TYKES AND TENURE: NAVIGATING THE UNIVERSITY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF FACULTY MOTHERS

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The Supervisory Committee certifies that this ***disquisition*** complies with North Dakota State University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the unique challenges faculty mothers face while navigating North Dakota State University (NDSU), and the implications their experiences have intra/interpersonally. Fifteen interviews were conducted and textual documents were referenced to answer the study's research questions, which included (1) How do women faculty with children engage with university structures? and (2) How do women faculty with children negotiate between their experiences as mothers and faculty members? The women's experiences unveiled levels of vulnerability, anxiety, and judgment with formal policy and practice, as well as spillover and tension between their work and family/home lives. How the women's experiences influenced their sense of agency is highlighted, as well as how their agency impacted the way they socially engaged. Discussion surrounds how the institution shapes women's everyday activities, and the strategic navigation faculty mothers participated in. Recommendations for future research and suggested applications are concluded.

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Finally, a special thank you to my father, who regularly served as a sounding board for both my excitement and complaints over the course of my graduate career. Without your continuous support and faith in me, none of this would have been possible. A bit cliché, but precisely accurate.

DEDICATION

To my mother above, who continually influences the paths I embark on.

3/16/63 – 9/22/06

Those we love don't go away,

They walk beside us every day,

Unseen, unheard, but always near,

Still loved, still missed, and very dear.

(Author Unknown)

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

A Problematic

Work-life balance: a hot button word in society that entails the attempt to have it all—a successful career and a happy home life. Although perfect balance is arguably unachievable, the maintenance it takes to seek out a healthy balance differs between professions, with no field having immunity, including academia. Numerous articles in the Chronicle of Higher Education discuss the challenges academics face while working to attain work-life balance. In a recent article, a poll was highlighted that asked individuals on a higher education network, "Is it unrealistic to expect a good work-life balance in an academic career?" As for the results, 53% of respondents reported that balance for an academic is simply unrealistic (Jones, 2014). The article goes on to say that although balance is worth striving for, expecting to maintain it is "madness" (Jones, 2014). The author acknowledges that academics can proactively set clear boundaries for others and themselves about time, but that perfect, continuous balance is unattainable. Rather, it is about managing one's various roles in a way that is satisfactory to the individual. Does pursuing an academic career provide the opportunity to achieve a satisfactory work-life balance? Or does it consequently tie individuals to an unspoken contract of daily struggles while in pursuit? This is a problematic that drives my research.

As a graduate student currently in the process of navigating the academic terrain as a developing scholar, I wanted to explore the way female faculty members with children negotiate daily challenges and make meaning out of their lives as faculty members and mothers. I, too, desire to achieve a rewarding profession, but question the strategic work necessary to do so while combining my desire to someday raise a family. These concerns interested me in the experiences mothers have while balancing their academic careers with parenthood. Throughout my graduate coursework, my curiosity of mothering academics' work-life balance continued to develop. Eventually, I had the opportunity to conduct an exploration of faculty mothers' experiences through

a small-scale research project. The project revealed several challenges unique to the field of academia while mothers worked to attain a healthy balance between their work and family/home life. I utilized the interview data I collected to help set up my approach to this thesis study, which sought to explore the problematic of negotiating motherhood in academia.

A problematic (Smith, 2005) serves as the driving force of research as the investigator explores the issues individuals experience in relation to institutional forces. Through my initial data collection, I was able to refine my research direction and develop the problematic leading this current study, which sought to understand the challenges faculty mothers face specifically in regard to formal policy, informal governance, and balancing one's work and family/home life. Additionally, I desired to understand how the women's experiences with these areas impacted their sense of agency, and, ultimately, influenced how they interacted with their work and families. The women's stories revealed levels of vulnerability, anxiety, and judgment with formal policy and practice, as well as spillover and tension between their work and family/home lives. Also apparent were the women's struggles with perfectionism and agency, which contributed to the ways they found agency, or lack thereof. It became apparent how the institution shaped the women's everyday activities, and how due to the lack of standardized practices and processes taking place at the university, the amount of strategic work required from the mothers differed. What follows is a brief overview of the literature supporting the direction of my problematic and the shaping of my research questions.

Overview: Mothers in Academia

Employment in academia, overall, is demanding for both men and women. Most professors log more than 50 hours a week (Jacob & Winslow, 2004), and even though the hours tend to be more flexible than other careers (Bailyn, 2003; Gatta & Roos, 2004), the work staggers between "the workplace and the home, between weekdays and weeknights, and between the working week and the weekends, holidays, and vacations" (Drago & Colbeck, 2003 cited in Mirsa et al., 2012, p. 301-302).

Because of this, work-life issues in regard to balancing a demanding professional career with childcare, eldercare, housework, and a personal life, can become difficult for academics (Misra, et al., 2012; Ward, 2014; Wolfinger et al., 2009). Studies continue to show, however, that housework and family care still predominantly rest on employed women more so than on men (Bianchi, Robinson, & Milkie, 2006). Although present-day media often portrays mothers as having the ability to willingly participate in whatever recipe of tasks they desire: raising the children, maintaining the home, maintaining fulfilling careers (Woods, 2010), the choice essentially becomes one that can be enabling, yet constraining—specifically in regards to motherhood and paid work (Thornton, 2014). Reasons such as these have caused particular challenges for mothers in academia (Swanson, 2003; Toepell, 2003; Wolfinger, Mason, & Goulden, 2009), and led me to focus specifically on their experiences through my research.

With the timing of fertility often conflicting with demanding tenure-track years (Wolfinger et al., 2009), women inevitably must negotiate between their work as mothers and professors. Mothers have been found to spend less time on research (Misra, Lundquiest, & Templer, 2012; Winslow, 2010), a category highly valued for tenure and promotion, and report greater experiences of "spillover" (Quinn, 2011, p. 101), when requirements of one role spill over into another. The challenges of juggling motherhood and tenure has ultimately contributed to a greater likelihood of mothers leaving the academic path (Toepell, 2003), as well as future female academics reluctant to enter the field altogether (Quinn, 2011), contributing to issues with retention and diversity in academia. As studies indicate, "graduate students perceive that academic careers are not compatible with what they consider to be satisfying family or personal lives" (Quinn, 2011, p. 100). Golde & Dore (2001), on the same note, found that often graduate students do not witness their faculty benefitting from flexible policies, and instead see faculty as struggling while juggling multiple roles.

Is this really the case? If so, where are the tensions arising? These questions drove the design of my research to focus on understanding how women integrate motherhood and academia.

Academia may be perceived as more open-minded than general society (Wolfinger et al., 2009), but essentially, it still faces the same issues. Although, the difficulty of being a faculty member and raising a family has not gone unacknowledged at universities. Higher education institutions have responded by implementing family-friendly policies and practices to support work-life balance (American Council on Education, 2007 as cited by Quinn, 2011). Some of these policies and practices are specific to women, such as maternity leave and women's mentoring programs (Baker, 2010). However, research finds that mothering academics may be hesitant to utilize policies or practices that support work-life balance out of fear of losing their reputation (Toepell, 2003). Even worse, some fear losing a possible promotion (Wilson, 1999). These discernments contribute to a lack of family-friendly polices utilized on college campuses today (Drago, Colbeck, Stauffer, Pirretti, Burkum, Fazioli, & Habasevich, 2006). Women who do utilize the policies are impacted as well, as doing so can instigate uneasiness about taking time off, knowing others may be irritated with filling in for them (Wilson, 1999). It could also cause women to question their own ability to keep pace with their colleagues. From these current studies and concerns, I organized my research to better understand how women involve themselves with such policies and practices, and the feelings that may result.

To many, academic institutions appear to be a family-friendly environment welcoming to motherhood (Waggoner, 2008), possibly due to the seemingly flexible schedules. However, some faculty women have explained this as a familial metaphor—it is a family environment in the departmental sense, yet not always so friendly to female professors with young children (Waggoner, 2008). Instead, some women feel "compelled to engage in excessive mothering for [their] students, while hiding the mother work required for [their] personal families," (Waggoner, 2008, p. 211). This

has caused some women to form a hidden support system comprised of individuals who can care for their children, allowing them to avoid cancelling a class or a meeting (Waggoner, 2008). As for mothers of newborns, those who plan on breastfeeding often face a conflict of having the means to do so in the workplace (Riad, 2007). From transporting around breast pumping equipment, finding a secluded and secure location, or storing the milk in a refrigerator without offending colleagues, nursing requires strategic planning despite its often uncontrollable and natural schedule. Examples such as these led me to take into consideration how women creatively carve out strategies within the institution's formal and informal support structures, and to explore the way women engage with these structures in their daily work and family life.

These questions and concerns are, by no means, new to the field. Arlie Hochschild (1989) spent a great deal of time researching women in the workforce during the 1980's, and produced well-known published pieces such as *The Second Shift* and *The Time Bind*. These findings highlighted the struggles of particularly working women, but also acknowledged the implications on men and family dynamics altogether. Although her work may be dated, the general issues have evolved with our transitioning society and remain consequential for those dealing with the ramifications—consisting not just of mothers but also children, spouses, friends, colleagues, and so on. Therefore, continued exploration is necessary. My current study is similar to Hochschild's foundation, but focused specifically on women in academia—a realm studied very little qualitatively. In addition, I worked to tie together the structural and the intra/interpersonal through this project, which has not been sufficiently represented in the literature. My particular research sought to join the conversation by investigating the day-to-day experiences of female faculty with children, and to shed light on the influence of the university on very personal aspects of individuals' lives. This benefits not only the mothers, by making them increasingly aware of how their lives can often be socially organized, but can also benefit individuals in charge of developing supportive policies and practices.

Overview of Chapters

In the following chapter, I outline my research questions and explain the approach of institutional ethnography (IE), which played a dominant role in shaping all aspects of my project. I continue building my project's theoretical framework through the complementing work of Anthony Giddens (1989), who emphasizes autonomy in a dualistic relationship between structures and agents, allowing me to focus on the negotiation work that takes place between the mothers and the institution and societal structures. Finally, I focus on the work of Brené Brown (2006) who considers intrapersonal effects in interpersonal contexts.

My third chapter drafts the methodologies and analysis I used, highlighting how the theoretical framework influences both. University context relating to this project's topic, along with specific participant demographics, are provided to help situate and inform the reader. The fourth chapter presents the findings of the study supported by participant quotations and an analytical narrative. Emergent themes are outlined and visually portrayed through a map to represent how the findings tie together. Finally, in the conclusion I discuss the implications of my research project, as well as future research recommendations.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to explore the experiences of faculty mothers, I relied on a flexible theoretical framework. This literature review offers an approach to exploring how women negotiate their work as mothers and faculty members through institutional ethnography (IE) (Smith, 2005). In addition to IE, I utilize Anthony Giddens' (1984) work with the duality of structures and agents. This supports IE by elaborating on the relationship between structures and agents, the importance of exercising autonomy, and the influence of structuration. Finally, in the last section of this review I hone in on the work of Brené Brown's (2006) work that contributed an intrapersonal and interpersonal lens.

Research Questions

My research questions concentrate on particular facets of the mothers' experiences.

1. How do women faculty with children engage with university structures?
    a. In particular, how do these women engage with university policy and practice in their day-to-day experiences at the university?
2. How do women faculty with children negotiate between their experiences as mothers and faculty members?
    a. Additionally, how do women negotiate their sense of self through their experiences as faculty mothers?

Collectively, these inquires enabled me to develop a better understanding of how agents work within an institution such as NDSU.

Institutional Ethnography

Dorothy Smith (2005) developed institutional ethnography (IE) as a way to address her experiences as a professor and a mother. In particular, she sought to develop a sociological method that valued the day-to-day lives of people engaging with institutional structures. Her struggles between her personal and professional lives tied in well to my interest of mothers' navigation of the

university. While this was a challenge for Smith during her early years as a sociologist teaching at the University of British Columbia, as my previous section detailed, this problem is not one that has found a resolution.

Institutions, such as universities, have the ability to both confine and enable individuals through mandated policies or established practices. These formal policies and informal practices weigh heavily on structuring even the most mundane activities in an individual's life (Smith, 2005). With the mindset that massive structures are yet still malleable, I used IE to create the foundation of my framework, which aimed to unmask where tensions arise for the mothers. I now outline the major components of IE that directed my project, highlighting key points of intersection.

Problematic and Ruling Relations

A problematic, as previously introduced, represents the starting point for research, but the ultimate aim of IE research is to discover how the problematic links to the ruling relations, or the powerful social structures that shape our realities. Smith (2005) describes the ruling relations not as modes of domination, but forms of consciousness under which society functions and organizes. The problematic, then, is not created formally by deciphering a problem theoretically, but instead asks the researcher to openly investigate from a particular perspective to reveal where and how the ruling relations function and impact individual action. This perspective is what shaped my project's lens and enabled me to examine the power structures mothers experience within the university.

Ruling relations exist within and are shaped by the media, government, corporations, academia, and hospitals, and includes the relations that interconnect them all (Smith, 2005). They are often objectified and are constituted externally to individuals and places, across time and space (Smith), and become deeply engrained in society and individuals. This can be seen in the world of academia. Academic institutions rely on and function by hierarchical administration, formal written policies, and informal governance, which then significantly contribute to the ways individuals within

organize their actions. As Smith also recognizes, the ruling relations are heavily text-mediated, and therefore can be further examined through various texts circulating within institutions. By doing so, it aids in revealing how the institution organizes and shapes the individuals working/existing within it.

"Furthermore, ruling relations are not just about who has the power to make regulations: they are about how people implicated in a system or institution perceive certain concepts" (Taber, 2010, p. 10). The replicable texts allow for the same words or documents to be present to people in various locations and is involved in organizing people's doings in similar ways. For example, a university's policy document is the same across the entire campus, but it is a document that relies on how faculty, staff, students, and administration engage with that document. The individuals are in the process of making the policy their own, incorporating the "discursive and institutional resources into their own schemes of interest, motivation, and action (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 3). By understanding the ways in which individuals access policy, understand policy, and even which policies apply to whom, the researcher's knowledge of the institution's hierarchy and processes, both formal and informal, will follow.

Smith (2005) also acknowledges that often textual documents are viewed as something that occurred in the past, and do not represent the individuals who are continuously structuring their daily lives in relation to the institution's texts. This is what she refers to as institutional discourse. Instead, to view texts as active, she introduces the concept of text-reader conversations. Text-reader conversations differ in that they do recognize individuals as continuously engaging texts, such as university policies, and therefore, the text is in the present through the way individuals organize their actions accordingly (Smith, 2005). Therefore, "authorized policy is a form of governance…but one that is constantly negotiated and reorganized in the ongoing flow of institutional life" (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 2). Through my project I sought to discover the text-reader conversations the

mothers participated in. The way in which the ruling relations work to shape the world can be seen through individuals' activities and implemented policies and practices, and that is why it is crucial to IE to investigate both. This allows the researcher to better understand the ruling relations' influence on people. In order to study the problematic and access the ruling relations, an ethnographer should begin with a standpoint.

Women's Standpoint Theory and Actualities

Women's standpoint theory, a primary component of IE, works from "people's everyday lives and experience" (Smith, 2005, p. 10) in order to discover the presence of the social. The particular experiences that standpoint seeks out are the actualities, which are visible actions observable through talk or text (Smith, 2005). With this approach, I positioned the mother as the "knower and creator of knowledge" (Smith, 2005, p. 11) and operated with the notion that informants can tell their stories the best. IE explores from the same world the individuals live in, rather than the abstract one people often speak in terms of. Aligned with this, I inquired "from where [they were] in [their] everyday lives" (Smith, 2005, p. 1), and through their stories, how their activities and experiences are organized through social relations became apparent. This is key to my research, because I wanted to allow the voices of women who are currently experiencing motherhood at the university and adhere daily to the policies and practices to initiate the research. Through the women sharing mundane activities they partake in, I examined how their internal and external doings interact with the policies and practices of the university and larger social structures. The women shared common experiences due to their gender, geographical location, employer, and various corresponding factors, but their professional and personal work also showed variances. Their stories, collectively, provided an entrance into revealing the impact of the university in mothers' lives.

Linking Actualities to Ruling Relations

IE takes the everyday experiences of the individuals and engages in an analysis that explores the ruling relations of the institution (Smith, 2005). It "may start by exploring the experience of those directly involved in the institutional setting, but they are not the objects of investigation. It is the aspects of the institutions relevant to the people's experience, not the people themselves, that constitute the object of inquiry" (Smith, 2005, p. 38). IE's main objective is to shed light on how people's ordinary activities are embedded in the institutions in which they operate, oftentimes against their own awareness (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). Therefore, while the standpoint of my project began with faculty mothers, the participants themselves were not the focus. Instead, my research objective was to discover the way in which mothers worked within the institution and were connected to the ruling relations. My goal was to examine how the university shaped the activities of faculty women and how faculty women shaped their own experiences as well. This parallels IE's focus on where the ruling relation's power influence and control, and attempts to extend "the knowledge of those [the participant] works with as well as the knowledge of others similarly in institutional regimes," (Smith, 2005, p. 42). Smith's approach coincides well with Anthony Giddens' (1984) work, emphasizing the relationship between structures and individuals, which I turn to next.

Exercising Autonomy

Despite the ruling relations seen as a domineering force, Smith acknowledges the power individuals have, saying, "their capacities to act derive from the organizations and social relations that they both produce and are produced by" (Smith, 2005, p. 18). It "is not a one-way relationship as people have agency and, although ruling relations attempt to generalize their lives, people do not passively accept dominant discourses," (Taber, 2010, p. 10). This project's framework was then further developed by focusing on the work of Anthony Giddens (1984) and his conception of the

duality of structure and agency. Giddens supports IE through emphasizing the power of the individual and their autonomy.

The lens Giddens (1984) provides is best understood through his theory of structuration. By looking at Giddens' theory with its components of structure and agency, one can further see how the framework corresponds with institutional ethnography to explore faculty mothers' experiences. By incorporating structuration theory into my project, I could focus on the individuals' abilities to shape their experiences through agency, while at the same time recognizing the institution's influence, which is the structural. Giddens theory of structuration is a highly interactive theory that emphasizes the ongoing relationship between agents and structures.

Structuration Theory

Structuration theory (ST), developed by Anthony Giddens in 1984, helps bridge together individuals and structures. "The basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of societal totality, but social practices ordered across time and space" (Giddens, 1993, p. 89). A driving component of the theory is the dualistic relationship between structures and agents. He suggests that the "structural properties of social systems are both the medium and the outcome" (Giddens, 1993, p. 122) of the practices carried out by individuals in that system. Although it is acknowledged that social structures and institutions heavily influence the way individuals act, the concept also highlights the ability of individuals to act purposefully, negotiating their actions as they go. This represents a "mutual dependence of structure and agency," (Giddens, 1993, p. 122), as structures serve as both an enabling and restraining force for the people within them (Lemert, 2004). In regard to female faculty with children, this may be observed through the way in which faculty members adhere to institutional policies or departmental practices, while at the same time the individual has the ability to interpret what those policies mean, and furthermore, negotiate how they will respond through

action. This process begins to get at the way policy, or the structural, turns into practice, or the "way individuals, and groups, engage in situated behaviors that are both constrained and enabled by existing structures" (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 3). Through policies and practice we see where the structural takes form and how it is incorporated into the actions of people's everyday activities. This represents a two-sided dependency, the faculty member maintains the policy at hand through her actions, while also expressing agency through the way she interprets and acts, therefore influencing her own experiences as well.

Structures and Social Systems

Giddens (1984), like Smith (2005), also focuses on the way in which individuals work within smaller realms, which are influenced by overarching structures. He states that "'structure' is regarded as rules and resources recursively implicated in social reproduction" (Giddens, 1984, p. xxxi). This coincides with Smith's focus on the ruling relations which influence across time and space, constantly organizing individuals' actions. The realms that individuals participate in, which are influenced by ruling relations, are referred to as social systems (Giddens, 1984)—most generally work and family. These social systems place demands, whether written rules or informal practices of the larger structure they exist within, that often can overlap and even contradict. In today's society, we regularly hear of issues occurring while maintaining the systems of work and family, most commonly referred to as work-life balance. This could be represented through the participants working during evening and weekend hours, as they may be opting out of time spent with the family. The following week, however, it may be flipped, with the family prioritized over the mother's work. While it is unlikely that any one social system will have our complete obedience to its demands, individuals do struggle with managing the interactions. However, Giddens makes note that institutions and social systems "do not just work 'behind the backs' of the social actors who produce and reproduce them" (Giddens, 1993, p. 124). This framework worked well with the emphasis Smith

has on the value of people's everyday lives in relation to institutions. My goal was to stay focused on mothers as agents working within the university, as they made decisions in correspondence to the institutional demands. I aimed to draw out their voices and experiences to provide greater understanding of how the university functioned from their particular standpoint, as well as how the institution influenced other aspects of their lives, such as family life.

