-child time allocation.

Religious beliefs could also induce fathers to invest in children. These could overcome some of the economically influenced reasons for time allocation and investment. Fathers could involve themselves in the lives of their children because their “religious” identity requires generational, religious socialization. One of the obligations of parents is to transfer effectively beliefs and values of their religious belief system. This can override economic motivations.

However, sometimes the economic factors can be compatible with the religious traditions. For example, if a father involves himself with the socialization of the children, the children in return will have a required obligation to take of the parents when they reach retirement age or are expected to be provided with extended care. The biblical statement of the Fourth Commandment¹⁴ suggests that the ancient Hebrews may have viewed filial obligation in such a recursive way: “Honor thy father and thy mother that thy day may be long upon the land....” The clause “that they day may be long upon the land” seems to indicate that the reason to treat your parents well is that the treatment you accord to them will ultimately be accorded to you.¹⁵

IV. Analysis of the Results of the Research on Fathers, Families and Economic Behavior

A. Hypothesis:

An economic approach to family socialization is a useful tool for analyzing father-child relationships and can provide a basis for developing both an analysis of the research and the development of a set of recommendations to enhance positive family relationships. Although it does not explain all necessary factors and causal relationships, it remains a helpful analytical tool. The theory assumes the following:

a. Economic factors influence heavily the relationships of parents to children and especially that of fathers. Families, where fathers positively impact children with both quality and quantity time, will have stronger positive family outcomes.

b. Economic factors often influence family choices both about relationships in the present and future. For example positive relationship decisions based on economic influences in the present will influence opportunities and valued experiences in the future. Parents who positively influence the lives of children can expect economic and non-economic benefits when they age.

c. It is the responsibility of the public and private institutions to maximize positive family-child interactions. This is especially true for the encouragement and development of significant father child relationships.

It is possible that a "cost-benefit analysis" perspective can provide a useful basis from which to interpret information drawn from a recent study of family relationships. The emphasis of this analysis will be to explore more significantly the short and long term economic decisions and their impact of father-child relationships on family life and viability. The economic status and relationships of family members will often influence ways in which fathers impact the life of the family.

There are four hypotheses that are to be explored:

1. Father's working hours will decrease as mother's working hours outside of home increases. This could provide opportunities of the father to develop significant quality time for interacting with children.

2. Total family income, when child resides at home with parents, should increase as father and mother increase working hours outside of home. Will this have an impact on time allocation of father-children interactions.

3. If the father is successfully involved in market activities it is reasonable to expect a negative relationship between the mother's working hours and father's working hours outside the home subject to the family's welfare. If father's working hours are a substitute for mother's working hours, then they will have negative relationship. However, if the

father's working hours are a complement for mother's working hours, then they will have a positive relationship.

4. The higher educational level would increase father's interaction time with his children.

B. The Sample

Data for this research project were collected by National Center for Fathering in 1995. It included a volunteer sampling of fathers who completed a self-report instrument in cooperation with the National Center for Fathering during the mid-1990s. The population was geographically dispersed throughout the United States. In order to increase minority participation in Canfield's study, fathers in New York City from minority ethnic backgrounds were given a free book, Fatherbond, and a meal in return for participating. (15)

C. Results of the research analysis.

The results of the study are divided into four major areas which can be used to evaluate how four major factors impact father-child relationships.

Model 1: In the first model the analysis explores the impact of various factors on Father/Child relationships. The major conclusion is that a father's weekly working hours are inversely related to father's weekly time allocation with his children.

Two stage least squares (2SLS), analyses were computed to test the hypothesis that a father's time allocation to interact with his children varies with the age of the child, whether a child resides at home, the father's education and the number of father's and mother's working hours outside of home. Results for 2SLS estimation are presented in Table 3. Table 3 includes 2SLS estimates for model 1, t-statistics, and goodness of fit statistics.

