

Subject Analysis

At its highest level, the resource under consideration reports findings of surveys on women's traditional role in families. At no point does it detail that role, however, so interpretation of the results is based significantly on presumptions. Directly addressing the 34 paragraphs of the total contents, the discussion breaks down into several categories, although subject treatment does overlap. Fortunately, paragraphs do focus on rather specific topics or combinations, so that unit of analysis gives a useful way to evaluate components of the overall discussion.

Where paragraphs discuss topics in combination, such as part-time work as a time management strategy to facilitate child rearing, I counted them as addressing each topic significantly explored by the discussion. Given the number of interrelated questions approached, coextensivity was not harmed by this overlapping consideration. An alternative treatment might have been to assign each paragraph only to one of those intertwined topics, but that would have artificially reduced measurements of their treatment within the piece and caused some key headings to be omitted because they would then fall short of the 20% threshold set by the *Subject Headings Manual* (LC 1984). Such a strategy would cause the headings assigned to incompletely characterize the resource.

Analysis was complicated somewhat by repetition of topical discussion across the paragraphs of the resource. The introductory paragraphs summarize concepts addressed in detail below, and I treated those cases as one incidence of the topic rather than two. Even so, some issues such as the glass ceiling did come up for substantial discussion in multiple spots, and I summed those paragraph counts.

Subject Headings Assigned

- Working mothers – Time management
- Work-life balance – United States
- Child rearing – Public opinion – United States
- Part-time employment – United States

Subject Heading Assignment Process

The primary subject heading for the assigned resource is clearly **Working mothers**. This choice is confirmed by its scope note, which emphasizes “works on the social conditions of mothers apart from their workplace and on how work affects the quality of life of mothers” (LC 1975, HQ759.48). The term appears in the resource title and throughout the piece, far in excess of the 20% limit called for in the *Subject Headings Manual* (LC 1984). In fact, more than 80% of the piece deals with that subject. I did not assign the heading **Stay-at-home mothers** because the resource discusses that alternative case only in contrast with the central focus on working mothers.

Women employees was a less good fit for the resource, because heading emphasizes employment, while the resource focuses instead on the effects of that employment on their home life. The heading **Glass ceiling (Employment discrimination)** would fit treatment scattered through the resource of reasons women might choose employment despite the difficulties of managing home life as well. I did not assign it because those mentions don’t amount to 20% of the resource’s topic coverage.

Addition of the subdivision – **Time management** is justified by the frequent mention of difficulties in schedule-keeping and harried feelings on the part of working mothers surveyed. At least 6 paragraphs directly address this issue, and it forms a substantial subtext in the discussions

of **Part-time employment** and **Child rearing**, which address how **Working mothers** find time for both job and home responsibilities. An alternative **Time pressure** also seems relevant, and I considered it for a primary term. However, its broader term **Stress (psychology)** indicates a meaning specific to individual coping and even pathology, whereas the resource emphasizes effects on social structure more appropriate to the meaning of **Time management**, whose broader terms derive from the world of work. The *Subject Headings Manual* does not explicitly include that subdivision (LC 1984, H1095), but the entry in LCSH allows a see-also entry for the “subdivision **Time management** under classes of persons” such as working mothers (LC 1975, HD69.T54). That judgment is confirmed by the appearance of a pre-coordinate term **Families – Time management**. However **Working mothers – Time management** is closer to the specific level of meaning present in the resource, so the term applies at the right level of meaning.

Following from the general terms **Families** and then its narrower term **Work and family**, I found the more specific **Work-life balance**. Although the exact language does not appear in the resource, that concept is addressed both directly and indirectly throughout the resource, well in excess of the 20% rule in the *Subject Headings Manual*. I was guided by Thomas Mann's assertion that the left-anchored subject browse facilitated by pre-coordinate selections from LCSH “very easily enables researchers to recognize not just relevant *individual titles* that could not be specified in advance, but whole *conceptual categories* that are equally unanticipated” (quoted in Kiczek 2010, p. 458, emphasis original). Further confirmation of the heading's fit with the content is implied by the broader term **Time management**, which comes from the area of business, making it and the narrower terms beneath it well-suited to the work-related resource under consideration. But the narrower **Work-life balance** is better targeted to the specific level of topic coverage there. Its related terms, **Quality of life** and **Work and family** also confirm a

close fit with the resource. I also considered the related term **Dual-career families** but I rejected it, because the resource addresses fathers' situations only as contrast with mothers' nor is the family itself directly addressed, but rather the resource considers the mother's role.