Agents and Their Autonomy

Giddens' (1984) concept of agents represents the individuals making up institutions. Agents are seen as having choice within institutions through exercising their autonomy, which is their potential to consciously participate in activities, or otherwise, refrain from doing so. Giddens directs researchers to look at essentially the only place structural properties can be observed, stating that "structures are never observed in themselves" they should instead be observed "in what people say about their actions" (Lemert, 2004, p. 151). He acknowledges the voices of those individuals involved as Smith does through her focus on actualities. The way in which people put into words their local involvement as well as others interacting across distance "is the only reliable way one has to know the virtual reality of structures" (Lemert, 2004, p. 152).

Using Giddens' (1993) perspective, I entered this research under the assumption that the mothers have the ability to negotiate within the social systems they exist. "According to the notion of the duality of structure, rules and resources are drawn upon by actors in the production of interaction, but are thereby also reconstituted through social interaction" (p. 123). From this viewpoint it could be conceived that faculty members pull from knowledge which is already accessible to them, but that the decision to do so occurs in the present, and although the past influences the present, the present is still "open to the free initiative of human actors" (Giddens, 1993, p. 123). In essence, Giddens aided my framework through addressing that all agents have

some degree of penetration in the social structures, institutions, or systems if they choose to do so (Giddens, 1993).

Agents and Reflexivity

When agents are negotiating their relationship with the structures they work within, they take into consideration their agency. This practice played an important role in my study, as I aimed to understand how the faculty women reflected upon their sense of self. The concept of reflexivity is elaborated on through the work of Alvin Gouldner (1970) as he focuses on the way individuals attempt to understand themselves and their world. He places emphasis on the reflexive process as a way of enhancing self-awareness, and ultimately, accessing our sense of agency that Giddens speaks to. My project focused on the women's voices through participant reflexivity in a way that encouraged reflection of the activities they participate in, as well as how the activities contributed to their perceptions of self. This was prevalent as the women performed their role as mothers and their role as faculty members while referencing deeply engrained expectations surrounding both systems. In turn, through reflection, I could further recognize their feelings about themselves and their success both at home and at work. This gave the faculty women an opportunity to put into question the way they were influenced by the social, and how it contributed to the meanings they created for themselves as mothers and faculty women.

The sense of self they had in their relationship with these structures consequently impacted their position as agents, which influenced their intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions. This led me to focus particularly on the work of Brené Brown (2006, 2007, 2012) in the following section. She contributed to my project's framework by focusing on how the mothers' sense of self, their intrapersonal, enters into interpersonal contexts, affecting their actions and connections with others.

Shaping Agency

Because I asked questions about the way mothers acted as agents in their work and family/home lives, it was important to discuss the ways in which people's own personal experiences can shape their sense of agency. Brown's (2006) theory of shame resilience (SRT), with a focus on her work with a wholehearted living and perfectionism, provides a lens into understanding how one's struggle with perfectionism shapes one's agency, in relation to both motherhood and the university.

Shame and Perfectionism

During Brown's time at the University of Houston, she spent a decade studying negative self-evaluations as a result of what she conceptualizes as shame. From her research, she defines shame as "an intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging" (Brown, 2006, p. 45). Shame can often be confused with guilt. Whereas guilt is "a feeling that results from behaving in a flawed or bad way," this differs from the feelings of a "flawed or bad self" (Brown, 2006, p. 45), as shame is. Closely connected to the experience of shame is perfectionism—a constant comparison to an unrealistic ideal. Brown (2012) more clearly explains perfectionism by emphasizing her concept of the "never-enough problem" (p. 24) that exists in our society—thoughts of being never good enough, never perfect enough, and so on. Shame, like perfectionism, is something that arises for all individuals at times. Brown acknowledges that "scenarios, experience, and expectations that lead to shame appear to be as individual and different as women, their relationships, and their cultures" (p. 46). Oftentimes, the feelings can come and go for individuals experiencing them, making shame, and similarly one's battle with perfectionism, confusing and sometimes difficult to recognize. Brown's work helps me to understand how faculty mother's experiences did or did not develop a sense of agency as they engaged with the world around them.

Brown's theoretical work motivated me to focus on the intrapersonal conversations faculty mothers experienced while negotiating their role as a mother and as a faculty member, and how the internal conversations influenced their interpersonal contexts as well. Her perspective takes into consideration the power Smith and Giddens speak of through structures and the ruling relations, and how these entities can influence the way mothers negotiate their sense of self, as well as how their sense of self can influence their interactions with others. Brown recognizes that shame can arise in the workplace as a management tool (Brown, 2012). When shaming is used as a form of power, it often leads to individuals becoming disengaged and fearful. They may become reluctant to ask for the help they need, as doing so leads to being vulnerable, and they may feel intense pressure about their evaluation. That is, they lose connection with agency and the ability to act effectively within the institution. In a competitive environment like the university, this can become a disabling issue. "When failure is not an option we can forget about learning, creativity, and innovation" (Brown, 2012, p. 15). This directed my interest in understanding how faculty women interacted with the university and their particular departmental culture, and whether they experienced feelings of apprehension. I aimed to recognize the possible social influence of shame and perfectionism, and to further access the governance occurring within the institution.

Instances of shame and perfectionism can also reveal themselves in the midst of individuals working towards societal expectations—particularly in relation to parenting. "When it comes to parenting, the practice of framing mothers and fathers as good or bad is both rampant and corrosive—it turns parenting into a shame minefield" (Brown, 2012, p. 15). I, too, was mindful of the ways in which faculty women strived to be good mothers while comparing their practices to the parenting expectations in society.

Shame Resilience and Wholehearted Living

Brown (2012) acknowledges the work individuals participate in, or can participate in, to be shame resilient. This work can be similarly tied to combating perfectionism. Specifically, Brown introduces the elements to becoming resilient to shame: recognizing shame and understanding its triggers, practicing critical awareness, reaching out, and speaking shame (Brown). The cultivation of wholeheartedness becomes an important factor in developing shame resilience. What is central to practicing wholehearted living is tapping into courage, compassion, and connection (Brown, 2010). Brown (2010) defines courage as, "speaking honestly and openly about who we are, about what we're feeling, and about our experiences (good and bad)" (p. 12-13), which essentially leads to connection with others. She then asserts that acceptance is ultimately the heart of compassion, and that "the better we are at accepting ourselves and others, the more compassionate we become" (p. 17).

Wholehearted living, for Brown, consists of 10 guideposts, which are listed below:

1. Cultivating Authenticity: Letting Go of What People Think
2. Cultivating Self-Compassion: Letting Go of Perfectionism
3. Cultivating a Resilient Spirit: Letting Go of Numbing and Powerlessness
4. Cultivating Gratitude and Joy: Letting Go of Scarcity and Fear of the Dark
5. Cultivating Intuition and Trusting Faith: Letting Go of the Need for Certainty
6. Cultivating Creativity: Letting Go of Comparison
7. Cultivating Play and Rest: Letting Go of Exhaustion as a Status Symbol and Productivity as Self-Worth
8. Cultivating Calm and Stillness: Letting Go of Anxiety as a Lifestyle
9. Cultivating Meaningful Work: Letting Go of Self-Doubt and "Supposed To"
10. Cultivating Laughter, Song, and Dance: Letting Go of Being Cool and "Always in Control"

Particularly for this project, I rely upon the first 3 guideposts: entail cultivating authenticity, self-compassion, and a resilient spirit. Brown defines authenticity as "the daily practice of letting go of who we think we're supposed to be and embracing who we are" (p. 50). This includes becoming comfortable with imperfection, and, aligning with the second guidepost of self-compassion, believing that "we're doing the best we can" (p. 59). Being resilient, then, is the ability to overcome adversity, which is built from the foundation of practicing critical awareness and having hope (Brown, 2010).

Focusing on shame resilience and wholehearted living, I desired to discuss if, and how, faculty women recognized shame (or their battles with perfectionism) in their lives, and further, to understand specifically what the triggers were. To move beyond where and when shame or battles with perfectionism occurred for participants, I also sought to understand if, and how, the mothers reflected upon their emotions through the practice of critical awareness. Through this reflection, the mothers were able to further speak to the relationship between themselves and the institution, and the sense of agency they had. Finally, I wanted to understand if the women had connections with others that allowed for them to reach out and speak about their struggles with shame and/or perfectionism to others.

Brown's work on shame contributed to my framework in a way that did not lead a particular direction of the project. Instead, shame resilience theory provided a way of better understanding what challenging emotions can follow the work of attaining balance while managing demanding roles, as well as recognizing the ways in which faculty mothers are resilient to shame and perfectionism. It was important to understand how they negotiated their sense of self while negotiating their activities as mothers and faculty women.

Through my use of institutional ethnography and my focus on shaping agency, I tied the institution to the intra/interpersonal. By this I mean that I sought to understand how the institutions

shaped the way individuals within it thought, which then influenced their interactions with others. This further enabled me to understand the impact the university had on the mothers and their everyday activities, as well as how the mothers actively engaged in the construction of their activities through navigating a path, particularly within the institution. This two-way influence between the institution and the individuals represents Giddens' (1984) concept of structuration. In the following chapter I outline how these theoretical focuses influenced my methodological choices.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

In order to best answer my research questions, I interviewed 15 faculty mothers, discussing the unique challenges they face with a focus on formal policy and informal governance, the way they manage their work and family/home lives, and how their experiences influence how they understand themselves. In this chapter, I explain the overall design of my project's methodologies. Specifically, I introduce the women who participated in this study and explain the groundwork of my interviews. Then, I explain the reason for additional textual resources I turned to for support. Finally, I provide my analysis process. I incorporate institutional ethnography (IE) to ground some of the methodological choices.

Research Design

In this project, I took an approach in which my position as the researcher represented that of a traveler rather than a miner. Instead of working towards a process of knowledge collection, as a miner might do, I took an active role as a traveler in the process of knowledge creation with the participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This project mentality could be depicted through a map. The way in which a traveler navigates a map resembles the way in which I, as a researcher, engaged individuals and their experiences, which led me in various directions. The project's methods allowed for variations "with the assumption that what is important reality is what people perceive it to be" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 26), and I debarked on a journey of "discovery rather than verification" (Luker, 2008, p. 37).

As previously noted, institutional ethnography (IE) informed this project both theoretically, as described in the previous chapter, and methodologically. IE is research that seeks to inquire and discover rather than test hypotheses (Smith, 2005), therefore lending itself well to the principles of exploratory qualitative work. Smith states that the project of inquiry should begin "in the local actualities of people's lives" (p. 25) who are "involved in the institutional process" (p. 31), and that

"the institutional regime they confront [sh]ould be explored from their perspective" (p. 31). The participants' perspectives and experiences essentially shaped the direction of my investigation, as IE projects remain flexible during the data collection and analysis process. Although aspects of the project's structure or direction were ambiguous at times, it was important to realize that it was part of the method. As Smith said, "You aren't able to previsage what it is you are going to do, or what you are going to discover. Isn't stumbling around integral to the process?" (Smith, 2006, p. 46, 47). Hence, both my personal position and textual data contributed to this project, but ultimately, the participants themselves are the ones who led the enterprise.

I approached the project with the understanding that I cannot accurately explain reality, but can, however, access the participants' constructed actualities through their communication, interaction, and practices (Tracy, 2013). This is in line with what Smith (2005) refers to as women's standpoint (p. 10). As an alternative to traditional sociology in which the subject is objectified, Smith expands on standpoint theory providing us with a "sociology for women" (p. 10), or women's standpoint. Women's standpoint is a "methodological starting point in the local particularities of bodily existence" (Smith, 2005 p. 228), which establishes a subjective position to begin research through actualities. Smith further explains that:

> By pulling mind back into body, phenomenon of mind and discourse—ideology, beliefs, concepts, theory, ideas and so on—are recognized as themselves the doings of actual people situated in particular local sites at particular times. They are no longer treated as if they were essentially inside people's heads. They become observable insofar as they are produced in language as talk and/or text. Discourse itself is among people's doings; it is of the actualities of people's lives; it organizes relations among people; and while it speaks of and from and in people's activities, it does not exhaust them (p. 25).

Through taking up women's standpoint and finding the connections between the local "discovered in the articulations of people's everyday activities" (Smith, 2005, p. 37), I began to make visible the extended social relations. With the flexibility allotted by IE, I did not limit myself to the subjects

who participate in the ruling relations, but also incorporated documents in my endeavor to map the textually mediated social relations.

University Context

Although my project only examined one mid-sized, Midwestern university, IE acknowledges that the findings of one study can serve as an entrance point to discovering how similar findings can be connected elsewhere. I did not seek to generalize experiences, but instead aimed to contribute to a map of how the ruling relations govern similar institutions through similar processes. With this perception, I now provide context about my current study's institution, so parallels can be drawn, or differences acknowledged.

The studied university is a tier one research focused institution, which as of 2014 employed 617 full-time faculty positions (NDSU website). In 2008 the male to female faculty ratio was 74% to 26% (ND State Data Center, 2010). Current research revealed that of the university's women tenure-line faculty, 44% held assistant positions, 30% held associate positions, and 11% held full positions (NDSU FORWARD, 2011-2012). These numbers indicate a fairly steady increase for women in higher ranked positions, although, the university's percentage of tenured female faculty was the second lowest nationwide (West & Curtis, 2006).

The studied university does continue to be challenged by female retention. In a 2008 study, 47% of women respondents were not satisfied with the way they balanced their professional and personal lives, with just over 46% at some point considering leaving the university to find better balance elsewhere (ND State Data Center, 2010). Additionally, 45% of female respondents felt their department had not identified ways to enhance the climate for women, with 36% reporting feeling isolated within their department. Finally, 25% of women participants felt faculty who had children were considered to be less committed to their career, and overall, women were more likely than men to report feeling fatigued, stressed, nervous, depressed, and short-tempered quite often (ND State

Data Center, 2010). This information helps in recognizing where my study contributes to the ongoing conversations at the university. By providing the voice of mothers and their experiences through this research, it may be of value while working towards a solution to retention, as well as the further promotion of work-life balance.

Participants

The participants for my project consisted of women who had given birth to one or more children within the past 12 years and who, with one exception, were currently serving as a tenure or tenure tracked faculty member at North Dakota State University (NDSU). As studies have shown, faculty members with a child under the age of 12 spend roughly "30 hours a week on childcare than those without a child under 12" (Misra, et al., 2012, p. 312). Holding this prerequisite allowed me to speak with mothers who experienced earlier years of motherhood during a time when few formal policies were in place, as well as recent mothers who have utilized current policies. A total of 15 women participated in the study. Collectively, I was able to reach theoretical saturation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), and the women's experiences served as the actualities I used to access the ruling relations, in order to better understand the unique challenges faculty mothers face while navigating the university.

The women's demographic information can be reviewed in Table 1 below. Pseudonyms are used in place of the participants' actual names to protect the women's identities. Additional demographic information was collected, including age, college, and race/ethnicity, although not included in the table in order to maintain the confidentiality of the participants. Altogether the women were representative of the university, as a participant from each of the university's colleges partook in the study. The women's ages ranged from 33 to 54 and both Caucasian and Asian ethnicities were identified.

Table 1.
Participant Demographics.

Name	Tenured/Tenure-Tracked	Marital Status	Number of Children
Kelly	Tenure-Tracked	Married	1
Nancy	Tenure-Tracked	Married	1
Jessica	Tenure-Tracked	Married	2
Haley	Tenure-Tracked	Divorced	1
Laura	Tenure-Tracked	Divorced	3
Kaitlin	Tenured	Divorced	3
Karey	Tenured	Married	2
Erin	Tenured	Married	2
Amy	Tenured	Married	3
Katie	Practitioner	Married	2
Cathy	Tenured	Married	1
Becca	Tenured	Married	5
Abby	Tenure-Tracked	Married	3
Andrea	Tenured	Married	2
Whitney	Tenure-Tracked	Married	1

Data Collection

My data collection process included two components: in-depth interviews and textual documents. I conducted ten in-depth interviews, referenced transcript documents of data I previously collected from five participants, and referenced four policy documents. The transcript documents comprised of data previously collected through three one-on-one interviews and one focus group with two participants during the spring of 2014.[1] The ten in-depth interviews were conducted during the spring of 2015. Finally, the four referenced policy documents were policies

[1] The data from my spring 2014 preliminary project consisted of five interviews and one Facebook group in which two women shared perceptions and interacted, for a total of seven participants. Due to one woman not fitting the criteria of my current project (faculty member with child(ren) under the age of 12), and another having a conflict of interest, their transcripts have been removed.

that were regularly discussed by women throughout both data collections. I further outline these components of my data collection below.

Interviews

In-depth interviews proved to be a fruitful method for gathering the women's actualities, and served as the majority of my data. Beginning from the women's experiences fell in line with institutional ethnography (IE) since the women are the key hole into the social relations that IE wishes to shine light upon (Weigt, 2006). Potential participants were sought out through directed emails to qualifying faculty in order to access a purposeful sample from across all colleges on campus. Dr. Christina Weber provided support in the process of selecting a representative sample. I reached out to each of the women via e-mail, as provided in Appendix A, to request their participation in my study. For those of whom were interested, I worked with their availability to set up an in person interview.

The interviews took place face-to-face in a quiet, secure location agreed upon by the participant and myself. Upon arrival, the faculty mother completed the consent form (see Appendix B), including reading the cover letter, which explained the purpose of the study to the participant. The mothers also provided demographic information on a questionnaire I created in order to compare and contrast during analysis and in the research report (see Appendix C). This included reporting their number of children and whether they were tenured or tenure-tracked.

All interviews were audio recorded, and lasted between 45 to 120 minutes as I moved through the open-ended prompts on my question guide (see Appendix D). The interview questions were influenced by the interviews I conducted in my preliminary project and this project's more focused research questions. The guide began by exploring the challenges faculty mothers face while negotiating between their role as a mother and their work as a faculty member. To access these

narratives, I focused on their responsibilities both at work and the home, as well as the support they received in each context.

The second portion of my interview guide focused on the structures the women engage with, particularly university policy and governance, including informal practices that guide their day-to-day lives on campus. I began by exploring what policies the women have utilized, and followed-up with reflecting on how the process went for them. I also included prompts about the mothers' tenure path, if they decided to extend their tenure clock, and their reasons for that choice. Also, to better understand the agency the faculty women experience, I focused on times they have felt most empowered within the institution. These questions helped me access their experience with structural policies and practices, and how they managed their agency.

I intended for the interview to be conversational in nature, in order to respond contextually to each woman's story, using the interview guide simply as a map (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). As Luker (2008) suggests, "all too often the social is invisible to [the research participants]" (p. 34), but with my particularly designed questions encouraging deeper reflection from the participants, I hoped to shed light on the invisibilities. This allowed for further awareness of how the women's activities are organized by the social. It is also important to note that some participants were more articulate than others, and therefore more clearly represented the findings of this project. This has resulted in a few participants less frequently referenced throughout the analysis chapter.

Textual Documents

Both transcript documents and policy documents served as texts I referenced as secondary data. The two forms' contributions to this project are clarified below.

Transcripts

The transcript documents I referenced, which consisted of data I previously collected through three one-on-one interviews and a focus group with two participants, were foundational to

my current project. As mentioned throughout both chapters thus far, the findings from my preliminary study contributed to this project by helping me shape a more focused problematic and research questions, as well as by helping me create interview questions to best answer the research questions. In addition, I included the transcript documents as data during my current project's analysis.

The data collection process during the spring of 2014 was similar to this current project's data collection, with the exception of a focus group conducted online. The three interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and were transcribed immediately following, and the online focus group included two participants interacting with one another and myself over a period of one week. Open-ended questions were responded to in both settings, and revolved around discovering the unique challenges faculty mothers face. The initial findings lent themselves to creating this project's more focused research questions. Because the initial data included discussions surrounding formal policy, informal governance, and the negotiations that occurred between their work and family/home lives, it was decided that I would include the transcripts as data to be analyzed for this project. The transcripts ultimately serve as a factor in triangulating my current project's findings.