A test of goodness of fit indicates that the estimated 2SLS model 1 is statistically significant since the calculated F value of 42.34 exceed the tabular F value of 2.18 at the 0.001% significance level. The coefficient of multiple determination is 0.33, which is fair for cross sectional survey data.¹⁶ This goodness of fit statistic indicates that model 1 is statistically significant in explaining factors that affect the father's time allocation for his child. Table 3 presents coefficients' signs and significance level consistent with expected outcomes. A further explanation of the variables is presented in Table 4. The 2SLS model 1 indicates the direction of change of father's allocation of time to interact with his child, caused by a change in the independent variables.

Based on the statistically significant coefficients at the 5% and 10% confidence level, father's weekly working hours has a strong significant negative effect on the father's weekly time allocation to interact with his child. As father's weekly working hours increase by one hour, the father's weekly time allocation to interact with his child decreases by 0.10 hours. The results indicate that father's weekly working hours are inversely related to father's weekly time allocation to interact with his child.

Table 3. Two Stage Least Squares Parameter Estimates of the Father-Child Time Allocation

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
		FCHILD	FHOUR	INCOME	MHOUR
Intercept	CONSTANT	11.953*	50.489*	-4.379	20.762*
		(5.22) ^a	(14.28)	(-0.26)	(3.86)
Father's Work Hours	FHOUR	-0.104*		0.148	-0.157*
		(-5.13)		(0.88)	(-3.08)
Mother's Work Hours	MHOUR	0.053*	-0.044*	0.045	
		(4.35)	(-2.44)	(0.44)	
Family Income	INCOME	0.002	0.004		0.001
		(0.49)	(0.82)		(0.21)
College Education	COLLEGE	0.613	2.251*	15.037*	
		(1.04)	(2.53)	(3.06)	
High School Education	HIGHSCHOOL	1.574*	1.735*	1.367	
		(2.23)	(1.63)	(0.23)	
Age of father	AGE	-0.177*	-0.133*	1.066*	
		(-5.08)	(-2.47)	(3.76)	
Father's Siblings (#)	SIBLING	0.018	-0.282*	-0.741	0.468**
		(0.17)	(-1.78)	(-0.85)	(1.78)
Children in Family (#)	CHILDREN		1.052*		0.266
			(2.22)		(0.35)
One Child Living at Home	CHILD1	10.243*	0.358		5.992*
		(13.33)	(0.2)		(2.1)
Two Children Living at Home	CHILD2	3.222*	-0.222		5.957*
		(4.41)	(-0.15)		(2.35)
Three Children Living at Home	CHILD3	0.968	-0.546		1.672
		(1.25)	(-0.42)		(0.76)
Mean Age of Children under 12	YCHILD	1.364**	-1.777**	10.142*	-7.371*
		(1.69)	(-1.43)	(1.57)	(-3.83)
Mean Age of Children 12+	OCHILD	0.42	-0.173	14.492**	2.42
		(0.49)	(-0.13)	(2.07)	(1.10)
Father's Father Present	FPRESENT		-4.53*		
			(-2.75)		
R ²		0.323	0.041	0.04	0.081

^aValues in parentheses are t-statistics.

*Statistically significant at the 5% level.

**Statistically significant at the 10% level.

Table 4. Descriptions of Variables

Variable	Description
AGE	Age of Father
CHILD1	One Child Living at Home
CHILD2	Two Children Living at Home
CHILD3	Three Children Living at Home
CHILDREN	Total Number of Children in Family
COLLEGE	Father's Education Attainment: College Education
FCHILD	Father's Time with Children
FHOUR	Mean Weekly Working Hours – Father
FPRESENT	Father's Father Was Present During Youth
HIGHSCHOOL	Father's Education Attainment: High School Education
INCOME	Family Income
OCHILD	Mean Age of Children 12 or More Years Old
SIBLING	Number of Father's Siblings
MHOUR	Mean Weekly Working Hours –Mother
YCHILD	Mean Age of Children under 12 Years Old

As expected, the mother's weekly working hours has a statistically significant impact on the father's time allocation to interact with his child. When mother increases her weekly working hours outside of home by one hour, father increases time allocation to interact with his child by 0.05 hours. This finding indicates that a father's interaction time with the child is a substitute to mother's time with the child. However, it is a less than perfect substitute according to the findings of this research.