I chose to add the subdivision — **United States** to all but the first heading I assigned. The survey results reported in the resource were specific to U.S. respondents and reflective particularly of U.S. conditions. The resource neither reports on or speculates about their applicability elsewhere, and all the terms allow geographic subdivision. I omitted it from the first heading I assigned because that term is so specific and so well-suited to the resource in itself.

Since the resource reports survey results, the heading **Public opinion** seemed to have some relevance. The topical coverage is specific to opinion about particular issues, however, such as whether women should contribute to family income and whether children should be raised by stay-at-home mothers. The *Subject Headings Manual* expressly allows use of this heading as a subdivision "under names of individual persons and corporate bodies, and under classes of persons, ethnic groups" (LC 1984, H 1095). Further, the heading's scope note expressly allows see-also reference to a "subdivision **Public opinion** under names of individual persons, corporate bodies, and topical subjects; . . . also subdivision **Attitudes** under classes of persons and ethnic groups" (LC 1975, HM 1236). I considered and rejected the headings **African American families – Attitudes** and **Hispanic American families – Attitudes** because those opinions, while mentioned, do not constitute nearly 20% of the resource content. Also, those particular survey results are specific to discussion of stay-at-home mothers rather than the focus of the resource on working mothers.

The resource reports on a bigger picture in its survey results, and that coverage does have significance for the heading **Child rearing**. For reasons noted above, I assigned the subdivisions

– **Public opinion - United States.** Alongside the results reported for working mothers' experiences, the resource addresses the social context in which those individuals make their employment and family decisions. Paragraphs specifically discussing that concern constitute nearly one-third of the topic coverage, clearly justifying a subject worthy of a heading.

One alternative to **Child rearing** would be **Children of working parents**. I chose to omit it, because the resource focuses on the mothers' feelings and attitudes about their effects on their children's lives rather than documenting the children's realities themselves. **Child rearing** addresses "works on the principles and techniques of raising children" (LC 1975, HQ768-780) which is a fit for the bigger-picture issues raised by the resource.

The resource significantly discusses **Part-time employment** as an alternative to full-time work that can facilitate **Time management** by **Working mothers**, the central focus of the piece. The paragraphs devoted to this subject amount to just over 20% of the total article text, and the subject is significantly treated at multiple points through the discussion. I omitted the subdivision – **Public opinion** here, because the discussion addresses the working mother's own accommodation more than general societal attitudes toward that arrangement.

As mentioned, the resource reports on survey results addressing women's traditional role in families. Lacking detail about what that role may include, however, I didn't find a subject heading to capture the meaning. I could find little in LCSH directly addressing the question under either the **Families** or **Women** headings. One possibility might have been **Work and family – Women** or the reverse, but nothing indicated that either could be treated as the subdivision. In an attempt to address this big-picture topic, I briefly considered **Family income – Public opinion**, but LCSH gives only one option for that heading – to USE **Income** –and that term is too broad to match the coverage in the resource. Given the detailed discussion of

Working women's Time management and **Work-life balance**, those headings fit the resource better than would headings with more general meaning.

I considered but omitted the form subdivision – **Computer network resources**. The survey report is primarily an example of journalism, and the fact of its communication via a website is incidental to the subjects covered, which might as easily have been reported in a newspaper or magazine.

Works Cited

Library of Congress. (1984). *Subject cataloging manual: Subject headings*. Washington: Library of Congress.

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Kiczek, S. (2010). Thomas Mann's contributions to current library debates on cataloging and bibliographic control. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 48(5): 450 – 471.