Policy

As Smith states (2005), "knowledge is socially organized; its characteristic textual forms bear and replicate social relations (p. 27), ultimately contributing to the institution's discourse. Through understanding the key policies and practices the mothers engaged with and adhered to, the ruling relations became more accessible. Here, I revisit the concept of the mother's text-reader conversations, consisting of "interchange[s] between a reader's activat[ion] of [a] text and [their] responses to it" (Smith, 2005, p. 228), to understand the ruling relations governance. The individual's actions are an example of how conversations with texts are "integral to the ways in which institutional discourses regulate people's local activities" (Smith, 2005, p. 105), highlighting

how actualities replicate the institutional. Through the women's discussions of activities, it was apparent how the texts of the university were not inert, but rather in action, as they continuously worked to replicate the university's relations. While reviewing the various texts circulating the institution and organizing the actions of people, I better understood intertextualities as well, which views texts as interdependent (Smith, 2005). Understanding how particular texts influence others aided in mapping the flow of governance within the university.

My interview guide, including questions on which policies the mothers have either utilized or are aware of, initiated conversations about the university's texts, directing me to the key documents to examine. My lack of knowledge regarding university policies and practices was beneficial, allowing the participants to lead me to the ones they found most influential. These policies included Childbearing Leave, Modified Duties, and the Extension of Probationary Period. I discussed with the participants how they accessed these policies, and how the policies organized their activities. Later, I took the opportunity to view the key policies they discussed as a part of my analysis. Childbearing Leave and Modified Duties deal with the actual experience of pregnancy and post-partum acclimation, while the Extension of Probationary Period—more commonly referred to as tenure clock extension—is related to this process as well, as it helps in supporting new families seeking balance between their work and family/home lives. Further details of these policies can be reviewed in Appendix E and F. The interviews and textual documents were integrated to best allow me to access the ruling relations of the university.

Analysis

Following each interview, I took time to memo my initial impressions of the interview in a research diary as suggested by Gibbs (2007). This helped capture emotions that occurred during the interviews, which otherwise may have not been recognized while reviewing the audio recording. Following this, I immediately transcribed the interview's audio recording. Pseudonyms were assigned

to each faculty mother to ensure anonymity on the transcriptions and in the research report. A list connecting subjects' names to the assigned pseudonym was stored with the original data in case a participant desires to have their information removed from the study. The informed consent provided to the women prior to the data collection gave them the right to request removal.

My first stage analysis began by reviewing all transcripts and working towards recognizing themes in the data. Emergent themes initially helped in organizing reoccurring policies, experiences, and/or feelings the women discussed during the interviews. In addition to the interviews conducted, I relied on the preliminary data I collected as a source contributing to the findings of my current study. I often reminded myself that the findings were not in the intricacies of the participants' stories, but rather in the overarching themes that emerged from the various stories regarding similar experiences. This required that I did not engage in micro-coding, such as coding line by line or making a list of several new codes, but rather in a macro analytical approach, where I pulled out the big ideas and processes the women spoke about. As I worked through the transcripts I engaged in an iterative process to integrate the themes with textual documents referenced by the mothers. These included policies on childbearing leave and tenure clock extension. Additionally, I often referred back to already reviewed transcripts to compare and contrast between the new findings in the transcripts that followed. Between the interviews conducted, the preliminary transcripts, and the textual documents, I was able to triangulate my initial findings.

My second stage of analysis included IE's practice of mapping in order to work through the ways individuals interact with university structures. This practice took into account both the work of individuals as well as the texts they referenced in order to chart the processes and actions of the institution (Smith, 2006). Mapping is an essential fundament of IE that enables the researcher to examine how individuals and their subjectivities are continuously coordinated and influenced. As Smith states (2006), "the focus of the research is always the institutional" (p. 140), but the researcher

does so by working from the ground up, the basis consisting of the people's actions and the texts influencing their actions. Like an actual map, this practice "aims at discovering the different kinds of work from different sites as well as how they are coordinated to create just those institutional processes that the research problematic located for investigation" (Smith, 2005, p. 43). As the researcher, I took individual experiences and connected them to the structural by making note of similar referenced texts, common language, and similar practices, incorporating these findings into a map. Through beginning with individuals' actualities, the way in which subjects coordinate themselves, and the way in which texts contribute to the coordination, the institution's influence on the subjects' performance began to unveil.

CHAPTER 4. THE JUGGLE STRUGGLE: STORIES OF NEGOTIATING AGENCY

Introduction

I began this thesis by acknowledging the balancing act faculty members partake in while seeking a successful career and a happy home life. I had a particular interest in discovering the unique challenges women faculty with young children face and how this impacts the way they do their negotiation work. The women who participated in this study graciously offered up their time and personal stories, allowing me to better understand their experiences as mothers who are actively navigating their work and family lives. Throughout this chapter, I address my research questions through examining the women's responses during the interviews I conducted. The research questions include:

1. How do women faculty with children engage with university structures?
    a. In particular, how do these women engage with university policy and practice in their day-to-day experiences at the university?
2. How do women faculty with children negotiate between their experiences as mothers and faculty members?
    a. Additionally, how do the women negotiate their sense of self through their experiences as faculty mothers?

To answer these questions, I analyzed the data, establishing four areas of focus. These areas of focus include (1) formal policy, (2) informal governance, (3) tensions between work and family/home life, and (4) agency and the institution. The chapter is set up in a way that each area of focus is introduced with its main themes bolded thereafter. I use the participants' voices to support the emergent themes. The sections and various subsections more clearly define how or when the themes arose, and I make connections to my project's theoretical framework. This includes exposing the impact of the ruling relations, acknowledging the dialectic relationship between agents and

structures, and addressing how one's sense of agency impacts interpersonal interactions. Below I chart the chapter outline, providing an overview of the themes and subthemes.

Table 2.
Chapter Outline.

Formal Policy

- Vulnerability with Maternity Leave
    i. At the Whim of the Chair
    ii. Differing Levels of Responsibility to Plan a Leave
    iii. Leaves Lack Standard
- Anxiety over Utilizing the Tenure Clock Extension
    i. Influence of Perceived Judgment or Support

Informal Governance

- The Role of a Tension-Filled or Supportive Departmental Climate
    i. Supportive or Unwelcoming Leadership
    ii. Colleague Demographics
        a. Mommy Cohorts

Tension between Work and Family/Home Life

- The Myth of Flexibility
    i. Friction with Cutting Off the Formal Work-Day
    ii. Mommy Drop-Off
    iii. Summer-Work Blues

Agency and the Institution

- The Struggle to Find Agency
    i. Lack of Presence
- Being Enough to Find Agency and Live Wholeheartedly
- Agency within the University

Although the majority of data for this project was collected through one-on-one interviews, institutional ethnography does not focus on individual stories. Instead, IE aims to discover how an institution functions, but does so from the bottom-up. Bottom-up philosophy is unique as it "offers a different and promising approach that emphasizes the involvement of diverse actors from different sociocultural contexts" (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 140). In this case, I relied additionally upon textual policy as well as the interviews to collectively provide an entrance into the university.

Together these data sources allow me to better comprehend how North Dakota State University engages and influences the mothers who work there. Only through the women's actualities do we begin to grasp their standpoint of the institution they work within. As Smith wrote, IE "is a method of inquiry into the social that proposes to enlarge the scope of what becomes visible from that site, mapping the relations that connect one local site to others" (2005, p. 29). Smith's work helps me recognize and draw forth the processes surrounding family-friendly policies established at the institution, and the influence of departmental climates through the women's differing actualities.

While the project's themes represent the participants collectively, because of my specific focus on the challenges the women faced, some participants' stories are included more frequently. However, it is central to understand that "no one story overrides; no story is suppressed (though not all stories will be told, and of that are, not all can be cited), it is finding their articulations and assembling them" (Smith, 2005, p. 143). With this, the women's stories chosen to be shared below are not the only stories that were told, but through thorough analysis, prove to represent the theme of the differing leave experiences appropriately.

The formal policy and informal governance sections represent the negation work that takes place between the mother and institutional policies and practices. The lack of standard amongst the women's experiences is noted, as well as the participants' differing levels of anxiety, ultimately instigated by the ruling relations. The third area of focus, tensions between work and family/home life, represents the negotiating the women do while working within their work and family systems, focusing on the sacrifices and spillover occurring within both realms of their lives. Finally, the fourth area of focus, agency and the institution, portrays the negotiations of the self that occur as the women work to make sense of who they are. This stems from the participants making sense of their experiences between formal policy, informal governance, and the tensions that arise between their work and family/home lives, and involves the women occasionally struggling with harsh evaluations

in result. How these negotiations enter into the social context is also acknowledged, recognizing the implications the women's self-evaluations have interpersonally. To visually represent the way in which these pieces tie together, I have developed a thematic map located below to outline the chapter. The three boxes in the middle represent the women's experiences with the three realms I focused on for this study: formal policy, informal governance, and their experiences with balancing their work and family/home lives. These experiences, as mentioned above, impact the way the mothers understand themselves, particularly in regard to their roles as faculty members and mothers. In turn, how the women understand themselves influences the ways in which they engage with their workplaces and their families. Ultimately, the flow of Figure 1 represents the concept of structuration, with an interactive relationship between structure and agent, and how the women's choices are shaped by societal structures and institutions, while the women also worked to affect their own experiences within the institution.

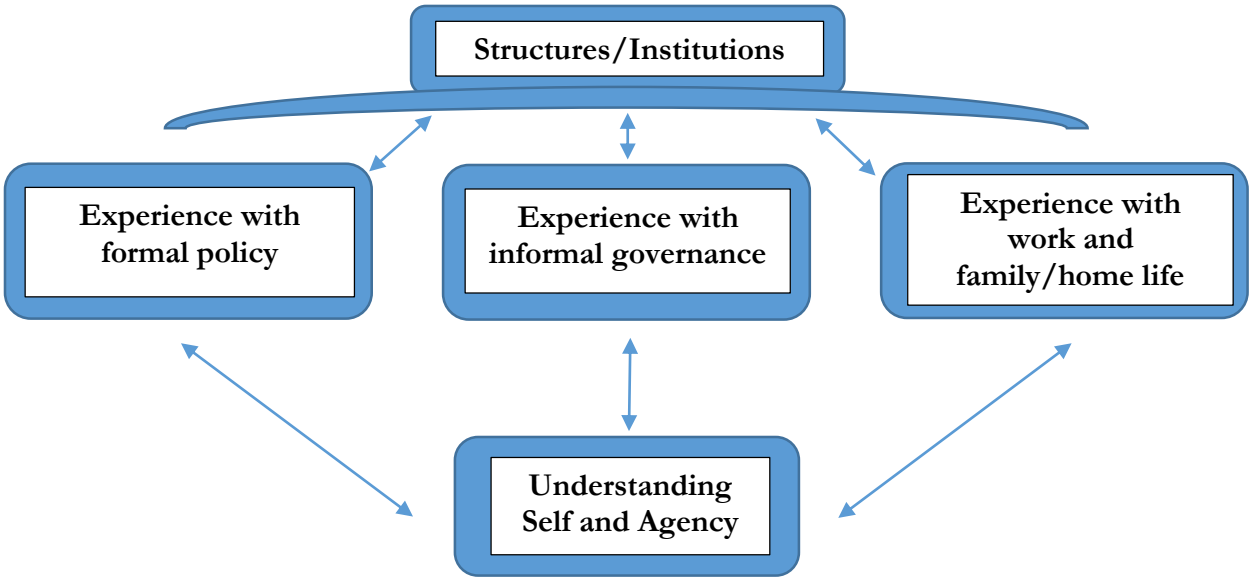

Figure 1. Thematic Map of the Structuration Process. A map of this study's main findings.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, maps are foundational to the work of IE as the ethnographer aims to chart the flow of institutional processes and its influence on individuals. This

chapter includes three maps, with the remaining two introduced in the following section. I relied on all three maps throughout my analysis, as they help with visualizing the way in which institutional policy and governance interacts with and influences the participants.

Formal Policy

> Even though programs and universities say they have all of these pro-family, pro-female stuff, really what they are looking for is the people who are going to be the most productive and are going to be able to dedicate their souls and lives to the university and who are going to be able to publish. Mommies are not perceived as being those people. Mommies are perceived as the people who are going to need an extra year. (Laura)

Institutional policy was a specific focus I had going into the interviews. I was particularly interested in the policies the women utilized and the practices that surrounded those policies. The quote above begins to highlight the female/parent-specific policies universities have developed which are meant to provide mothers with time as they either grow and/or care for their families and themselves. However, as the participant continued, being a mother may activate underlying assumptions, and so may utilizing female/parent-friendly policies. The quote represents the power of perceptions and their ability to often create fear, anger, or insecurities. Although policies may be physically present in policy manuals and seemingly accessible, there are various unwritten processes and implications that surround them. This influences the individuals' experience with policy, including the individuals' decision to utilize policy or not. Negotiation with formal policy was a common discussion by the participants and can be seen more clearly in how they negotiated maternity leave and tenure clock extension. I investigate these below.

Vulnerability with Childbearing Leave

In our interviews, the participants discussed how they informed the institution of their pregnancy, what their maternity leave experience looked like, and the maneuvering work they participated in. It was clear from the women's responses that negotiations were continuously taking

place, and that it was not only about policy but also about practice, as there appears to be a lack of standard process of accessing childbearing leave, which left the women feeling uncertain and at risk. The following section outlines the participants' actualities—their visible actions observable through talk or text (Smith, 2005)—pertaining to their experience with attaining a leave due to childbirth, and the vulnerability they faced.

As mentioned, I was interested in how the mothers accessed their leaves, so my interview guide specifically asked what route the women took to receive a leave due to childbirth (See Appendix D). Smith states, "noticing how people go about activating texts helps us to escape our experience of them as inert, enabling us to see them as embedded in social relations" (2005, p. 228). It also enhances the researcher's knowledge of the institution's hierarchy. In addition to understanding how they accessed their maternity leave, I was interested in how the women experienced the actual process and how they perceived the maneuvering work they took part in, particularly in regards to telling, planning, and taking their leaves. Understanding what path the women took to receive their leave highlights the social organization of the institution, revealing where power exists. Their feelings then surrounding the maneuvering work and their experience with negotiation ultimately represents their interaction with the ruling relations. I turn to the actualities the women provided to best understand these events.

The Childbearing Leave policy is represented in the university's online policy manual under section 320. This policy can be referenced in Appendix E, but will be summarized here to focus on its key language. As employees with full-time, less than 12-month appointments, all female faculty are entitled to six weeks paid leave during medical disability through childbearing leave policy. This leave relieves them from all duties for six weeks beginning from the delivery date. An extended paid leave (before or after the birth) is available if necessary, due to medical reasoning, although it requires further approval. Modified Duties—another policy related to Childbearing Leave—is also

available in Appendix E. This policy is related in that women utilized either one or the other in regard to attaining a leave for their childbirth. Modified duties is another policy faculty can utilize which allows them to remain at 100% workload and 100% salary while adjusting their work responsibilities, such as being released from teaching for up to the equivalent of a semester. Modified duties in relation to childbirth must conclude within 12 months of the child's birth date, and these duties are to be discussed with the department chair and approved by the dean.

At the Whim of the Chair

Although Childbearing Leave and Modified Duties are textually available online for the women, as I spoke with participants it became clear that they did not reference the texts while preparing for, or strategically planning, their pregnancy. Instead, women relied on discussions and negotiations with their chair, essentially leaving them vulnerable to what their specific department's practices were. This theme of vulnerability while attaining a leave emerged through my discussions with the women. One way that this theme emerged was through the lack of knowledge of policy that some of the women expressed. For example, Katie stated that she did not believe maternity leave was available to faculty on nine-month contracts. Jessica, a mother of two with awareness of a university policy, admitted, "To tell you the truth, I don't know the details of the policy." Every participant clearly articulated the same path taken to access leave policy, which was solely through their department chairs. While the policies remain university wide, Cathy acknowledged that "up to this point it has been what individual departments are willing, or able, to do," and Jessica mentioned that, in general, "a lot of how the policies get implemented is really up to the chairs."

It became clear through the women's stories that their experiences with accessing a leave and planning for their leaves varied, even if they all uniformly discussed their negotiations with the chair. The participants regularly acknowledged procedural differences between departments, and attributed this to each departments', and more specifically, the chairs', ability to implement the policies as they

deemed fit. Jessica explained the conforming ability the textual policy had within the particular departments.

> There's lots of policies on the books of the university that don't make any difference unless there are people there who want them to. They want to give people flexibility…but then you're kind of at the whim of the chair to work out an arrangement.

Although the university does have a policy in place, it is a document that relies on individuals—in this case, department chairs in conversation with the faculty member—to implement the policy in accordance to their context. The policy allows for individuals to make it their own, fitting into their own "schemes of interest, motivation, and action" (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 3), as noted in my theoretical framework chapter.

Smith (2005) further confirms, a "given text may be read differently at different times and by different people and in difference sequences of action" (p. 107). This was apparent through the stories the women shared of differing practices and processes amongst the departments surrounding childbirth leave. However, they understood their chairs as the path to accessing their leaves, essentially representing how the chairs brought the policy to life, as Smith (2005) discusses through her concept of text-reader conversations. Text-reader conversations focus on the process of bringing texts into action. For Smith, this is expressed through the example of an individual reading a text, like policy, then that text influencing the individual's behavior in correlation with what the text stated. Hence, bringing the text to life through individuals' activity. My data shows, however, that the participants engaged in what could be considered as second-hand text-reader conversations, because many of them were focused on the dialogues with the chair about policy or lack of policy, rather than the textual policy itself. The texts were underlying the discussions, but many of the women had not read the actual policy. This differs from Smith's conceptualization, but can be seen as expanding her definition, as this expansion takes into consideration that in some contexts people

are not directly working with physical texts. The map below represents the perceived course to access a leave, showing how the women engaged with and relied upon their department chairs to bring the policy into action, although alternative routes did exist as documented in the textual policies.

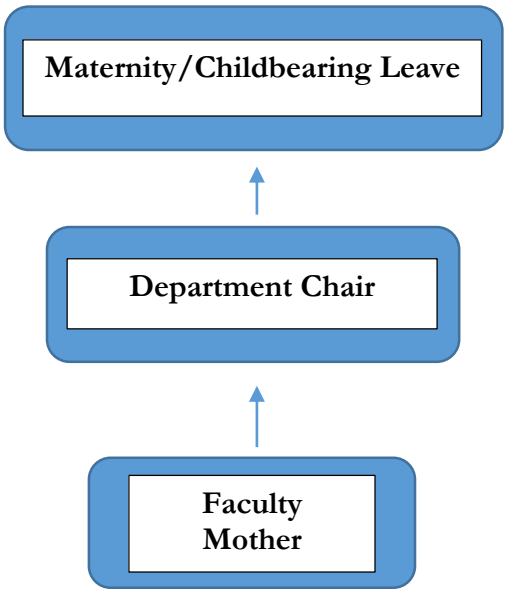

Figure 2. Map to Access Leave. The perceived lone course for a maternity leave.

Relying upon the chairs for a childbirth leave becomes problematic because the hierarchical administration prominent in the institution leads to an imbalance of power, or at least of perceived power, with the women viewing the chair as the one with control. Jessica further highlighted this in our discussion.

> That's a difficult dynamic because there's a huge power differential. A lot of women, and faculty members in general, feel very dedicated to their job, so taking time off—they already have difficulty with that, they have a difficulty asking for what they need and asking for even extra accommodations is really very difficult. The people who are having children are usually the younger faculty members, just demographically, and so they're new to the institution, they have no idea what's possible.

The women were left to figure out how to attain a leave while navigating this perception of power. This significantly contributed to the way the mothers then organized their actions aligning with their pregnancies and maternity leaves.

Seeing the department chair as the path to attaining a leave due to childbirth, the mothers then worked to organize their actions based on the knowledge they had. In some cases, what action needed to occur was rather simple, and took little external or internal negotiation, such as the mother sending an email to the chair, informing him of the dates she would be gone. This was true for Karey.

> I emailed [the chair] just informing [him] that I was going to be on maternity leave these dates, and he responded back with cc-ing the dean of the college saying, "Yes, we agreed to these dates, that works for everyone."