The results indicate that education is positively related to the father's choice to allocate time of interaction with his child. However, this finding reveals that the more education father has the less time he spends with his child. From the economic perspective education could be considered as a proxy for the wage rate (the more education a father has, the higher is his wage rate). This finding indicates that a father's time with his child may not be considered to be inferior or superior to other time allocation choices. Graduating from the high school, the father allocates his time to interact with his child nearly two times more than if he graduated from college.

The age of the father seems to have a negative influence on the father's time allocation with his child. The results indicate that an older father is more likely to spend less time with the child. Also, the number of children at home imposes constraint on the father's time allocation with each child. When there are two children in the family, the father allocates almost three times less time with each child comparing with only one child in the family.

Finally, the age of the child has a significant effect on the father's time allocation with his child. The finding indicates that during the period when child is less than 12 years old, the father spends nearly three times more time with his child compared with the period when the child is between 12 and 18 years of age.

Model 2: This model explores the variants that impact on the Father's working hours outside of Home. What are the factors that influence a father's decision about the number of hours it is necessary to work? One of the major findings is that the larger number of children in the family often forces fathers to increase their working hours and decreases the time allocation of fathers to their children.

Analyses were conducted to test the hypothesis that the father's weekly working hours outside of home varies with children's age, whether the child resides at home, father's education and mother's working hours outside of home. Results for 2SLS estimation are presented in Table 3. Table 3 includes 2SLS for model 2, t-statistics change, and goodness of fit statistics. A test of goodness of fit indicates that the estimated 2SLS model 2 is statistically significant since the calculated F value of 3.47 exceed the tabular F value of 2.18 at the 0.001% significance level. This goodness of fit statistic indicates that model 2 is statistically significant in explaining factors that affect the father's weekly working hours outside of home. Table 3 also presents coefficients' signs and significance for model 2.

Based on the statistically significant coefficients at the 5% significance level, the mother's weekly working hours is negatively related to the father's weekly working hours. As the mother increases her weekly working hours by one hour, the father decreases his weekly working hours by 0.044 hours. This indicates that within the family production outside of home, the mother's weekly working hours are an imperfect substitute for father's weekly working hours.

As expected, the father's age has strong negative impact on his decision to work during the week outside of home. According to the permanent income hypothesis¹⁷, consumption depends on a long-term average of incomes-called permanent income-rather than just current income. Based on the findings of this research, on average, as the father becomes older, his working hours decreased.

The results, as anticipated, indicate that total number of children is positively related to the father's weekly working hours. Increasing number of children raises consumption of the family and therefore requires rise in income through increase of father's weekly working hours. On average, the arrival of an additional child in the family increases father's weekly working hours by more than one hour.

The results also indicated that education is positively related to the father's weekly working hours outside of home. This finding suggests that the more education father has the more hours he devotes to weekly work outside of home. Considering education as a proxy for the wage rate (the more education father has the higher is his wage rate), this finding indicates that father's weekly working hours may not be considered to be inferior or

superior to other time allocation choices.

This research indicates that the number of siblings the father has is negatively related to the father's weekly working hours outside of home. Relations among family members differ radically from those among employees of firms and members of other organizations.¹⁸ The interactions among relatives are more likely to be motivated by love, obligation, guilt, and a sense of duty than by self-interest narrowly interpreted. In order to exercise all the above motivations in father's behavior, the time resource devoted to relatives is more important than any other type of resource.

As expected, the average age of children up to 12 years old is significantly negatively related to the father's weekly working hours outside of home. Altruistic fathers devote time and monetary resource for child's upbringing. Arguably, parents have to consider opportunity cost to the investment in child's future. Parents who financially invest significantly in the education and skills of children hope to yield a higher rate of return than having returns from alternative investment like savings, stock market, etc. Parents believe that their children will spend more time with them in their old age by devoting resources to developing children's skills, habits and values.

However, if the return of alternative investment were higher than return from investment in children, parents would spend fewer resources on children and more on the market activities. Those market activities could include production, consumption and investment, which maximize parent's welfare and do not increase welfare of growing children. The results of this study show that respondent to this survey find investment in children superior to alternative investment options.