Others, however, participated in significant negotiation, as far as organizing their pregnancies to be more conducive to their work schedules, rather than placing the maneuvering work on the department, and more specifically, the chair. A few of the women decided to avoid these discussions and negotiations with their chairs altogether, and instead planned the timing of their pregnancies to occur at a time they already had off, such as summer, a holiday break, or a course release. This was what Jessica resorted to.

> I decided to have my child during a semester that I already had a course release as a part of my hiring package, and I was fortunate enough that I could plan. So basically I planned my pregnancy around my work schedule, which is not unusual.

While the participant did not have an explicit conversation with the chair in which this type of maneuvering was pushed upon her, the statement does represent how the ruling relations are far more than the exertion of power from one individual with authority to other individuals. Instead, the ruling relations prove to be deeply engrained in people and their day-to-day lives, influencing the way individuals organize their life activities. In this instance, it caused an individual to manipulate a life experience (pregnancy and childbirth), which is often assumed to be a natural (unplanned) part of social life.

As IE moves beyond only taking into consideration the ruling relations as individuals who have power, the ruling relations also can be found in circulating common knowledges that influence

individual's choices and actions. This point emerged in the stories the participants shared about fellow faculty and how those stories impacted their choices around pregnancy and a leave. For many, deciding how to navigate a pregnancy as a faculty member included gathering an understanding of how fellow female colleagues' handled their maternity leave and pregnancy experiences. The conversations with fellow faculty and witnessing their experiences, particularly with the chair of the department, could be considered third-hand text-reader conversations. While the textual maternity leave policy remained, other forms of dialogue took place outside of the physical text-reader conversations with policy. The participants sought out additional conversations to help them understand how the policy has been enacted in the past, therefore relying upon other sources to bring the policy to life. Smith (2005) acknowledges that "people plan, think, and feel; and what others are doing and what is going on is refracted by the perspective of the doer's activity" (p. 162). For Kelly, like Jessica, this also meant planning the timing of her pregnancy.

> I have always timed my babies to be born in the summer. I know that not all academics do that, but for me that just seemed easier. I would have two to three months without having to wrangle about it. It was sort of like, "Well, of course you can stop the clock for a year, but I can't give you any leave." I don't know if he ever came out and said that, it's just that he never offered it, and I never asked for it. I was like, "Okay, I'll have a good two months and that's more maternity leave than most people in this country get." Although that's not a very functional standard to compare it to. And I was new, it was my second year of teaching, I just thought—"if they're not going to offer it then I'm not going to push it." My coworker who had her baby in April wasn't nearly as okay with it, she pushed and she asked. And maybe that's also why I didn't ask because I knew she had been sort of pushing him on it about it and he wasn't giving, so it's like I'm going to try and keep some of my political capital and not push on this one.

This statement from Kelly shows the impact of seeing others' leave experiences, which for her, built up enough anxiety to alter her own course of action accordingly—by planning the timing of her pregnancy, and avoiding having to request a maternity leave at all. Whereas for Kelly, seeing others' experiences built up anxiety in a negative way, for Karey, seeing other colleagues' leave experiences was something that gave her a sense of comfort.

> Fortunately, for me, I was not the first female faculty in my department to have a baby, and the department head that was in place when the first [colleague] had her baby just two or three years before me, he was a firm believer in maternity leave and family time and he actually gave her 12 weeks paid without taking leave time. So that's not policy, it's not even standard practice. So, he did that, then there was one other [female] faculty who had [her baby] before me, and then I was the third. The department head who was in place when I had my baby, which was different than the one who had been head, he stuck with that and kept that part of the policy—12 weeks free and clear of duties persay.

This shows what impact the women's chairs had on each of their leave experiences, and the additional strategic work that was required for some.

Differing Levels of Responsibility to Plan a Leave

After discussing how the women attained a leave, we discussed the planning process of a leave. Participants shared with me how they gathered an understanding of what actions to take to move forward with planning, and the differences in what work was required of them became clear. I explore these differing levels of responsibility within the overarching theme of vulnerability.

To understand the amount of responsibility left to the women to plan their leaves, my interview guide included questions particularly about who planned how the mother's teaching responsibilities would be covered while she was on leave. For the women who experienced the least amount of anxiety over engaging their chairs, it also appeared they had the least amount of planning to do while preparing for their childbirth and what would occur after. Amy states nonchalantly, "I told the department chair because he needed to arrange for classes," and Nancy echoes a similar experience.

> When I realized I was pregnant I first told our department chair because it's about the teaching thing. I wanted to tell him much much earlier so he could manage it and make the teaching plans. He was very supportive.

These participants not only experienced little anxiety over telling their chairs about their pregnancies, but they also were not responsible for organizing how their courses would be covered after they gave birth. This was not a uniform process, however. For fellow participants, the responsibility for

planning also rested on their own shoulders. Karey explains that although her chair was willing to help plan how she could take a leave, he was not going to entirely do it for her.

> I went to my department head and told him the situation and when the due date was and when I would be taking off. He said, "Well, who do you want to teach your class?" And I didn't know, but he said I needed to come up with some ideas and then we'd sit down and figure it out. So he wasn't going to figure it out for me, but I kind of had to figure it out for myself.

She continued on to say the plan her and her chair configured to cover her course did end up working out, which she was thankful for.

Finally, some of the women experienced having to partake in extensive organization and planning in order for them to even take a leave. This was true for Erin as she recapped the moment she told her department chair she was pregnant.

> When I told my chair I was pregnant he was like, "Oh, great!" I was like, "So, what are we going to do?" And he just blinked at me. So I said, "Here is kind of what I was thinking," and my plan was not a plan at all.
>
> I [asked] a friend who had taught [my class] before, but she was in a different department, she herself was pre-tenure, she herself had four children. I asked her to cover for me so I could have a few weeks, and I ended up having like two weeks. I had a lot of problems with my first, so that was really stressful, but I didn't feel like I could ask any more from her, for obvious reasons. I was really bitter and angry about that for a really long time.

The difference in responsibility to plan for her own leave is clear, in comparison to the participant experiences above. As she notes, in practice her plan did not hold up, which initiated negative feelings about her experience and the lack of support she received. Another participant, Katie, also was entirely responsibility for planning what would occur after her childbirth.

> There was no planning involved. You're just supposed to plan your classes around it, because it's going to happen—are you going to do lecture-capture for the class? Thankfully with technology we're able to adapt to these things and make it work still. With a nine-month contract we don't get any vacation or things like that, so it's not really an option.

These examples represent how the women's experiences and lives are "caught up in social relations and organization concerting the doing of others" (2005, p. 61), specifically through the departments they worked within and chairs they worked under. Although it was clear some chairs and departments took on more of the organizational work, the discernment comes from the vast difference in experiences among the women, some of who endured undesirable circumstances, such as being responsible to plan their work throughout the entirety of their pregnancy and childbirth. With a substantial reliance on particular individuals in hierarchical positions, in all of these cases the chairs of the departments, along with possible self-induced anxiety, a light shines on a troubling problematic—some women were significantly more vulnerable during the negotiation and experience of their pregnancies because of the department in which they worked. Concerns continue to arise in the women's actual experience with their leaves.

Leaves Lack Standard

It was important to continue understanding the maneuvering work the participants did in relation to the processes surrounding maternity leave, so my interview guide included questions regarding their actual leave experience. What became clear through the data, as with the prior two subsections of this theme, was a lack of standardized practices and processes amongst the leaves. Again, this represents the vulnerability of the women, stemming from the particular department's practices a woman may work within. In other words, uncertainty in what ability they have to influence their own actions, as they feel at the mercy of the chair.

For some, maternity leave was negotiated informally between the chair and the mother. For others, they were provided the formal six weeks childbearing that the policy protects. Kelly, Amy, and Cathy were three participants who appeared to have negotiated an informal leave. Although Kelly spoke of utilizing the Modified Duties policy, providing her with 100% salary, the expectation she understood was that she was off until the following semester.

> I did get the semester of other duties *(said with air quotations)* but this new chair was very much like, "In my eyes you're on leave." We had advising week and that was late enough in the semester that I came in and he was like, "You know you don't need to be doing this." I was okay with doing stuff like that, but it was very clear from the chair that I didn't have to. Maybe officially I should say there was still these other expectations, but what I felt day-to-day was, "You're on leave and we'll see you in January."

Amy was released entirely from teaching responsibilities during her pregnancy leaves.

> I was very grateful. I had the first two children in the middle of the semester and my department chair released me from teaching both those semesters. Our department was able to do that for me though. That was very good, I've heard lots of stories about women in other colleges that had to work really hard throughout their pregnancies.

Finally, Cathy was assigned a research semester and did not have the responsibility of teaching classes the entire semester of her childbirth.

> In [my department] you are assigned basically a research semester where you don't have classes, so I had the entire semester off. Which I consider myself super fortunate, because almost no one has that much time.

These women were well taken care of by their departments in regard to their leaves, and felt privileged to have been offered the terms they were. Again, though, these women were dependent upon the climate of the department for their positive experiences.

For other participants, although they received an informal leave negotiated with their chair, they felt as though they never were able to get away from their job. Karey was one of the participants who expressed this to me.

> That didn't mean that duties were off the table. I was literally editing things at the hospital after I had my daughter. There was deadlines. I was pretty fortunate to have 12 weeks but that whole time I was surrounded by computers. You're never away from your job. I was making phone calls and setting up meetings even when I was at home. At least I was home.

It is clear that while Karey was on leave, she reluctantly felt the need to continue working. The pressure to do so may have been self-induced, but ultimately stemmed from the ruling relations and

the demands they place on individuals, contributing to a build-up of anxiety, and an influence of action taken.

Another mother, Erin, received her formal six-week leave, but just as Karey expressed, Erin felt the demands to continue working as well.

> He was born in October so I had six weeks leave, I guess. It wasn't really leave, and this was after we had policy that should've given me leave but I didn't really get leave. I quite literally wrote an exam, finished an answer key, sent it off to the person who was going to take over my teaching and two hours later my water broke and I went into labor. And while I was on leave *(said with air quotations)* all hell broke loose with my course. I was getting phone calls and complaints from students and complaints from my department chair. I ended up having to rewrite the final exam and grade the final exam, you know, things you don't want to do when you're not sleeping. Starting in January I didn't have childcare, and I didn't have reduced responsibilities or anything which is really rare across campus because I have female colleagues who if I had been in their department they would've had no teaching for me that spring.

Again, this example highlights the significant difference in leaves the women experienced, with Erin even acknowledging that if she were in another department, things would have been better.

Finally, Andrea spoke about her maternity leave as a developmental leave or sabbatical. This type of leave was a way for women to manipulate a leave for themselves considering the six week childbearing leave policy, as well as the modified duties leave, were not yet established.

> I applied for a developmental research leave so that I could be with Eve a little longer when she was a baby, but that meant my baby leave was a research leave. At the time, it wasn't so much departmental constraints as it was institutional ones. There was no paid family leave back then, only the unpaid FMLA leave, so this was a way to not take a complete pay cut but still have some flexibility. But the developmental leave meant a 25% pay cut.

This developmental leave arrangement was essentially utilized in place of a maternity leave, and allowed the women to have more flexibility while still maintaining an income. Although Andrea did not feel a physical presence was expected of her, she did speak about the leave being an inadequate substitute for a maternity leave, as she worked very hard during the entire process, because the goals of a development leave are to further one's research productivity.

This section on the women's actual leave experiences unveils the lack of standard between the departments' practices in regard to implementing the policies. The vast array of experiences ranged from positive to unfavorable, and the women clearly recognized and attributed their experiences to the departments they were in, and more specifically, the chairs of the departments. Such dependence on having to navigate practices and perceptions of departments and chairs also influenced women's experience with another formal policy, which was prominently discussed in the interviews: tenure clock extension.

Anxiety over Utilizing the Tenure Clock Extension

> I think that policy is set up in a very nice way. Because you take it, and then later you kind of decide if you want to resend it. I mean, even thinking about the regular tenure process, it was nice for me to know that I could go up as usual if I really pushed through and put things out. But that I had that flexibility, that was a load off my mind. And I also appreciate that you can retract it, because in some ways extending your tenure clock is not a benefit—like you put off getting your raise, and it's another year of being not sure what's going to happen. So it's nice that it's also reversible. (Kelly)

Tenure clock extension—formally called Extension of Probationary Period—was the other policy the women discussed regularly throughout the interviews. What emerged was a clear theme of anxiety often present for the women as they were deciding whether or not to utilize the policy, including the perceived views that surround those decisions, both from others and themselves. It was clear from the women's responses that negotiations internally and externally are continuously taking place. As the quote above begins to highlights, in the current policy, this is a relatively automatic extension, with the mother (or father) needing only to notify administration of their pregnancy. However, the individual can retract their decision to extend their clock if they later change their mind. The policy in its entirety can be found in section 352 of NDSU's policy manual and is provided in Appendix F for reference. Tenure clock extension allows for the mother to request an additional year per child birth (prior to the year in which their portfolio is due) towards

their progress of promotion and tenure. The policy also includes the acceptance of an extension request for additional circumstances—which two of the participants utilized, rather than reason of childbirth.

The Influence of Perceived Judgment or Support

From the discussions I had with participants, the tenure clock extension policy required some of the mothers to internally negotiate whether they should utilize the policy or not, as well as what it might mean if they do or do not. Ultimately, this involved the participants taking into consideration if they would be supported or judged by their colleagues and senior faculty, as well as how they judged or supported their own decisions. On one hand, the negotiation work that took place was minimal and included little to no turmoil. Jessica experienced this as she found the extension readily available and did not question what negative consequences may occur because of her request for extension.

> I had my second daughter after I came here so I got a year extension. I do have to file paperwork for it, and if I don't file the paperwork then I don't think they give it to me, but they don't even need evidence. It's mostly just documenting that I had a child, if that makes sense. I need to submit something to document that I had a child, then they approve it—always. I wasn't concerned about it. Just needed to fill out a piece of paper, but that wasn't a big deal. I think a lot of that has to do with attitudes—my department is really supportive of families, so I never thought that there would be any sort of negative backlash for taking it, and really that I *should* take that year!

For Jessica, she perceived that the request would be well-received and seen as positive. However, it is important to note that there is still a level of uncertainty in how the policy is to be read. In the text, the policy reads: "While NDSU supports the use of the extension, the probationary faculty member has the option at any time after the birth or adoption to return to the original schedule of review" (see Appendix F). Whether a faculty member read this text through the lens of perceived support or judgment could influence how they actually view its accessibility. Are the words encouraging the policy's use? Or are they indirectly encouraging a return to the regular probationary

period if possible? Although the extension is technically easily accessible as Jessica experienced it, several other participants spoke about negative perceptions surrounding the utilization of the policy. This included their own internal negotiations, such as comparing oneself to others. One of the participants, Karey, struggled with this.

> Karey: I did a year extra for tenure.
> *JP: What went into that decision?*
> Karey: Well, I had my daughter already when it went into place, so when they changed [the policy] I took advantage of it. Just went to my department head and asked for the extra year and he said, "Well, let me write the letter." So he wrote that to the dean and that went to the provost and back down.
> *JP: How did you feel about taking that step?*
> Karey: I was okay with it, part of me was a little annoyed with myself because I felt like I needed it, whereas other female faculty didn't use it, and they haven't used it, they hadn't felt the need to..

Karey's example represents the negotiation that takes place not only externally—with the chair, department, or institution—but also internally, and the anxiety that arises from constant comparison within oneself. Further examples of similar internal negotiations and their implications will be revisited in a later section of this chapter.

Other participants' experiences with the tenure clock extension policy required more extensive negotiation work, particularly for two of the mothers, Erin and Laura. Erin experienced more trouble with the external negotiation.

> Technically the policy is that it automatically gets extended now if you have a child, either by natural birth or adoption. It's an automatic extension, they did that for a lot of reasons but mainly because the research said that women are less likely to take it because they feel there's pressure and because there's some perceptions that that's an extra year for the women to work. Right? Give me a break.
>
> I chose not to take the two years based on the advice that I got. I sought a lot of feedback from tenured faculty when I knew I could go up. The conversation went something like this.. From my side, "Why not go up for tenure if I can? It's job security, it's pay increase, and you can be more relaxed." I felt like I was ready but I wasn't sure, so I spoke with a senior male faculty member in biological sciences, I spoke with two senior male faculty in my department, and then some women in the FORWARD group. I said, "This is what I have, I have a lot of grant money, should I go?" And it was interesting, the women in FORWARD said no, that I should take

> my two years because if I didn't then I was sending a message to other women that they have to be supermoms. The men said, "Oh Erin, you're totally ready and this is the best time for you to go through because you have all this grant money and in two years your fund incline may go down and you aren't sure if you'll have another one so now you should go, you're a shoe-in, like why hold back?"
>
> So, I ultimately decided to [refuse it] and there was a couple women who like, felt like I let women down, all women, everywhere, and that I somehow had set back the feminist group and I was like—I AM A FEMINIST! But this was what's good for me. I didn't want there to be a question on if I was ready for tenure I wanted it to be well of course she is. So I found other strong peer role models—we're our own women, we get to make the rules for what's acceptable for us or not. So if we feel like it's acceptable, then it's acceptable. And if another women takes the time, it's not that they're bad.

Erin's struggle with negotiating whether she should take the leave involved seeking others opinions, as well as negotiating for herself what it meant to utilize the policy and if it would personally benefit her. The anxiety for her arose from feeling pressure from various locations, including herself, her senior faculty, and her women peers. This again represents how an accessible, easily accessed policy, can become a culprit for fear, anxiety, and turmoil.

The other participant, Laura, also struggled with whether she should request an extension. This included negotiations that involved her attempting to maintain a particular image she felt would be threatened if she utilized the policy.

> *JP: When you talk about a delay, is that the tenure clock extension?*
> Laura: No, not an official delay. I'm totally on time with all of that. I have reason enough to file for a delay if I wanted.
> *JP: Have you considered it?*
> Laura: No.
> *JP: What would be your reasoning?*
> Laura: You look weak.
> *JP: Can you elaborate? I think that's interesting.*
> Laura: It's all about perception in terms of does it look like you can keep pace with your colleagues if I have to file for years of delay. I know other people do and they use that time and they use it to their advantage. I don't want to look like a pity case. I want to be able to keep at least the perception.

Laura highlights an important component of this policy, that perception is central. The way this policy is brought to life again represents how text-reader conversations and the participants' way of

understanding does not solely rely on the words they read on paper, the textual policy. Rather, a participants understanding of the policy and how to utilize it are influenced by the ruling relations. The ruling relations, which are socialized into individuals, ultimately have the ability to induce anxieties and impact the way people organize their activities. This caused participants, Laura included, to fear what others would think of them for utilizing the extension, and therefore shaped the choices they made regarding the extension.

These examples of the women's experiences with policy correspond to the point Smith (2005) makes about why institutional ethnography is important. When the researcher looks beyond the textual policy itself and seeks to understand how the policy is used and the activities surrounding utilization, the ruling relations can be exposed. The power relations are then noticeable, and newly created boundaries can be recognized as well, as noted by Laura below.

> That's something I worry about. I think changing policy is good, but at the same time, we assume that the change will be positive when we put more policy into place. We don't think about the potential negative repercussions of that or additional barriers those policies might create and/or how people can twist those policies in other ways.

To tie this back to the data, while the maternity leave and tenure extension policies were good in intention, they oftentimes presented unequal opportunities to the women, depending on her chair, department, and internal negotiations. So, while universities have established several family-friendly, and particularly female-friendly, policies, the importance of informal governance within the institution impacted what the women really face while navigating the university as a faculty mother. As this current theme outlines, this can contribute to the anxiety the women feel as they work to understand their actions within their environments. This is explored in the second area of focus presented below.

Informal Governance

In this project, informal governance was recognized through the unwritten rules and processes, the unspoken standard practices, and the ambiguous and learned circuits of power. With regards to exploring how the informal governance influenced the participants' statuses as mothers, this area of focus was more clearly discussed through questions surrounding whether the women brought their children to work with them, how they felt about doing so, and what types of connections they have with their senior faculty and fellow colleagues. The conversations ultimately centered on the overall climate of the departments the women worked within, and whether the unwritten rules, processes, and practices were welcoming or unwelcoming towards motherhood. The department and university climates that the women experience are an important facet of the informal governance occurring at NDSU.

The Role of a Tension-Filled or Supportive Departmental Climate

> I am grateful for the policies that are in place at NDSU, however, I feel it is more of the individual people that make the biggest difference. I have had other offers to go to another university, however, I have stayed [here] because of the support I get within my department and college. (Whitney)

Governance played a role for participants in the way the women perceived their individual departmental climates as tension-filled or supportive, specifically towards their experience as mothers. The women's perceptions of their climates appeared to have a great influence on their experiences, as the quote above acknowledges, recognizing how formal policy is only one form of support, but that the unwritten rules and processes have great influence as well. Overall, I explore how the women's experiences are essentially interactions within the ruling relations (Smith, 2005) of NDSU, and in doing so, recognize how the women are enabled and constrained by the academic institution, with its reliance on policies, practices, and hierarchical authority.

Beyond the mothers utilizing institutional policies as a useful guidepost for acting within the university, support also appeared to be forged informally. The informal support proved to be even more influential than policies for participants, as mentioned in the quotation above. Unfortunately, for those who experienced a lack of informal support, this too was impactful, but with adverse consequences. I included questions on my interview guide that centered on the climate of the women's departments in relation to aspects of parenting. For some, the connections made within the institution reached past departmental boundaries. Discussions centering these informal relationships allow me to better grasp how faculty governance takes place, in general, and the departmental practices that impact mothers, specifically.

This theme, just as the others, represents the constant negotiation occurring between the individual and structures. Therefore, Giddens' (1984) concept of structuration can be recognized through the way the climate either enables or constrains the mother. While Giddens explores the relationship between structures and agents, the departments' climates fall between the two, through unwritten and ever-changing practices made up by the individuals within the formal institution. Oftentimes, there can be disjunctures between the formal policy and the informal practices that work within the cultural climate of a particular department. Whereas the supportive policies may be present, they may not be easily enacted or supported in a hostile informal department climate. The informal support, however, if present, can often be more impactful than the formal supportive policies.

The participants distinguished the most influential aspects of the informal governance they experienced. These channels included departmental leadership (both administrative positions such as the dean and chair, as well as senior faculty) (particularly female), departmental colleagues (particularly female), and, in some cases, female colleagues outside the department. It was clear that the participants had differing experiences with their senior faculty and individuals in administrative

roles. Some women felt supported and encouraged when it came to the choices they made regarding motherhood in correlation to their work. Specifically, it was fellow females in these senior and administrative roles that had great impact. Other participants, however, experienced unwelcoming attitudes by individuals in these positions, such as when the women brought their children to the workplace and received unfavorable glances from others.

Department colleagues also contributed to the participants' perception of climate. It became clear that the demographics of the women's colleagues had a great influence, particularly in regard to whether they were also parents, and more importantly, whether they were also female. The female colleagues with children specifically shaped the women's perception of a more welcoming climate. The map below represents these channels that impacted the mothers' perceptions of their departmental climates.

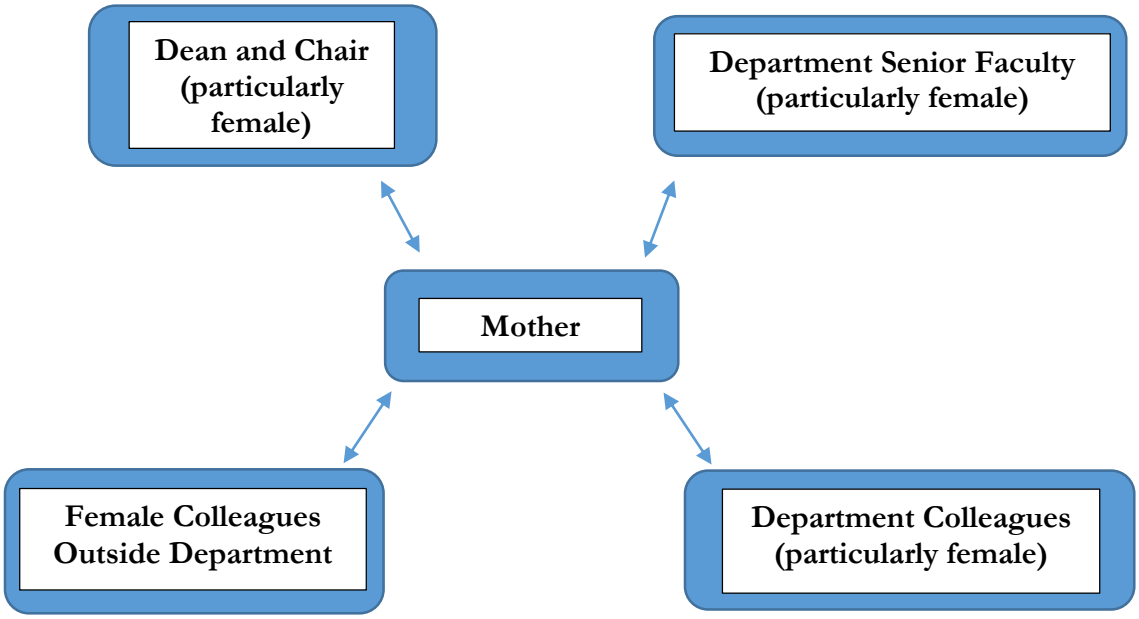

Figure 3. Informal Channels Impacting Perceived Supportive Climate. A representation of the perceived main components that contribute to a supportive climate.

Throughout this section the thematic ways in which the women engaged with the channels in Figure 3 are explored further, highlighting specific examples.

Sympathetic or Unwelcoming Leadership

While the interviews transitioned from discussions on policies and, as Jessica stated, being at the "whim of the chair," it was no surprise that the women's responses in regard to climate-related questions began by recognizing the consequences of supportive or unwelcoming leadership within their departments. This emphasizes the influence of power differentials within a hierarchically organized administration. For the women, it not only depended on the actual formal authority exerted from one person to those in a junior position, but also on the perception of power. Karey, a participant who regularly provided examples of how her and her chair negotiated alongside one another, provided another instance when she was pleased with his understanding management.

> As faculty, we are expected to be productive during the whole process, but [my chair] understands we're going to slow down a little bit. This year he was understanding because the big federal grant call to write came out when I was on maternity leave, and the deadline was so much shorter than it has ever been—instead of four or five months it was six weeks. I simply said, "Not writing it," and he said he completely understood.

This added to her perception of her chair being supportive of her motherhood responsibilities and accepting of her stepping back from work responsibilities, even though it risked department funding.

While every participant acknowledged the significance of leadership, a few who spoke of their climates as welcoming specifically noted the important role their female leaders, who also had children, played in fostering that climate. They perceived their female leaders with children as perhaps more understanding of what needed to occur in order for the department to be family-friendly. Haley felt this way about the dean of her college.

> We have the only female dean. Our policies and practices I think are different because we have a dean who's a mother and a grandmother. I think she understands

> some of the work-life better than some of the other deans at our university. She actually has promoted work-life balance—our college meetings cannot start after 4:30 and they cannot start before 8:30. So we have specific policies that take into account that we have children we have to pick up and drop off.

This example highlights the informal support stemming from relational means rather than the textual policies that are established to support mothers.

Studies also show that mentorship is more crucial for female faculty than male faculty (Howell, Lyons, Thor, Dandar, 2015), and it appeared the female leaders who were able to develop welcoming climates implemented these informal opportunities. Erin found this to be true for her department.

> It's a department that's really good about mentorship. Our department chair won the university mentorship award last year so she's very mindful about creating peer-mentorship opportunities and mentoring groups. So it's positive, and they send a good message about work-life balance, so that's nice.

The messages relayed both verbally and through actions, such as setting up opportunities for senior and junior female faculty to casually socialize, significantly impacted the perception of a welcoming climate.

Female leaders in the department, primarily senior faculty who did not have children, unfortunately also had the ability to influence the climate by making it feel unwelcoming for the mothers. Laura especially perceived this occurring not only at North Dakota State University (NDSU), but also during her time as a doctoral student.

> I do know that older female faculty tended to be, and still do tend to be, far more obnoxious, far more judgmental, much more snarky, and snide, and more likely to roll their eyes about things. I felt like particularly older female faculty who had chosen not to have kids, they would roll their eyes or be really snide. They were just really rude sometimes, like, "Why are you here with your kids?"

Laura explained that while she felt tension with the senior female faculty members, she had no other choice but to bring her children to campus due to lack of childcare. Although she felt like it was acceptable for her to do so, the perceptions of her senior females created a hostile environment.

Additionally, there was a perceived tension between the mothers and their leaders and/or senior faculty in regard to family dynamics reforming over time. Karey, along with other participants, noted the differences in family dynamics in today's society.

> We all have families so they understand it to a certain stance, but I don't know, it's different. For younger faculty, it's more that the parents are hands-on types. But the older faculty, the ones that were my mentors, they have these expectations for the younger faculty—"You need to get this, this and this done." Well I can't because I have to care for my kids or do this for my family, and most the time they don't have spouses that work outside the home.

While this occurred with some senior female faculty who did not have children, the women also experienced a disconnect with the male senior faculty, whether they had children or did not. They attributed this to a generational difference in familial interactions, as well as a possible forgetfulness of what it takes to raise young children. They noted that today's parents, particularly fathers, are more hands on and involved, compared to the male senior faculty members who had more traditional set ups with stay at home wives. Whereas the perceived their male colleagues with kids similar in age to understand better, they did not feel the senior male faculty had the same level of interactions with their children years ago, therefore were not as considerate of the demands of their mother role. These differences in turn developed tension between participants and many of their leaders and/or senior faculty members.

Colleague Demographics

Colleague demographics, including colleagues' ages and parenthood status, as well as whether they were female, emerged as clear indicators regarding whether the mothers perceived their climates as welcoming or tension-filled. Erin detailed when she felt as if bringing her child to the office was a major intrusion even though she desired the ability to do so, which in turn made her feel insecure and self-conscious.

> I would try to bring my kid with me to the office, I did a couple times, and it's just very quiet, and babies are not quiet. I felt completely uncomfortable doing it. I felt

> like I was on display. Anytime he gurgled, he was like disrupting the peace. With my first one I was determined to change the culture in my old department, I was like "I'm not going to feel weird bringing my kid to faculty meeting, I'm going to bring my kid to faculty meetings!" Brought my kid to a faculty meeting, and like little kids make little noises, it was just weird, everyone was trying to pretend like they couldn't hear him but everyone's sort of looking. It was a visual reminder to my colleagues that I was a mom not a scientist. And from that time on, every time they interacted with me it was about mom stuff and not about like, intellectual things. So then I felt like, now I'm only a mom? Not that that should be a bad thing.. So yea, I was just worried that my kid would disrupt the peace. I brought him into my office a few times, and only for the smallest amount of time, and always felt like he was a major intrusion.

The hesitation Erin eventually developed towards bringing her child into the office stemmed from the perceptions she felt her colleagues held of her and her child. She began to feel they questioned her abilities as a faculty member, as well as saw her choice to bring the child along as disruptive. Although she never states these perceptions were explicitly stated, she did internalize what she felt was expected of her, then negotiated her future actions. The anxiety and fear that she developed disabled her from talking openly with her colleagues about these concerns. She continued by explaining she also had committee meetings to attend that she did feel uncomfortable bringing her child to. She attributed this to the fellow committee members also being parents, compared to her department colleagues who she said did not share her parent status. Again, this example reflects how the women's perceptions of their climates as friendly or unwelcoming to them as mothers often stemmed from differing or similar colleague demographics, and essentially resulted in the women negotiating their actions to fit into their given environments accordingly.

Colleagues with children proved to be central to the construction of a welcoming climate that was inclusive for faculty parents. Several examples were provided by the participants ranging from how they relied on colleagues for help with childcare or work responsibilities, to colleagues simply being there as a sounding board and advice source. The mothers mentioned that being surrounded by individuals who were also raising families made the environment much more family-

friendly. Jessica and Cathy were two participants who were adamant about expressing these experiences. Jessica acknowledges the friendships that have developed by this parental status her and several of her colleagues shared.

> A lot of us, even the men, have younger children. So I think that is really helpful because you see other people being parents. And enough of us are women and parents that, you can't really hide it, everyone's going through the same things and we're all really supportive of each other. I have a lot of people who are in a similar life stage and age as me in this department that I'm close friends with, which is really nice. So I think part of it is demographics.

Cathy also acknowledges the bonds that grew with fellow faculty who were raising children as well.

> Before Hudson was born people would talk about how they didn't feel comfortable discussing their kids or things like that. I was curious to see if I would feel that way, and I haven't at all and I feel that's because we're in this department that has so many young children that it's more acceptable of a topic. I never felt like I need to not talk about my kid—that it would diminish my professional creditability because my identity as mother. Most of the time my colleagues are asking me about him.

Both of the women felt welcomed as mothers, and often bonded with fellow faculty parents because of their mother status.

Even help with childcare was exchanged between the participants and their parent colleagues. Karey and Kelly both expressed great appreciation for their colleagues, both male and female who also had similar aged families, particularly in relation to help with childcare. Karey acknowledges that the age demographic of her colleagues which was similar to her own contributed to the welcoming climate she felt she had.

> I brought the baby with—she was actually born six weeks early so I wasn't ready for her, so I had some loose ends I had to tie up. So, she came with me [to the department] a few days, and we have pretty young faculty in our department so there were many who were willing to hold her and take care of her.

Kelly acknowledges the age demographic also included her colleagues' children's ages as well.

> We've made good friends with people who have kids the same age. Like my colleague here who lives down the street, we both kind of have the philosophy of let's help each other out when we can. Even to the point, although it's not very

> Midwestern, even to the point of asking for help. Actually two days a week my daughter goes to this friend's house.

These women not only felt more comfortable having the role as a mother amongst their fellow colleague parents and colleagues in a similar age demographic, but also felt comfortable actively performing their parenting responsibilities or asking for childcare related help. Along with childcare, Andrea mentioned how for her, colleagues with children often were more willing to help the mothers cover work responsibilities if needed.

> We have very good colleagues in this department. If I for any reason need to travel for any conference, or my child gets sick or I get sick and I cannot come here, I can arrange for my colleague cover my class. It doesn't happen often, but if it is needed then my colleague will be able to do it.

Although altogether it was not exclusively the fellow colleague parents who contributed to the welcoming environment, they were discussed significantly more than colleagues without children.

Tension brewing from differing family dynamics did not only occur between senior faculty and the participants as mentioned above, but also between the mothers and particularly their male counterparts. Several participants discussed their perceptions surrounding these differences, including Erin and Haley. Erin worked in a traditionally male department and noticed differences in her male colleagues experiences compared to her own.

> It was a traditionally male department. When I arrived there, the men that had had kids, if they did, they'd have a sort of a traditional relationship where their wife would stay home. It certainly wasn't where they didn't respect it, so if I said my kids were sick I can't come to faculty meeting, nobody would give me crap, it wasn't like that. But it wasn't… it just wasn't a part of the daily conversation.

Haley, then, working in a female majority department, also noticed this distinction between her experiences and her male colleagues' experiences.

> Haley: I would say we're a department of majority women, and I'd say it's the women who are generally more accepting and comfortable with it. The few men in the department are dads but they don't bring their kids into work and they don't take off days to take care of their kids nearly as much.
> *JP: What's the difference there then?*

> Haley: Oh that's just society, right? It's the moms who do that, and [the men] all have wives who do that—stay at home wives, a couple of them have that. More of the traditional gender roles. One [male colleague] in the department has older kids, college age kids, and he's probably forgotten a lot of what it was like. So sometimes he's not as understanding because his wife was always staying at home and his kids are so much older. So I think sometimes he's kind of like, "Why do women have to miss a meeting because of a kid's appointment" or whatever, so I think sometimes he doesn't quite understand that. Most of the women in our department have to do that.

These examples draw forth a perceived gender difference between the participants and their male counterparts, contributing to the participants' perception of the department's climate towards motherhood.

Furthermore, Laura expressed how she believed she was viewed differently for being a parent than her father colleagues were, and therefore, attempted to refrain from displaying her role as a mother in her workplace.

> It's very interesting. I'll sit in meetings and it's cute when male faculty talk about their kids, but if I talk about my kids there's something problematic about it. It's endearing for men to do that. For me, clearly I don't have my roles separated and differentiated enough, so I check that at the door. Like I said, I drop mommy off in the morning and I check that part of my life at the door, essentially, and say, "Okay. Don't talk about that very much." I understand people are going to roll their eyes and be like, "Ugh, there they go again talking about their kids," even though the guys clearly can do that.

Almost half of the women mentioned the differences between faculty fathers and faculty mothers during their interviews, often attributing it to the traditional gender roles that are still prevalent in society.

While leadership, department colleagues with children, and male department colleagues had great bearing on the women, above all, it was the close relationships the mothers formed particularly with fellow female colleagues with children that influenced the participants' perceptions of a supportive climate.

Mommy Cohorts.

The informal supportive relationships the participants shared with female colleagues with children, both inside and outside of the department, appeared to be the greatest positive factor in the women's perception of climate. This subsection falls within the larger section of colleague demographics. For Jessica, her informal peer support developed through a women's running group that included both fellow department members as well as faculty members outside of her department who had children.

> I definitely get a lot of emotional support, too, from my peer women who have kids. So I have a running group and we go jogging and we all have young kids and we're all faculty members. Yea we're talking about, "Oh this is my most recent parenting challenge" or "this is the difficulty I'm having with my spouse and parenting challenge." We also talk about work a lot like teaching challenges or research challenges or everything! So it's great peer support for everything. I think that contributes so much to my happiness here, I really like my job a lot, and I think that has to do with the wonderful women that I work with. And the men too, but this peer running group happens to be women and we do talk a lot about family-life-work balance.

She not only participated in exercise—something she found vital to her physical and mental well-being—with the female peer group, but also found it a safe place to discuss familial or work struggles she was having. This informal support group had a significant impact on the way she perceived her work climate.

Erin, along with Jessica, was a part of the women's peer running group on campus, and also found the support network to be vital to her perception of the climate. She found she was able to rely on the fellow women for advice in all arenas of her life.

> It took me a while to realize it was okay to stop work at four so that I can get exercise in, but I have also woven a little bit of work into that in that I run with other women in my department. So it's a time where we're not working on research per say, but we're peer mentoring one another—so we're talking about, "Well, I had this situation with a student or with an advisee" or "I'm writing this grant and I'm nervous about this." So we can give each other feedback about work relating things, or even about parent related things—so, "Have you heard about a good summer program for kids because I'm not sure how I'm going to care for them over the

> summer." It is [difficult] if you don't have positive female role models. So just getting these different ideas for how women balance it—because there's no just one story fits all—it's really important. And I like it! So I've also found that not being scared to talk to women and be like, "So what do you do, do you hire a housekeeper? How do you shop? I still have the same pants that I interviewed for NDSU in, I think I need some new clothes, how do I do that?" And they're like, "Order online!"

She spoke to the importance of having positive female role models, a prominent climate influencing factor for the other participants who also had similar female peers groups or individuals.

Another participant, Laura, had a peer group that she referred to as her "mommy cohort."

> I think for us, that was the coping mechanism was finding each other, normalizing the situation, saying, "Look, I'm not the only person who is trying to navigate this course," and give us some support amongst ourselves. That was good.

Finally, Nancy had a friend who was a mother that she looked up to in another department of her college.

> Amy (*fellow participant*) is an amazing lady. She handles everything very well. Sometimes we get together on weekends, or sometimes it's a women faculty thing we do together like having lunch outside. So we discuss a lot, she has really done a great job. Usually during lunch we focus on something outside of teaching and researching. We like to share as parents, especially if we have some confusion.

It was apparent just how influential female colleagues with children are to the women's perceptions of climate, and essentially to their experiences as they navigate the university as mothers.

Between leadership and colleagues, both inside and outside the women's departments, the climate significantly impacted the participants' perceptions, and even further so, their actions. It was clear that the climate contributed to enabling and confining individuals beyond the textual policies that were present, which were not as accessible as ideally envisioned. As Laura expressed, sometimes putting policies in place simply allows for items on an ideal female/family-friendly list to be checked off, but rather it is the climate that needs to change in order to have true impact.

> I very much want the faculty and the women out there who are willing to fight for policy. I want them to continue doing that, and they need to do that, but we can't think that that is the only fix. I want the institution to hire female provosts and to bring in things like FORWARD, but in a lot of ways that's a band aid. It's a good

> start, but it doesn't stop the hemorrhaging. I think that puts some of the pieces in place, I don't think it necessarily causes the change, and I think that's where there's a misperception. That, "Oh, it's a check mark," mentality—"We have females in these positions now, we're good. We put these two policies into place, we're good." So, while those institutional factors are very important, it doesn't necessarily change the climate in terms of how people actually behave. I think we need to figure out how to affect the culture.