Model 3: Analyses were conducted to test the hypothesis that annual family income varies, when child resides at home at the different age, is significantly correlated with education of the father who on average is the main source of family income and father's age, and children's age. Results for 2SLS estimation are presented in Table 3. A test of goodness of fit indicates that the estimated two stage least squares model 3 is statistically significant since the calculated F value of 5.44 exceeds the tabular F value of 2.18 at the 0.001% significance level. This statistic indicates that model 3 is statistically significant in explaining the annual family income.

As expected, father's age has a strong positive impact on the annual family income. As father becomes older, the total yearly family income increases by \$1005. That is consistent with other empirical evidence. For example, it can be commonly observed that annual salaries of working men increase every year not only to account for work experience but also for inflation. This finding suggests the more education the father has, the higher is

the family annual income. Considering education as a proxy for the wage rate (the more education father has, the higher is his wage rate), this finding is consistent with economic theory. For fathers graduating from high school, family annual income is less than if the father graduated from college.

Model 4: This model measures the variable factors that impact on the number of hours the mother works outside of the home. One of the major findings is as the mother increases the number of hours to work outside the home there is a decrease in the number of hours a father works and therefore there is more time for the father to allocate to the children.

Analyses were conducted to test the hypothesis that mother's weekly working hours outside of home vary for the child at different ages, when the child resides at home, the total number of children, number of children that reside at home and the children's age. Results for 2SLS estimation are presented in Table 3. Table 3 includes two stage least squares estimates for model 4 and goodness of fit statistics. A test of goodness of fit indicates that the estimated two stage least squares model 4 is statistically significant since the calculated F value of 10.40 exceeds the tabular F value of 2.18 at the 0.001% significance level. This statistics indicates that model 4 is statistically significant in explaining mother's weekly working hours outside of home. Table 3 presents coefficients' sign and significance for model 4.

Based on the statistically significant coefficients at the 5% significance level, father's weekly working hours outside of home have strong significant negative effect on the mother's weekly working hours outside of home. As a father's weekly working hours outside of home increases by one hour, the mother's weekly working hours outside of home decreases by 16 minutes. As it was pointed out earlier, the father's weekly working hours outside of home is an imperfect substitute for mother's weekly working hours outside of home.

The number of father's siblings has strong positive impact on the mother's decision to work outside of home. Family with the large number of siblings behave differently from the family with the small number of siblings.¹⁹ The research indicates that a mother increases weekly working hours outside of home when there are more siblings in the family of the father. The research indicates statistically significant relationship between mother's working hours outside of home and number of children residing at home. Particularly, when one or two children reside at home mother's working hours outside of home increase.

Finally, the sign of the coefficient for the average age of children less than 12 years old is negative. On average, mother's often decide to stay with children at home until

children reach 12 years of age. However, the research indicates that after child becomes 12 years old, the behavior of the mothers change significantly and they become more willing to work outside of the home.

When mothers work outside the home, either because of necessity or desire, the father will tend to play a more significant role with the children. This time allocation can be both qualitative and quantitative. The intent is to allow the father the opportunity to play a more significant socialization role in the lives of the children.

VI. What are the public policy implications of these findings on father-child interactions on positive, intentional children's socialization?

This study attempted to determine what were the most important variables which determined how fathers interact with children. What were the socioeconomic and demographic factors which significantly impacted the amount of time father's had with children? How do the statistically significant economic variables suggest factors which are important to the analysis. What results emerge from the simultaneous equation models were used to analyze factors that effect the father's time allocation to interact with his children in the United States of America.

The research suggested that a father's weekly working hours, a mother's weekly working hours, education, age, number of children residing at home and average age of the children are significant influences in whether and for how long the father allocates quality time to his children. Findings also show that a mother's weekly working hours, age, the total number of children in the family, education levels of father, a father's number of siblings, and the average age of the children are significant factors in the determination of a father's weekly working hours outside of home.

The results also indicate that the father's weekly working hours, the father's number of siblings, the number of children residing at home and the average age of children have significant impact on the mother's weekly working hours outside of home. Finally, empirical results indicate that families where the father is older, more educated and has older children are more likely to have higher annual family income.