This highlights how together policy and practice form the women's realities, and together shape each woman's situation and actions differently from participant to participant.

Aligning with Giddens (1984), the university could be seen as a built environment from the production and reproduction of social practices, including both policies and practices, but it is up to the women to influence and affect how motherhood influences her navigation of the university's expectations. The effects of policy and practice, and ultimately the influence of the ruling relations, furthermore seeps past institutional boundaries and impacts individual's activities in other realms of their lives. This was noted through the participants' stories about navigating their work lives in conjunction with their family and home lives, which I turn to in the following section.

Tensions between Work and Family/Home Life

> I wish that I was better about that, honestly. I think [my husband] does a really good job, because as a professor, you always have more to do--more grading, more reading, more writing, etc.--even if he has more to do, it stays here. He never works in the evening, that's part of his personal stance on work-life balance. I think that he's just really good at managing his time. I wish I knew his secret. (Cathy)

The women navigated between their demands in regard to their work and family/home lives, which regularly resulted in tension when it came particularly to their schedules. The examples the participants provided, which will be outlined below, represent how the women were pulled by the various systems they functioned within—a central component of Giddens' work introduced in my theoretical framework chapter. For my project I focused specifically on the systems of work and family and the way the women actively shaped their activities while being influenced by the institution. As Cathy's statement reveals, the women often felt demands from both their work and

family/home realms, causing them to feel imbalanced at times. This section highlights the areas where women negotiated most often, overall focusing on aspects of their work schedules. These aspects include alternative work hours, cutting off their formal work-day, switching between their mother role and faculty role, and working summers.

The Myth of Flexibility

The mothers' day-to-day work schedules were by far the most discussed topic as every woman spoke of how flexible the profession was in correspondence with her motherly demands. However, the word flexible was regularly accompanied by air quotations or contradicted through additional stories they shared of their work being never-ending and ultimately spilling over into their home/family life. I dug deeper into this topic to discover what their day-to-day schedules looked like and the type of negotiation work required of them.

Scheduled flexibility appeared to be crucial to the women's satisfaction and perception of success with both their work lives and their family lives. The flexibility of being a faculty member allowed for the women to continue progressing professionally on their own time while they worked to care for their family's needs or attend familial recreational activities, of which frequently interrupted traditional work-day hours. These situations presented themselves to all participants, and are represented in the following statements from Kelly and Kaitlin. Kelly mentioned her loyalty to the career because of this flexibility.

> I think it's the relative control that I have over my schedule. I mean there's times where I think maybe I should check out other careers and what else I could do, but whenever I get to that need to be in an office for a certain amount of time and report to somebody, that's just where I'm like no, never. I will never leave this life because of that. So I think that contributes a lot to staying, and keeping my head in my family and keeping my head in my job at the same time.

Kaitlin compares her flexible career to a more standard corporate position.

> That is one of the things that is nice about being a faculty member because you do have a lot of flexibility that you wouldn't have at a regular nine to five job or a

> corporate job. So like I said, if [my daughter] was sick and I had to leave after class, I don't have to be here and I can work from home. Not even if she's sick but she has a school thing or if I want to go volunteer at school one day, I can go do that and no one's going to be checking up on me. It's really about your total output rather than, "Hey I didn't see you here today from eight to five."

Kelly and Kaitlin negotiated the functionality of being a faculty member through their family-accommodating schedules. They found themselves able to adjust their work system according to their family system.

Participants, like Karey, even considered the flexibility of their job necessary to effectively raising a family in correspondence with a partner's more hourly-structured job.

> If my job wasn't flexible it would be almost impossible because my husband is in a position where his hours are 8-5 and they're inflexible. There's no deviating from that. It's hard for him to get away and run a kid to a doctor's appointment. It's very difficult for him, he has to plan ahead whereas I can do that. I can take off this hour and a half to run this kid here, but that means tonight I need to be working on this or whatever.

However, at times this resulted in animosity towards the woman's partner, as it did for Erin.

> When my kids are sick I'm able to take the time because I have this flexibility, more so than my husband who has to take formal sick leave. That gets really hard because I never get that time back, so I'm either upset at my husband, or I'm upset at my kids for getting sick. As faculty we don't get vacation time or sick time, I would feel so much better about saying, "I'll take my sick day," if there were sick days to take! And when your kids are under two and going to daycare, they're sick all the time, like all the time.

The same feelings were true for Kelly.

> Sometimes I get kind of stressed or resentful that it is me making everything work. But it's kind of like, I'm the one with a flexible job and I know my husband has to ask for time off if he wants to do this stuff.

Even though the participants were thankful for the ability to adapt to the needs of their family system, they recognized that for them, it was still considered lost time in regard to work.

While the mother's flexible schedules were helpful for dual-earning families, particularly where the husband worked outside of academia, the few single mothers I met with viewed it as even

more critically valuable. They spoke of having to stay home from work for their sick child as the only care-provider available, but with the benefit of not having to count it as a vacation day, as parents must do in many other professions.

Although the schedule flexibility was seen as beneficial and family friendly, the women acknowledged that the missed work still had to be completed at other times, often taking over their nights and weekends. Katie acknowledges the hours she puts in off campus.

> I feel there is some flexibility to [the job], which is nice especially having family and kids. You know if my daughter has a basketball game at 5:00 I wouldn't be able to make it if I was here so I would just say, "Hey, can I make a conference call from home," and would have no problems doing that. It really benefits my children. But it's recognizing that okay maybe we're leaving at 4:30, but we're still going to put in equivalent to an eight hour day—not sitting at our desk but instead at home, or coming in on the weekends to get stuff ready, or coming in when we're off contract.

A fellow participant, Cathy, expressed the same.

> I think it's easier, for me at least, as a parent because I have much more flexibility than someone who has an eight to five job. We can move the work around in ways that suit our schedule. So, when they had a play cafe over at the center where they invited parents in to make veggie pizzas—the ability to go to that at like three thirty in the afternoon, not have to leave work early but just walk over there, and move the work that I would have done at that time to another spot in my schedule—is a real blessing of the flexibility. The downside of course is that then the work extends into evenings, the weekends, etc., you can never have it all complete. I was just reading an article that said that professors on average work for 51 hours a week, many of them more than that, we have the work to fill, it's just not during an eight to five time, sometimes it's beyond.

For these two women, and the rest of the participants, the seemingly flexible work schedule often caused tension in other aspects, such as requiring weekend work—time typically reserved for the family. This reality of having to reschedule the missed work and it often drifting into their family or home life began to make the flexibility appear somewhat less flexible, with the women regularly accompanying the word flexible with air quotations. As Jessica said, "this idea of flexibility, I think it's really a myth!"

The women expressed similar attitudes towards what they deemed as a flexibility misconception or a double-edged sword—that while the daily work schedule could be adjusted, there was always an abundance of work, essentially causing overflow into other systems of their lives. Therefore, evenings and weekends regularly demanded a constant work stream, requiring the participants to negotiate and maneuver their family or home interactions in relation to their work schedules. Nancy acknowledged how work sometimes seems endless.

> Well, we need to work at night. Sometimes when I have proposal deadlines it's even on the weekends. It happens very often—my husband will take care of my daughter at home while I come here to focus on my work. The difference between faculty and other professions, you need to consider your work may be all 24 hours. The whole night before a proposal sometimes. If I have some emergency [during the day] I can go as long as I don't have class, but at night I may have to work until 2 am to finish everything.

Nancy continued by talking about her constant exhaustion, especially considering she had a young baby at the time, which she said in itself was physically tiring to keep up with. Amy also spoke about her exhaustion while having to manipulate her work schedule to her child's sleeping pattern.

> So this is something about faculty job--it can be flexible but we are working all the time. In the beginning, I had my first child in my first year working here, so that couple of years was very hard. Every evening when we'd come home at night, she could only sleep for three hours at a time. So I would have to prepare for my lecture and my proposal and all that during those times. The sleeping was very limited. When she was sleeping I just had to work, especially during her first couple of years. Everything was new. I remember for a while, a couple weeks I had proposals due, and I slept no more than four hours a day for two weeks. In the end I felt I couldn't do it anymore.

These examples further reflect the constant negotiation required of them as they coordinate their work and family lives.

For another participant, Becca, the children's bedtime revolved around her need to work in the late evening after the kids were sleeping. She mentioned how her day-to-day institutional meetings left little time to get her individual work done on campus, so the work had to be done at home.

> They have to be tooth-brushed and in bed at eight o'clock, that's because I've got to work then. I'm kind of a late-night person. I wish I could sleep-in in the mornings, I'm not a morning person, but I can usually work from nine to midnight pretty easily. I really do try to keep that time before nine for the kids and family. My job now is almost all meetings. So I don't have time during the day to really get any work done. If I could keep up on my emails, that's great. Otherwise, I've got to do all that work at night. Which is okay, it's just a different work flow. I mean, it works..

Although she appears to be accepting of the evening work hours, the negotiation work between her family and work systems is evident.

Finally, for Abby, a mother of three active boys, her work schedule involved completing various work responsibilities while at her children's sporting practices or events.

> A lot of the times when the kids are at their activities, I'm working my computer or I'm grading papers or whatever. I used to be a lot more regular about working after the kids went to bed, it used to be five nights a week. Now, maybe like one night a week only. This week, Monday and Tuesday I went to swimming lessons and then wrestling with the kids and I worked the whole night while they were doing other things.

She later talked about struggling with feelings of guilt for not being as present of a mother, which will be discussed at length towards the end of the chapter. Conclusively, Haley best represented the women's collective perception of their work schedules when she said, "So we have tremendous flexibility. But in a sense, there's really less flexibility."

Friction with Cutting Off the Formal Work-Day

Cutting off the formal work-day for participants meant having to leave campus for the day to fulfill their parenting responsibilities. This was a subsection of the overall work schedule theme as it was clear this transition caused particular tension for a majority of the mothers and their work productivity. For most, this contributed to the mothers having to work late at night or catching up on the weekends, as was just noted. Abby mentioned how cutting off her formal work-day was what caused the most friction for her.

> I feel the most stressed probably when I've had a busy day at work with lots of meetings and class and stuff, then I have a long to-do list of things that are my own

> projects, but I have to go home at five. I feel very stressed when I have to leave work and still have tons and tons of things on my to-do list that have deadlines.

Abby was often leaving work to attend her sons' events, stated in a quotation above, where she regularly attempted to continue working to relieve some of the stress. However, this demand from her work responsibilities required a sacrifice from her family system. A negotiation that impacted additional negotiations as she made sense of her self, highlighted in the last theme of this chapter.

For many of the other participants, the need for cutting the day off revolved around childcare facility hours or the children's school hours. Amy's comment represented this finding.

> What time they have to be at school and pick-up time, that's pretty much the time constraint, you definitely can't be late. So everything for work has to be done during the day or after my kids go to sleep. I try to get the kids to bed by 8:30, it shouldn't be much later than that. Sometimes I fall asleep with them, I just can't get up. If we don't [fall asleep] though, we're both faculty members so we'll get up and work.

Specifically, issues with childcare arose in the summer when the childcare service hours changed. A handful of the women utilized the campus childcare center, which adjusts its end of the day pick-up time during the summer months. Jessica spoke to this issue.

> If you were going to leave work at 5 to pick your kid up at 5:15 or 5:30 [during the academic year], then for 4:30 you have to leave work at 4. I don't understand the math behind this. I don't know who's making this work.

This caused Erin to feel frustrated with how she was supposed to fulfill a healthy lifestyle by fitting in a workout during the summer days before returning home for the evening.

> And in the summer [childcare is] 7-4:30. So what am I supposed to do during the summer? I had felt like I had finally achieved what felt like a really good work-life balance [during the academic year] because I got off at 4, but now this means I'm going to have to knock off at 3…? That doesn't sound like a productive day. So, now I'm wondering where that's going to fit in. That is a real issue.

Exercise was important to her to feel as balanced as possible, yet because her family system was demanding an earlier end to her day, something had to give.

The stress of cutting off the formal work-day additionally applied for women whose children attended school, which ended for the day at 2:50 pm, but whom did not wish to utilize a childcare service. Yet cutting off the day was even more of a challenge for the single mothers I interviewed like Haley.

> That's one of the things I'm jealous of my colleagues for. If they're in the zone a lot of them will call their husbands—"Okay, you pick up the kids and you're in charge tonight," and vice versa, where the male colleagues will have their wives in charge. So if I'm in a zone or in the middle of a project, there's no one to pick up the kid so it has to stop. I definitely am able to see the benefits of having a supportive partner when you have kids.

Kaitlin also expressed this particular issue as a single mother.

> I definitely didn't have the leisure of staying late in the lab, staying late at the office. You can't work at home when you have a kid and no other partner around to help with that. So it was tough.

While having to cut the formal work-day off was an issue for the majority of the participants, it was also the transition between roles that caused tension.

Mommy Drop Off

Even something as simple as coming home or going to work required work from the mothers as they had to negotiate what role they were to play and actively make a transition from one role to another. One participant, Laura, referred to this as "mommy drop off" when she went from home to work, representing a need for compartmentalization.

> I do what I call mommy drop-off which is when I take the car and go to park in the campus parking lot. I always listen to my music and I do my thing. I don't know, I have to mentally shift gears. So I call it dropping mommy off at daycare too because I have to drop off the mommy routine and all of that to come into work and go straight to whatever meeting or whatever it is.

Whether it was having to drop mommy off before going to work, reminding themselves to be nurturing when returning home in the evening, or avoiding the performance of both roles simultaneously, all participants spoke of maneuvering between roles.

The women were required to consciously decide which role to perform while negotiating the demands of both, or forced to accommodate to avoid the tension of performing the roles concurrently. Kaitlin expressed the difficulty of this transition as well.

> Just changing your mental state, when I go home from thinking about science and work and then I have to think like, "Oh, I'm a care giver now and I have to be nurturing," it's very different. It's very hard to transition like that. I don't know, I just know it's something I do and that it's hard to do.

A need for a firm transition from work to home was recognized through undesirable experiences of attempting to perform both roles at the same time in the past. This was particularly true for Jessica's experience.

> If I'm trying to work [at home] on something for class and my child is asking me questions, I find it really difficult to do those two things at once and it makes me really grumpy about both things—working on the class and the child. Whereas if I'm just not trying to do any work, I'm much more patient with my children. I have a really tough time with those two [roles]. For me those two roles are really compartmentalized. So when I'm here, I'm 100% work-researcher, and I don't really think about my kids at all. When I go home I don't really think about my research and I'm 100% mom. Instances when I have to try and do those two things at once, I just really don't enjoy it.

Compartmentalizing the roles seemed to be what was desired, although more challenging to do in practice considering the women's regularity of working at home.

The intersection of these roles caused tension in various contexts beyond the home as well, requiring the mom to navigate her family and work systems simultaneously at events such as dinner parties or conferences, as occurred for Kaitlin.

> Probably for me the hardest thing is when I have my daughter at events and have to talk science. It's easier for me to go from home to work and from work to home but if I have to shift back and forth, like if we're hosting a party and there's people that want to talk science, that really hurts my brain. So when she was really little I tried bringing her to conferences and it was very hard to focus on what I was doing. I see a lot of women bringing their children now a days and I admire them for that, but I can't. I have trouble shifting back and forth between mommy mode and professional science mode. That was something I decided I wasn't going to try again.

The performance of both roles once again caused frustration, and required the mother to maneuver her everyday activities to accommodate to and avoid this issue.

Summer-Work Blues

Finally, the last facet of the mothers' work schedules that required negotiation between work and family dealt with working in the summer. The majority of women I met with were on nine-month contracts pertaining to the academic year. Of those, only Katie spoke of having her summer relatively off from university related activities.

> I'm on a nine-month contract, so I get my summers off. Which is different than most professions—and that's great for family! That's when I can consider my commuting all the time a wash and some of those days or evenings missed with family, I see it as a good compromise for being home during the summer with my kids. I find having those full days with the kids is more valuable than an hour here or there before they go to bed.

For the remaining mothers, this was not reality. They had to plan and negotiate childcare and family time throughout the summer months.

One participant, Laura, bluntly explains the harsh reality of working in the summer.

> Laura: So this whole perception of professors only work nine months a year and then we just travel and lollygag in the summer does not apply to my program.
> *JP: What about childcare during those times? How does that work?*
> Laura: It costs me a crap ton of money. A huge amount of my income goes to childcare costs. I pay a huge sum of my paycheck just to be here, just to have the time to actually work and be here.

Mothers even relied on full-time childcare during the summer months although they were not on contract, and therefore, not receiving pay. This was a reality for Jessica.

> When my school-aged daughter is out of school we do put her in activities every single week. We have her in different camps and activities so that we can still work a full day. And my younger one goes to full time childcare all the time.

Both Laura and Jessica's experiences represent how they organize their everyday activities and their children's activities particularly in the summer to accommodate their work demands, and ultimately, the cost of doing so.

In addition, the tenure-track played a major role with the amount of expected work to be completed during the summer while off contract. Becca was one of the participants who felt this pressure.

> That was always part of the challenge is that you don't get paid in the summer, but you've got to work, especially before tenure. I think that was a real challenge. That was maybe one of the biggest challenges with my family first. They're like, "You don't have to work in the summer so come to the lake and spend all summer at the lake." We don't get paid but because we're so busy during the year this is the time to get the research done that will get you tenure and promotion. That was always one of the biggest challenges.

Another participant, Haley, talked about the pressure that accommodated this need to work in the summer to attain tenure.

> If I wasn't working really hard towards tenure I could take more of the summer off. I do have colleagues who do a lot less in the summer, and I do hope to do a lot less in the summer it's just needing to get this tenure and feeling I need to have a really solid tenure case. I know people who go up for tenure with kind of iffy cases, and I just feel like I can't. Because if there's a question about my case, if there's a possibility that I could lose my job then I just don't know where I would go from there. Where would I? I don't have a spouse, there's not anybody I can rely on. I have to keep my job!

For these two women and several other participants, working in the summer while off contract was simply the reality of an academic job, and in turn, the women had to adjust their family schedules in accordance.

The maneuvering work the mothers dealt with as they organized their work systems and family systems contributed to the way they negotiated their sense of self. The way they began to make sense of their experiences and internalize what those experiences meant about themselves is discussed in the remaining theme of this chapter.

Agency and the Institution

> I think a lot of women feel the same about faculty positions. It's, "Can I dance this dance or do I have to step out?" Fitting into that culture--you either dance this dance and you perform this performance, and you can stylize it a little bit to fit you, but in the end if you don't fit the dance, your option is to just step out. There are, I don't

> know, 22,000 other PhD's waiting for your position—so nobody really cares if you step out or not. You're kind of irrelevant in that sense. The question then is, "Do I keep up this dance? Is it possible for me to tweak it enough to make it work for me and my family, or do I have to find a different way to do this?" (Laura)

This final area of focus seeks to understand how each woman made sense of her experiences, and in relation, began to form a perception of her agency. I also wanted to understand how their sense of agency impacted how they engaged with their work and families. As Laura's statement above acknowledges, the women often ruminated about their activities and whether this lifestyle was working for them. The constant internal negotiations the mother's participated in sometimes wore them to the point of exhaustion and frustration, with several women even admitting that switching professions occasionally crossed their minds. At times they felt overloaded, unstable, and in some cases, defeated and lost. Cathy made an analogy about the balancing act being a puzzle, one that she had yet to master.

> I think that I'm harder on myself, on the professional side, when I feel like I've run out of time for things. If only I could figure out the puzzle better then I would be getting it all done and that's a level I expect of myself. I need to reflect on, "Should I be reducing the number of things that I'm committing myself to? Should I be lowering a standard in some way?" I don't know, I haven't figured that out.

Another participant, Kelly, explained how the continuous balancing work inevitably stole some of the personal joys associated with being a mother.

> When I'm awake it's just constant—it's either I'm working and trying to work really hard so I can do what I need to do and get out of here, to doing all the kid stuff that you need to do. So there's so many of these parenting things that I know I need to do but don't necessarily relish them.

These examples portray the overwhelming feelings that arose, at times, for every participant, and essentially links to their struggles with agency. However, some participants were more successful in finding agency and were able to feel more comfortable with who they were, what they did, and even more so, were accepting of what they did not and/or could not do. In this section I explore both the struggles and successes with the participants' development of agency.

Brené Brown (2007) helps with framing what the process of struggling with or developing agency entails. She recognizes that individuals regularly struggle while striving to manage their roles and the expectations that coincide, and acknowledges that people are often "expected to produce and keep [their] professional and personal lives artificially compartmentalized in order to succeed" (Brown, p. xxiii). The participants' shared stories of how they navigated when to play which role (mother or academic), what the role required of them, and furthermore, questioned whether they were performing the role well enough. This process of evaluation not only involved assessment in the eyes of others, but also (and sometimes more importantly) in their own eyes. Essentially, each of their stories correlates directly with their paths of finding agency. Shaping agency was a process for every woman as they actively engaged with the institutional demands and their battle with perfectionism.

Giddens, aligning with Brown, argues that "we live in a world where we feel compelled to constantly question our beliefs and values. We do not merely accept things as they are (or appear); we reflect, ruminate, fret, and worry" (Kidder, 2011, p. 10). The study's participants partook in fret and worry while reflecting upon their roles as mothers and faculty members. These roles "exert[ed] their influence back onto [the women]—prescribing and proscribing what [they] can (and should) do" (Kidder, 2011, p. 12). The roles of mothers and faculty members hold particular expectations, and the women compared their experiences to the perception of what it is to be a good faculty member and/or what it is to be a good mother. While participants may have their own understandings of what is feasible and/or acceptable, society's pressure to perform these expectations still persists, as we tend to be obedient and follow social organization (Kidder, 2011). Participant examples will be provided in the following section to represent how the women began to understand themselves and their agency based on their experiences. This includes their struggles with perfectionism and finding agency, but also how some women found agency through being

resilient and showing compassion toward themselves. Finally, I tie the intrapersonal to the interpersonal by outlining how the women's agency impacted the way they engaged with their work and families.

The Struggle to Find Agency

The participants' ability to make sense of their agency stemmed from understanding their experiences as they worked to manage their work and family lives. Some participants struggled more than others while negotiating between their family and work systems due to several factors. These included where they were in their tenure track or if they were tenured, as well as the types of relationships they had within their departments. It was particularly a struggle depending on whether they perceived their departments as supportive, or competitive and judgmental. Additionally, the women's struggles incorporated logistical factors such as how many children they had, the ages of the children, and whether a domestic partner was present. While these factors significantly influenced the mother's experiences, the struggle also depended on the woman's individual ability to mentally cope with managing both demanding roles. This relates to Giddens' (1984) work with agency, and how comfortable individuals are with their experiences and the decisions they make. Every participant spoke of experiences that involved internal negotiations linked to their agency, which are presented below.

As the women maneuvered between their family and work systems, their experiences began to influence how they saw themselves as faculty members and mothers. For Laura, a newly single mother of three, there was an endless streamline of thoughts that clouded her mind on a daily basis.

> I've got all these weird female identities that aren't congruent with how I see myself. I think all identity is two sided. It's how you see yourself but it's also very much an imposition socially from others onto you. Whether you choose to internalize it or not is an entirely different question. To an extent, you have to. I don't think you can get around internalizing those expectations. At the same time, I guess I'm the kind of person who is at least aware enough. I feel like I go into this weird observer status

> where I put myself back from an arm's length and try to figure out, 'Okay, which hat do I wear here and which persona do I put on here?'
>
> To be able to do all of these things you have to have just an insane amount of self-discipline and you have to be planning all the time. How am I going to figure out how to factor in all of these eight million things every day? How am I going to make sure everybody gets where they need to go, and still pay attention to my doctoral students and still teach my classes and still, oops, not forget about my research? I'm trying to negotiate these hats and which hat am I supposed to wear at this time and that time, and all of that, and that leaves a lot of room for confusion.
>
> The last ten years, I was solely in survival mode. It's only been in the last couple of years where I really have been forced to reflect on it. Because those roles were just so not coordinating anymore, it had to be addressed. I think the kids are stressed out, too. If the parents are overwhelmed and stressed out that is contagious, the kids become overwhelmed and stressed out. What you end up with is a family that is just overwhelmed and stressed out all the time. You just suck all these people with you into this weird bizarre vortex, and whether they like it or not they exist there with you, and it's a weird place to be. Sometimes, I think, "God, I really made a mess. What did I do?"

I quote this at length, because Laura's statement exemplifies the negotiating done internally as she worked to make sense of herself and her world, and ultimately, her agency (or lack thereof). She acknowledges the societal and institutional expectations that are imposed indirectly and directly, and how she struggles with attempting to perform them all accordingly. This can be seen as a battle with perfectionism (Brown, 2007). Laura even points out how negotiating her roles and negotiating her sense of agency impacted her interactions with others, particularly her children. Brown (2006) highlights the social implications of negotiating oneself, claiming that people assess themselves in regard to socially situated expectations, and that the results then influence their interpersonal interactions. In the specific example of Laura, it was her interactions with her children. Although, as mentioned, some of the women coped differently than others, essentially every mother at some point discussed her internal negotiations that concluded in a negative self-evaluation. These stories can be recognized as a struggle in finding agency, and were particularly recognized through the women's stories about their perceived lack of presence.

Lack of Presence

When the participants were asked what the most difficult aspect of being a faculty mother was, many spoke about negative feelings occurring due to a perceived lack of presence they had within either their work realm or their family/home realm. For some women, the feelings occurred evenly within both realms. The examples of lacking presence presented below more clearly represent the women's struggle to be comfortable with their experiences, as they felt like they were never able to do enough. I pose the question: What would be enough, then? This question is central to the discussion on perfectionism, which can be linked to Brown's (2006, 2007, 2010, 2012) work on guilt and shame.

As mentioned, the participants' stories sometimes resembled a lack of agency when it came to their decisions and experiences within both their work and family/home lives. Haley, a single mother, discussed the guilt that came with having to multitask while at home. She explained how during her son's reading time before bed she regularly worked to catch up on emails or plan lectures, causing her to feel a lack of presence.

> It's been a stressful time…I still work a lot of hours. I work more than I would like to for being a good invested mother, but I tell myself it's just until I get tenure…and I hope that's true. I don't know, it's just right now I work every night after he goes to bed. That's just a norm.

> It's feeling like I have to multitask and do the strategy of [working while he's] reading [before bed]. I mean I feel terrible when I do that. You want to just be there and be present. It's just hard to be present all the time when you're an academic for your kids. I'm lucky in that I just have one child because I feel like he gets much more attention than friends of mine who are academics and have 2 or 3 kids. So I still feel like he gets a lot of good quality mom time, but it would be great if I didn't have to take my work home with me. And I just feel as an academic that's hard, I don't see any way that I couldn't. It just doesn't seem like there's enough hours in the day.

While Haley's work often caused her to feel guilty about her interactions with her son, the guilt was also prevalent in her work system. She spoke of times when her son would be sick, but she felt the need to still make it to work.

> I think sometimes there's a feeling of guilt—like I'm not doing my part if I miss an important meeting. So I guess personally I'll try very hard not to miss things. That's when I'll bring [my son] into work. Right there that's showing the value that I have in needing to be here.

A fear of having a lack of presence caused her to organize her activities to avoid such a negative assessment, both from what she perceived others would think, but also from within her own eyes. This ties to the struggle with both perfectionism and finding agency, as Haley did not feel as if she could perform both roles adequately, and felt guilty for not being able to do so.

For Abby, feeling bad about not being present at work was also a reality. This stemmed from leaving the office before colleagues, in order to attend her children's activities.

> *JP: What makes you feel the guilt?*
> Abby: Sometimes knowing that other people are still here and not leaving at the time that I am. Especially if still have things on my to-do list. I'm the vice chair of this department so I feel guilty if I, in my own perception, I'm not setting a good work ethic example. I know nobody knows when I'm working at my kids' activities. It's just hard to really ever get away from your job.

Abby continued by expressing further instances when she felt this way, but rather in regard to her role as a mother.

> Sometimes I feel guilty because I have a lot of friends who are stay home moms. Most of the women in my bible study are stay home moms. That is hard. Because you hear them talking about things that they're doing with their kids all day and they volunteer at their kids at school and I'm removed from that. I feel guilty about not being a part of it sometimes. You feel like there's this mom expectation of you. I think for me, it feels like it's the observation of those women who are doing those kinds of things, it looks so wholesome and I guess traditional. It looks like the ideal for some reason and I don't know why. Just not being present I think is a disadvantage of being [a working mother]. Maybe a little bit less of an emotional connection with my kids just because I'm not present all the time.

Abby mentioned feeling guilty in comparison to her friends who are "ideal moms," and that these feelings stemmed from not being as present for her own children. These kinds of thoughts impacted how the women perceived their agency, and ultimately how they interacted with their families and their work.

Only a few participants articulated negative evaluations evenly between their work and family lives, as discussed above. For the majority, however, perfectionism and finding agency were predominantly discussed in relation to their mothering experiences, particularly struggling with the same lack of presence Haley and Abby exemplified. Some of the women talked about their feelings surfacing when they departed from their children as they left for work, causing them to reflect on a yearning for more presence. This is represented through an example of Nancy's.

> Nancy: It's hard every time I have to leave [my daughter] and come here, I feel terrible because I have some friends that can stay at home with their baby, being together. The job thing is just a personal choice for a person, some of them maybe don't go to a job and just stay at home with the kids, and I think it really is an amazing thing because you don't need to leave every morning and feel terrible.
> *JP: Is that something you struggle with?*
> Nancy: Yes actually, very often. I tell my husband, especially on Monday mornings, "Oh if I just didn't have to go to work I could stay with my daughter every day." When we drop her off, she tries to hug me and tries to follow me. This is why sometimes I just ask my husband if I can stay in the car. I ask my husband to send her in there. I still sometimes feel like I maybe should've stayed with her longer. When my daughter was so young and I had to return to work, it was very difficult, the emotions are difficult. You just feel sorry for her. Now, during the week I know I need to come here, to do the work thing, but on the weekends when I want to cook food for my daughter and I can't because I am too busy, I still feel not good. It's actually very often.

A similar scenario to Nancy's occurred for Erin the very morning of our interview and was fresh on her mind as she reflected.

> I was walking to school today and I just thought—I got to see my two year old for exactly 45 seconds this morning. He slept in and when I was putting on my shoes and my husband brought him down really quick to say goodbye. And today's one of those days where I'll pick him up before the daycare closes at 5:30, I'll be in charge of cooking and then it'll be bath and story and bed. So when it's all said and done, and considering I have two kids so that attentions divided, I'll maybe have five full quality minutes with him. And he's my last, I'm not having anymore. So my biggest regret is feeling like I miss out on the day-to-day moments and being there for them. I'll pick them up from daycare and [the daycare employees will] be like, "Guess what he did today he did this really amazing thing"—and it's like, "Thanks, I'm glad you wrote that down because now I know what happened without me."

Finally, Laura questioned what impact her lack of presence would have on her children.

> I try to really make sure that my kids don't feel like they have to compete with my laptop or with my phone, even though my books and all of that stuff piles up. I try to make sure that they don't feel like they have to compete with all of those things for my attention in the little bit of my time that I do have with them. I hope I'm a good role model even though I'm not there a lot, but you worry. I worry a lot, and it makes me really sad. Sometimes I'm really sad that I think that they would perhaps think they are not the most important because they are. I don't push just for me. I'm doing it so that my kids have a chance to go to college, so my kids have a chance to do all of those things. It hurts because you don't know if they see that. They won't until way down the road. I don't even know if they will ever understand.

This lack of perceived presence existed in almost every woman's story. As Kaitlin reiterates, "Probably the most difficult thing [about being] a working mom is [that] you miss out. I wish I could've been around more," and for Karey, "Most the time when I feel tension it's when my daughter is crying because she wants me to stay home." While all mothers acknowledged they did not want to stay at home, they still felt that at times work took away from the interactions they longed for with their children. This included Jessica claiming to not have enough patience for their children after a long work-day, and Becca simply wishing she was "fresher" when she found time for family. These statements can be tied to each woman's struggle in finding agency, and feeling comfortable, or lack there of, with the experiences they had as mothers and faculty members.

As can be recognized, these feelings of lacking presence were salient throughout the interviews. Although this comment regarding presence was the most prominent, negative internal negotiations arose for various reasons. Other negative internalizations stemmed from feeling like they were not doing their best work, and for other participants it dealt more with their marriages or personal health. While these negative feelings were undoubtedly prevalent, the women also spoke about combating the negativity, and with time, improving how they negotiated their sense of agency. This practice aligns with Brown's (2006, 2007, 2010, 2012) work on wholehearted living and resilience, which will be supported by participant examples in the following section.

Being Enough to Find Agency and Live Wholeheartedly

Shame resilience, as introduced in my theoretical framework chapter, involves recognizing shame and understanding its triggers, practicing critical awareness, reaching out, and speaking shame (Brown, 2012). By practicing the components of shame resilience, individuals can become more comfortable with accepting imperfection from themselves and others, and ultimately combat the negative evaluations all individuals struggle with. As Brown (2007) asserts, every individual to some degree knows what it is like to struggle with feeling comfortable with who they are. Whether it is questioning the way they look, the work they do, or their parenting style and/or family life they have, all individuals struggle to varying degrees. I also revisit Brown's (2010) concept of wholehearted living, and its three specific guideposts that can closely tie to my discussion on agency: authenticity, self-compassion, and a resilient spirit. The women practicing these three components had recognizably stronger senses of agency, which I highlight through examples below.

Although the participants spent time sharing stories of struggle with negotiating their sense of agency, many also shared their resilient stories, where they stood up to the negativity and found agency. Cathy's statement below begins to demonstrate what takes place when resilience is practiced.

> Many academics want to be the super mom that is able to do everything that they did before—be a really good mother, be a good partner, etc., and you'll just drive yourself crazy like that, you'll be exhausted. There aren't enough hours in the day. So having to lower your expectations in all areas, which is very counter to what most academics are—it's hard, and I don't even know if I'm doing it successfully, but I'm aware that of the fact I have to do it.

While Cathy uses the language of needing to lower expectations of herself in the quotation above, for Brown, authenticity, compassion, and resilience is more about accepting whatever is accomplished as enough. Katie seemed to grasp the concept of accepting whatever is accomplished as enough, and represented it well through drawing a line for herself.

> You realize that you're never going to encompass everything, so you don't have to stay up until 4 am working because you're never going to get it all done anyway! Just

> figuring out where that line is with time has definitely improved things. You can literally work all day, you can take stuff home and could work from 6 am until 2 am and still have work to do. So you have to be able to shut it off. You could work all through the summer if you wanted to but you have to draw a line.

In addition, Andrea acknowledges that this was something she became better with over time, representing the practice of shame resilience as a process.

> I find I'm better able to make the work-home divisions and feel less guilty about them. I let deadlines pass as long as I'm meeting the most important ones. I allow myself to be satisfied with what I can do in a reasonable number of hours per week.

Recognizing shame resilience as a process is a key factor for Brown. It is not something that is perfected one time then maintained, but rather is a practice that consists of conscious choices made day after day. As Brown states, "Wholehearted living is not a onetime choice. It is a process. In fact, I believe it's the journey of a lifetime" (Brown, 2010, p. 1). Shame, and similarly perfectionism, is messy. It can come and go and can be trigged by different factors for different people.

Finding agency and resilience for the participants went beyond accepting the amount of university work they could complete; it also incorporated the way they perceived themselves as mothers. As Brown (2012) stated, "When it comes to parenting, the practice of framing mothers and fathers as good or bad is both rampant and corrosive—it turns parenting into a shame minefield" (p. 15). For Haley, single-parenting unfortunately demanded more situations with her systems of work and family overlapping in the evenings. This was unlike the majority of participants' households where the woman's partner could care for the child(ren) while she worked in the evening.

> I do a lot of multi-tasking. Some of it I end up feeling guilty about. But I think trying to not feel guilty about it is important. And trying to not beat myself up about the fact that I'm responding to email and that my son is wanting my attention and I'm not giving it to him.

Haley recognized the need to refrain from evaluating herself harshly as she tried her best to manage both roles as the single caretaker and provider. This aligns with understanding shame's triggers and

practicing critical awareness, both components of shame resilience as mentioned above. She also portrays wholehearted choices as she chooses to show herself self-compassion.

Kelly also spoke about her resilience and wholehearted living process as a mother. For her, it was about becoming more accepting and authentic over time, as she became increasingly comfortable with letting things go.

> First kid wore cloth diapers, we didn't buy baby food because we grew it all and mushed it up and put it in glass not plastic. Those are standards that have slid. By the second kid, every so often he got formula, that was something that had to happen because it was too stressful to do it the other way. And the third kid, I'm pretty sure he's at school right now? Ha! I'm sure he's fine. But that just happens to everybody, even kid stuff standards have slid and everybody seems okay. I think I was just being too hard on myself the first time around. Maybe this is part of my feminist training but guilt is not a thing, I see it as mostly counterproductive. Tension comes from those days where you feel like you're doing too many things and you're doing them all badly, where if you could just focus on one and do it well—but seven years into this, this just feels normal now. At first that really bothered me, but it's like, I'm doing the best I can with all these things. Every so often I forget my daughter needs to be somewhere or I'll think it's a different time, and I'll kind of be beating myself up and she'll have to be like, "Mommy, it's okay, everybody is where they need to be." And I don't want her seeing me be so hard on myself either. Not to say that it's easy!

This statement of Kelly's echoes the daily choices involved in living wholeheartedly—that the opportunity to be authentic, compassionate, and resilient present themselves in various circumstances where the individuals have a choice to be kind to themselves. Not that it is a mentality that comes easily, but rather one that is slowly developed and strengthened, and one that immensely impacts how people makes sense of themselves and agency, as well as how they influence and interact with others. Kelly also recognized the social impact this had on her daughter.

Laura practiced resilience by recognizing how well she was doing despite facing tough situations in her life recently, and ultimately, showing strength in the face of adversity.

> I used to feel guilty about a lot of things. It doesn't mean that I don't still feel bad about things sometimes, or when I drop the ball on something and I'm like, "Oops, I didn't make the cupcakes," or whatever thing that I missed that week, sometimes I'll feel bad about that, but then I guess, for me, I've also learned a lot of self-

> compassion. I also had to learn how to give myself credit for all of the things that I do manage.

Showing self-compassion and choosing to acknowledge and give credit for what oneself is or does is an important aspect of shame resilience. Brown states, "Courage, compassion, and connection seem like big, lofty ideals. But in reality, they are daily practices (Brown, 2010, p. 1). While many tend to look at the overall picture and overall achievements, it comes down to the daily victories individuals forget to celebrate. Acknowledging the option to choose courage, to choose compassion, and to choose connection, in every decision or interaction, is what wholehearted living is about.

Agency within the University

Ultimately, one's sense of agency influences the way they interact with others, and in this case, it was important for me to tie the intrapersonal to the interpersonal by understanding how this occurred within the university. Brown is adamant about acknowledging how shame is an issue reaching beyond the self. "We think it's a personal problem or a self-esteem issue rather than a serious social issue" (Brown, 2007, p. xix). This, too, is true for individuals who struggle with their agency. This larger scale impact of one's sense of agency can be recognized throughout the entirety of my project's themes. For example, agency, or a lack thereof, can be seen playing a role in the built up anxiety women felt while debating whether to utilize the tenure clock extension policy or not. It could also be recognized through some women's ability to feel comfortable cutting the work-day off in order to fit a workout in, as this activity served as a stress relief. I outline further examples below.

The social impacts of agency were woven into the women's experiences with formal policy. The level of comfortability in asking for support, whether through a maternity leave or a tenure extension, connects to the participant's agency. Some of the women's experiential narratives with policy presented feelings of animosity, exhaustion, and fear. As Brown (2007) states, "we put so much of our time and energy into making sure that we meet everyone's expectations and into caring

about what other people think of us, that we are often left feeling angry, resentful, and fearful" (p. xiv). Various experiences with fear were discussed, with women altering their actions ranging from planning a pregnancy to avoid negotiating with a chair, to declining a tenure extension in order to not be perceived as weak. Undoubtedly, this exemplifies a struggle in finding agency.

On the other hand, Brown also recognizes that when one practices self-compassion toward themselves and finds themselves worthy of acceptance, they are able to be brave and are better equipped to ask for the help they may need. This was noticeable for Karey, who struggled at work with speaking up and finding agency within.

> I think being a mother has made me less timid in my day-to-day interactions with people. I'm less willing to sit down and be quiet, more able to stand up for myself and what my needs are as a faculty member to be successful, and not take a back row seat to other people that are either more dynamic or more forceful or more outspoken than me. I'm a quieter person, but I finally got over worrying about other people and what they are doing. So I'm more able to say this is what I need.