In summary, the most consistent variables influencing family member's time allocation for interaction are education, age, number of children and the average age of the children. Higher education seems to have negative impact on father's time allocation with his children and a positive impact on the father's working hours outside of home. Higher education of the father also contributes to the annual family income.

Research reveals a negative impact of the father's age on the time allocation for his children and on the father's working hours outside of home. However, the father's age has

positive effect on the family annual income. The average age of the children under 12 years old has a positive effect on the father's time allocation for the children and a negative effect on the father's working hours outside of home.

The number of children residing at home has a positive influence on the father's time allocation and a negative influence on the father's working hours outside of home. This research also revealed that if the number of children residing at home does not exceed two, then it impacts positively the mother's working hours outside of the home.

Finally, the mother's weekly working hours outside of the home influences negatively a father's weekly working hours outside of the home. Also, the father's weekly working hours outside of home negatively affect the mother's weekly working hours outside of the home and on the father's time allocation for his children.

In summary, the most significant variable influencing a father's time allocation for his children was the number of children residing at home. Also, age, education, a mother's weekly working hours outside of home, a father's weekly working hours outside of home and the average age of children were significant in father's time allocation for his children, in the father's working hours outside of home and in the mother's working hours outside of home.

The results of this research may be useful in developing specific public policies and programs. Four conclusions may be helpful and can provide guidance for policy makers. First, if one concludes that it is important for fathers to spend a greater amount of quality time with the children it is essential for fathers to spend less time at work. What are the types of public policies that could positively influence fathers to spend more time with children? How does this impact questions of compensation and establishment of health care benefits?

Second, fathers need to have access to time away from work for quality time with children during family crises. Fathers also need to play an effective role in a child's education and talent-development options. Significant family leave provisions and adequate spaces for vacation time can encourage effective and meaningful father/children relationships.

Third, supports for two-parent working options need to be enhanced. In order for "fathering" to actually be a part of his agenda it is necessary for a father to have exclusive and intentional time with children. How can this take place? Is it possible for fathers to enjoy a flexible work schedule when it is necessary to be more available at home? .

Finally, it is generally recognized that the failure of fathers to spend adequate and qualitative time with children can have larger negative economic and social consequences in the larger society. For example, to reduce at risk youth behavior, policy makers should

encourage fathers to spend more time with their children and induce fathers to reduce weekly working hours outside of the home.

This study has been helpful in the identification of variables to a father's role of socialization in the lives of children. One of the major implications is to implicitly support the idea that choices a father makes at the start of family life can have long standing impacts on the long term development of the children. These choices are often economically influenced. The issues of income and work are determinates which set parameters for family choices and ultimately impact long term family interactions. It is important that these choices be included in a society and economy which has as one of its values the cultivation of a family-friendly environment.

Although further research is necessary, the findings conclude that family work choices, income distribution options and educational opportunities do influence parental interactions with the children. If a father is an important member of the family in the area of child socialization than it is essential that public policy options include that variable in the development of economic parameters and emphases.

¹ The mission of the National Center for Fathering is to improve the well-being of children by inspiring and equipping men to be more effectively involved in the lives of children. In response to a dramatic trend towards fatherlessness in America, the Center was founded in 1990 by Dr. Ken Canfield to conduct research on fathers and fathering, and to develop practical resources to prepare dads for nearly every fathering situation. <http://www.fathers.com>

² Whitbeck and Gecas, 1998

³ Hoover-Dempsey, Sandler, 1997

⁴ Hanson, 1986

⁵ Hoover-Dempsey, 1997

⁶ Goldberger, 1989

⁷ Becker, 1993

⁸ Portner, 2001

⁹ Willis, et al., 1973

¹⁰ Stryker and Serpe, 1982

¹¹ Becker, 1988

¹² La Valle et al., 2002

¹³ Garis, 1998

¹⁴ Exodus 20:12

¹⁵ Portner, 2001

¹⁶ Goodwin and Koudele, 1990

¹⁷ Friedman, 1957

¹⁸ Becker 1993

¹⁹ Becker, 1993