This shows the vulnerability transition individuals make when practicing authenticity and shame resilience. It is the act of showing up and letting oneself be seen, including weaknesses, and ultimately being comfortable with asking for help.

"Vulnerability is the core, the heart, the center, of meaningful human experiences" (Brown, 2012, p. 12). When people exercise vulnerability in the workplace, then there is room for learning, creativity, and innovation (Brown, 2012). The university is supposed to be a place where knowledge creation occurs and where knowledge is openly shared. It is an industry that is expected to teach the modern innovations and where great minds come together to think better. Nancy spoke to the beauty of learning, creativity, and innovation occurring within the workplace, tying it to her similar experiences as a mother.

> We are always dedicated to talk to different young people and learn how to communicate with them. Learning how to share the different research projects and the different knowledge—always keep learning and keep improving. I think it's the same thing with being a mom. I did not know anything, and we still need to learn

> lots of new things—still keep learning, keep improving. I have purchased lots of books and we read and we talk to our friends about this, especially when my daughter has any discomfort or changes, I do not know so I try to learn from the books and from others. I think to be a faculty member, I come across new things every day, and with being a mom too, you can always learn something from every day. When I'm in class and I see my students learn something and they are happy, then I am happy. So I think those two things, they benefit each other.

If shame is used as a management tool, or shame has an influence over individuals' actions within the workplace, then these accomplishments are not achieved at their greatest potential.

Shame resilience and finding agency can also be recognized as fostered through the women's experience with the institution's informal governance, specifically if they felt connected. The women who spoke of having welcoming climates also spoke about the informal relationships of support they forged with their senior faculty/leaders and colleagues, particularly female colleagues with children. Some women discussed having positive female peers who they could connect with and speak openly about their familial and work struggles with, two components of shame resilience—reaching out and speaking shame. Brown (2007) recognizes that "the most effective way to overcome these feelings of inadequacy is to share our experiences" (p. xxiii) and that "connection is critical because we all have the basic need to feel accepted and to believe that we belong and are valued for who we are" (p. xxv).

While finding agency is a process, and a more difficult one for some, individuals having a strong sense of agency pays in significant ways over time. As Brown (2007) suggests through her concept of practicing shame resilience, "we can change the way we live, love, parent, work and build relationships" (p. xiii). From the examples provided above, it is clear that when agency was cultivated within, it had social impacts as well, which allowed for the women to be vulnerable and connect with others around them in the workplace. Brown (2012) states, "Connection is why we're here. We are hardwired to connect with others, it's what gives purpose and meaning to our lives, and without it there is suffering" (p. 8). Essentially, the university is a place where connection is

necessary in order to achieve the goals of knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. These goals are best achieved when this mentality of connection and vulnerability is instilled not only in the individuals, but within the university's policies and practices as well. Becca spoke to the importance of the university encouraging and practicing this mentality, so that it too can be internalized within individuals working at the institution.

> I wish that as an institution, not just NDSU, but any institution, would help mothers and fathers work on work-life balance, and help other people who aren't mothers or fathers, who are just employees, also work on work-life balance. I think that we all work too much and I don't think it adds up to anything. I think most of it is stupid. I wish as an institution that we would work smarter, and really tell everybody that you're going to be a better employee if you can sleep seven hours a night. They could help us figure out ways to balance it. We get some people here who are very—and I'm one of them, so this is not a criticism of other people—who are sort of super high performers, and I don't even mean that my performance was always excellence but it's a lot of stuff. I just don't think that's healthy for anybody. I don't think it makes us smarter. I don't think it makes us healthier. I think if there's a way to say, "You know what? Everybody needs to be able to walk an hour a day, or run, or whatever you do, an hour a day. And you need to be able to sleep seven to eight hours a night. And if this job is making you sleep five hours a night,"—which often during the week, that is my habit—"that's not good and it doesn't make you smarter." It doesn't make *me* smarter.

Ultimately, the institution encouraging such practices would contribute to the development of individuals' sense of agency.

As noted, the path to finding agency has much to do with Brown's (2006, 2010) concepts of shame, shame resilience, and wholehearted living. When individual's struggle to find agency, this is when anxiety, self-doubt, fear, and shame, can take control, placing oneself in a battle with perfectionism, which inevitably cannot be won. However, the guideposts she provides through wholehearted living, and the practices that individuals can partake in to develop shame resilience, align with a stronger sense of agency. This is when women can overcome the societal pressures to be perfect, and can instead embrace their imperfections, while feeling comfortable with who they are, and what they do and/or do not do.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

My study aimed to explore the unique challenges faculty mothers face and how they negotiate between their roles as mothers and as faculty members. My research problematic was recognized through the challenged retention rates for female faculty at the studied university, as well as current studies where the women of the institution reported high rates of stress, fatigue, imbalance, and consideration of leaving the university altogether. Just under half of the women respondents were mothers of young children. By examining the ways in which faculty women with young children negotiate their roles and activities, this problematic is further understood in regard to how the university contributes to shaping the women's experiences. Through my data collection, I recognized the impact these experiences have on the way faculty mothers shape their sense of agency, and how their sense of agency impacts their interpersonal interactions. This conclusion chapter briefly discusses these findings, their importance, and where the findings fit into the university conversation and larger body of literature. I also highlight the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research on the topic.

Key insights were found while focusing on the way faculty mothers engage with formal policy at the university. Two policies dominated my conversations with the women, which included childbearing leave and tenure clock extension. The women expressed significant vulnerability with childbearing leave as they spoke about the practices followed by their departments, and how they differed from one department to the next. This left some participants with unfavorable conditions compared to fellow women in other departments. The other policy discussed, tenure clock extension, caused anxiety for the women, particularly in regard to whether they should or should not utilize the extension. The level of anxiety stemmed from whether the women perceived their senior faculty members and colleagues as supportive or pressuring. Some women felt if they utilized the policy they would then be perceived as weak and unable to compete with their peers, while fellow

participants felt encouraged and supported to utilize the family-friendly policy. Discussion surrounding these policies indicated the ties to the informal governance occurring within the departments, which was my next area of focus.

Additional findings regarding informal governance occurring within the departments were discovered through conversations on unwritten rules and expectations of departmental climates. Particular channels emerged as indicators to whether the women perceived their climates as tension-filled or supportive, specifically to their role as mothers. The influence of leadership (administrative roles as well as senior faculty) and colleagues was significant. Whether leaders' actions were perceived as unwelcoming or supportive, and whether colleagues shared a parental status, had great impact on the women's experiences with their climates. Most importantly, it was the connections women had with fellow female colleagues with young children that effected their perceptions of an accepting climate. This finding draws attention to the importance of informal connections in the workplace.

My third area of focus looked at how women negotiate between their work and family/home lives, and where challenges arose. This led me to discover facets of the women's everyday activities that caused the most tension while negotiating their roles as mothers and as faculty members. These facets included friction while having to cut off the formal work day, having to transition from one role to the other, and the necessity to work during the summers although under nine-month appointments. The women's stories of their negotiations often tied back to the anxiety, vulnerability, and pressure they felt from the demands of their roles.

Finally, I sought to understand how their challenging experiences with formal policy, informal governance, and negotiating between their mother and faculty roles ultimately contributed to their sense of agency. Several of the women shared stories about their struggles with negative self-evaluations, and how this connected to a perceived lack of presence. What was interesting, however,

was that many of the women, not long after sharing stories of their struggles with agency, also shared how they have gotten better with battling negative feelings over time. They discussed the compassion they have learned to provide themselves, as well their growth in their ability to accept their imperfections. How their stories of combating perfectionism and finding agency impacted their social interactions was relevant, and I specifically focused on how their agency enabled or confined the women within the university.

These findings serve as means for practical applications at NDSU, as well as other similar institutions. It must first be recognized that changing policy directly correlates to changing practices. Formal policy adjustments cannot simply be seen as check-mark changes (ex. we have placed this woman in a leadership role, therefore women now have access to leadership opportunities, check). Instead, we must work towards adjusting individuals' deeply engrained perceptions and beliefs that create boundaries for diverse subgroups within the institution, in addition to establishing inclusive policies. Secondly, as my findings indicated, informal networks are significant to creating a welcoming environment, and more opportunities for these channels of support to form should be presented. This was clearly seen as a desire by the participants, as following the interviews, many of the women mentioned that they wanted to hear what fellow participants shared with me. Finally, it is important for people to engage in personal reflection, to be resilient, and to practice compassion towards themselves and others. Such a mentality begins with the cultivation of aligned practices within the university, and may then be internalized by the individuals working there. Developing a stronger sense of agency combats the negative consequences of the ruling relations such as fear, anxiety, and isolation, and instead encourages positives like vulnerability, connection, and innovation.

This research study is an important contribution to the ongoing conversation at NDSU on the topic of female retention, as well as the larger body of literature including institutional

ethnography, the development of agency, and the impact of wholehearted living. By combining the work of Smith (2005) and the work of Brown (2006), I was able to represent how the institutional ties to the intra/interpersonal. I provided another entrance into the institutional mapping Smith discusses the importance of, and I further recognized and exposed the concerns of agency, as well as the beauty of resilience. I have additionally provided personal narratives to the statistical findings of the work-life survey conducted at NDSU, which contributes to a greater, more in-depth understanding as to why such statistics exist regarding women's isolation and desire to leave.

While my study produced valuable findings and contributes to a larger body of knowledge, it is important to acknowledge its limitations as well. First of all, although the study included one participant from each college within the university, not every department was represented. Future research should seek out women's stories from additional departments to further gather experiences of faculty mothers at the university. The women's voices collectively shed light on the university, and supplementary stories would allow for deeper entrances into the institution. This also goes for collecting additional stories from subgroups present at the university that could provide further information regarding policy, work-life balance, and agency. These subgroups could include faculty fathers and administrators. This would provide further entrances into the institution to investigate this problematic, and should be taken into consideration in future studies. In all, continuing research on the unique challenges faculty with young children face engages in a necessary conversation of work-life balance and agency that many struggle with.

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APPENDIX A. RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Hello (Name of potential participant),

My name is Jennifer Pruett and I am a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at North Dakota State University. I am conducting a research project to better understand the experiences and challenges faculty women with young children face. I am currently in the process of recruiting participants. If you are interested in participating and are willing to meet for a 60-90 minute interview, please do let me know! I would greatly appreciate your time and insight for my study.

Thank you,

Jennifer Pruett

APPENDIX B. CONSENT FORM

NDSU **North Dakota State University**
Department of Sociology
PO Box 6050; Fargo, ND 58108-6050
(701) 231-8657; Fax: (701) 231-5118

Title of Research Study: Tykes and tenure: Navigating the university from the standpoint of faculty mothers

This study is being conducted by:
Jennifer Pruett, a masters degree candidate in the Department of Sociology at NDSU will lead this project under the supervision of Dr. Christina Weber, Associate Professor of Sociology.

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?
You are invited to take part in this research study because you are a mothering faculty member at NDSU above the age of 18.

What is the reason for doing the study?
The purpose of this research project is to better understand the influence the university has on your experience with motherhood.

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an audio recorded interview. You will be asked a series of questions about your experiences with mothering while maintaining your position as a faculty member at NDSU. Your answers to these questions will later be transcribed from the audio recording, analyzed for common themes present in other interviews, and written about in research papers. Your names will be changed to protect your identity.

Where is the study going to take place, and how long will it take?
The interview will take place in a library study room at NDSU or at another place convenient to you. The length of the interview will vary depending on how much you are willing to share; however, I estimate between 60 - 90 minutes of your time.

What are the risks and discomforts?
Some of the questions regarding your mothering experience may be personal and private to you. You may refuse to answer any question, for any reason, or you may stop the interview at any point. Refusal to answer questions or further participate in the study will not have any impact on the participants' current or future relationship with NDSU.

What are the benefits to me?
By participating in this study, you will have the opportunity to reflect on your personal experience with motherhood while working at NDSU.

What are the benefits to other people?
This study has the potential to reveal new information about how the university influences faculty member's experiences with motherhood. The study will also have the potential to reveal new information about where improvements can still be made in regard to caretaking roles of faculty members. This information could be valuable to fellow mothers, or caretakers, at the university, as well to the university administration committees.

Do I have to take part in the study?
Your participation in this research is your choice. If you decide to participate in the study, you may change your mind and stop participating at any time.

Who will have access to the information that I give?

- We will keep private all research records that identify you, to the extent allowed by law.
- Audio files will be stored in a password protected file on a computer that is only accessible to the primary investigator and the co-investigator. Electronic copies of the interview transcripts will be saved and protected in the same fashion.
- All printed data (including demographic and consent forms) will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in an NDSU office which only the principal investigator and co-investigator will be able to access.
- Data and records created by this project are owned by NDSU and the researchers. You may view information collected from you by making a written request to the researchers. You may only view information collected from you, and not information collected about others participating in the project.

Will I receive any compensation for taking part in this study?
There will be no compensation provided for partaking in this study.

What if I have questions?
Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to participate in the research study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have any questions about the study, you can contact the lead researcher, Dr. Christina Weber, at christina.weber@ndsu.edu.

What are my rights as a research participant?
You have rights as a participant in research. If you have questions about your rights, or complaints about this research, you may talk to the researcher or contact the NDSU Human Research Protection Program at:

- Telephone: 701.231.8908
- Email: ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu
- Mail: NDSU HRPP, 1735 NDSU Research Park Dr., NDSU Dept. 4000, PO Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108-6050

The role of the Human Research Protection Program is to see that your rights are protected in this research; more information about your rights can be found at: www.ndsu.edu/research/irb.

Documentation of Informed Consent:
You are freely making a decision whether to be in this research study. Signing this form means that

1. you have read and understood this consent form
2. you have had your questions answered, and
3. you have decided to be in the study.

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in study	Date
Printed name of person agreeing to take part in study	
Signature of researcher explaining study	Date
Printed name of researcher explaining study	

APPENDIX C. DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Your answers to the following questions will help me better understand your experience as a faculty mother at our university.

1. Are you (circle one): tenured tenure-tracked

2. How many children do you have? (please provide ages)

3. What is your age?

4. What is your marital status?

5. What field are you a faculty member of?

6. What is your race or ethnicity?

APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW GUIDE

(MOTHER FACULTY TENSION SECTION)
How do women faculty with children negotiate between their experiences as mothers and faculty members?

Conversational Opening:

- Can you describe a typical day for you?
- What has it been like being a faculty mother?

Work Experience and Environment

- How many hours do you put in during a typical day/week as a faculty member?
- What do your work responsibilities consist of?
- Who do you interact with during your work-day?
    - Faculty? Students?
- Can you tell me about your interactions with your colleagues?
- How would you describe your department?
    - Is it a positive place to work? Why/why not?
- Do you feel your work hours differ than others professions? If so, how?

Personal Life

- What types of responsibilities do you have outside of the workplace?
- What are your primary childcare responsibilities?
    - Do you share responsibilities with anybody? [have her elaborate]
- How do you handle childcare when you are at work?
- How do you handle childcare when your child is ill?
- Do you feel well-rested most of the time?
- Are there times you do not feel well-rested?
- What contributes to you feeling/not feeling well-rested?
- Do you feel able to reach out for help when you feel overwhelmed?
    - If so, do you have a supportive network to rely upon?
    - If no, what do you think gets in the way of asking for support?

Intersection:

- Can you tell me about a time where you felt tension between the expectations of motherhood and work?
    - How did you handle this tension?
    - Did that change the way you thought about your work? Your home life?
- Did you breastfeed while working?
    - If yes, can you tell me more about your experience with breastfeeding while working?
        - How do you feel it was perceived by your colleagues?
- Can you describe your departmental climate towards parenting?
- Have you ever brought your child(ren) to school?

    - If so, under what circumstances?
        - How did your colleagues react?

(MOTHER INTERACTION WITH STRUCTURE-POLICY AND GOVERANCE)
How do women faculty with children engage with university structures?

For those who had child(ren) while at NDSU:

- When did you notify NDSU that you were pregnant?
- How did you notify NDSU that you were pregnant?
    - How did you feel about doing this?
- What process was involved at NDSU in preparing for the birth of your child?
- How did you handle your semester work (if you delivered during a semester)?
- Did you need to look at any policy as you were planning your pregnancy and childbirth?
- Did you utilize maternity leave when you had your child(ren)?
    - If so, how did you access the policy?
- Did you extend your tenure-clock?
    - Why/why not?
    - How did you go about deciding to/not to?
    - How do you think this was perceived by colleagues?

Questions for All:

- Have you ever had to miss class or meetings to attend to your child(ren) (for any reason)?
    - If yes, how did you handle this situation(s)?
    - How did you feel about doing this?
- Have you utilized any university policies in regard to family/personal life?
    - If yes, can you explain what you used and why?
- Can you tell me about a time you felt the most empowered while navigating the university?

Conversational Ending Question:

- What other activities do you participate in outside of work and family/home?
    - How important are these activities to you?

SECTION 320
FACULTY OBLIGATIONS AND TIME REQUIREMENTS

5. Childbearing Leave

Academic appointees (tenured and tenure-track faculty, professors of practice, and senior lecturers) with less than twelve-month appointments who give birth are eligible for childbearing leave during the period of medical disability. This is a temporary leave from all duties without reduction in pay during the time the faculty member is temporarily disabled because of pregnancy and childbirth. Childbearing leave begins on the actual delivery date and ends six weeks after (including university breaks), although individual circumstances may require extending this period. Any extension beyond six weeks (before and after delivery) shall require medical certification from the attending physician or midwife and is approved by the Provost. Unpaid leave that extends beyond the period of medical disability is available through FMLA. Eligibility for childbearing leave begins upon hiring.

6. Modified Duties

6.1. Who is eligible: An academic appointee (tenured and tenure-track faculty, professors of practice, and senior lecturers) who 1) becomes a parent through childbirth, adoption, or foster placement of a child (as defined by the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA); 2) has a health condition that makes them unable to perform their regular duties but does not necessitate a reduction in workload; or 3) who will be caring for a child, spouse/partner or parent who has a serious health condition (as defined by FMLA). Additional modifications for longer-term conditions may be made in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and NDSU Policy 100.1.

6.2. Definition: “Modified duties” means a change to duties and goals without reduction of salary for a limited period of time. A person taking “modified duties” will still be at a 100% workload and 100% salary; however the nature of the responsibilities for this time period will be adjusted. Modified duties will include a revision of workload for up to the equivalent of a semester (e.g., release from or reassignment of teaching courses, committee assignments, advising, or alteration of research duties). When a period of modified duties immediately follows childbearing leave, the modified duties may be extended to the end of a semester to accommodate teaching schedules as necessary. Modified duties must conclude within 12 months of a birth or adoption.

SECTION 352
PROMOTION, TENURE AND EVALUATION

3.6 Extension of Probationary Period

At any time during the probationary period but prior to the sixth year (or prior to the year in which the portfolio is due), a faculty member may request an extension of the probationary period not to exceed a total of three years based on institutional, personal or family (pertaining to a child, spouse/partner or parent, as described in NDSU Policy 320) circumstances, personal illness or disability, which, according to reasonable expectations, impede satisfactory progress towards promotion and tenure. Faculty given promotion and tenure credit are also eligible for this extension. Faculty members are encouraged to request probationary period extension as soon as they recognize the need for extension. Written notification to the Provost must be submitted within one year of the beginning of the event for which the extension is requested and approved prior to July 1 of the year in which the tenure/promotion portfolio is due. A faculty member who submits an extension request during the academic year in which they are to undergo third year review must successfully undergo third-year review and renewal before any extension can take effect. The request must be in writing and will be submitted to the Provost who will review the request and will approve or deny the request. Denial of an extension may be appealed under NDSU Policy 350.4, however, appeals will not be granted for requests that are submitted outside the required timeline for extension.

3.6.1 Extension of Probationary Period for Childbirth or Adoption

A probationary faculty member who becomes the parent of a child (or children in case of twins, triplets, etc.) by birth or adoption, prior to the year in which the portfolio is due, will automatically be granted a one-year extension of the probationary period upon written notification to the Provost. While NDSU supports the use of the extension, the probationary faculty member has the option at any time after the birth or adoption to return to the original schedule of review. Any additional extensions beyond the one year (per birth/adoption occurrence, not to exceed three years total extension) must be requested under the provisions of 3.6 above.