Attitudes toward women's roles: a study of selected undergraduate students at Rowan University

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ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN'S ROLES: A STUDY OF SELECTED UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY

by
Alicia M. Groatman

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration of The Graduate School at Rowan University May 15, 2008

Approved by __________________________
Dr. Burton R. Sisco

Date Approved May 15, 2008

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The main purpose of this study was to look at students’ attitudes toward women’s roles of 381 selected undergraduate female and male students at Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ, in March, 2008. Also investigated was the impact of demographic factors such as age, class level, class status, major, gender and race. The data on the attitudes toward women’s roles was collected using a 25 item Likert-scale survey. The data analysis suggests that the selected students had a profeminist, egalitarian attitude rather than a traditional, conservative attitude. There was a moderate correlation between the gender of the students and their attitudes toward women’s roles and weak correlation between race and attitudes toward women’s roles. No significant correlation was found between the age, class level and class status of the students and their attitudes toward women’s roles.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work is dedicated to my brother Nick, who has played many roles in life, especially as a husband and father who worked a full-time job, did the cooking, the cleaning, and spent every moment he could with his children doing fun things. He is greatly missed.

I would like to thank my husband Brad for his continuous love, understanding and support throughout these years. You are so wonderful and I could not have done this without you.

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Many thanks go to Karen Haynes, who has been my mentor and role model. She has encouraged me to stay focused throughout these difficult years and challenging times. Her persistence to keep me in line finally paid off.

I applaud my advisor, Dr. Burton Sisco, for his dedication to his students’ success. His patience is greatly appreciated as well as all of the time he has invested in us. Thank you so much for all of your encouraging words and wisdom during this journey.

Last but not least, I am very grateful to the students at Rowan University who participated in this survey. Your opinions on this topic were critical to this research.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

A woman’s role in society in terms of her “place” has been a continuing discussion for many years, and seems to be an issue that is getting more attention. Researchers have been exploring this topic for the last 30 years. Women are expected not only to combine marriage, family and career, but also to keep everything balanced, usually leaving little time to do what they want to do.

Statement of the Problem

Western society views women’s roles in different ways, usually having either traditional or liberal points of view, particularly when it comes to the ongoing decisions that a woman makes regarding her educational plans, career aspirations, and life goals. Betty Friedan (1997), who wrote about this topic since 1963, determined that this was an issue that must be addressed; through talking to countless women, Friedan discovered that women were feeling empty and incomplete as individuals when their roles were limited to being a wife and mother alone.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover what the attitudes are of current generation female and male undergraduate students toward women’s roles. This research sought to learn whether college students have liberal or conservative views.
Significance of the Study

This study examined selected female and male undergraduate students at Rowan University and their attitudes on women’s roles. The findings not only provided an updated view of how the current generation of female and male students feel toward different issues relating to women’s roles in today’s society, but also if certain student variables impacted the outcome.

Assumptions and Limitations

It was assumed that the students completing the survey were representative of the attitudes of students in higher education today. Also, students understood the concepts being surveyed. This survey was limited to female and male undergraduate students at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. A random sampling of 824 selected undergraduate students at the freshman, sophomore, junior and senior levels at Rowan University were surveyed. The students were traditional or non-traditional. Those who returned and completed the survey participated in this study. It is assumed that data is valid and students were being truthful. If students worked together on the self reporting survey, were influenced by researcher expectations, or did not understand the concepts in the survey, then potential bias may have occurred. There could also be potential researcher bias that may have influenced the results.

Operational Definitions

1. Attitudes: “A complex mental state involving beliefs and feelings and values and dispositions to act in certain ways” (WordNet, 2006a, p. 1). For this
study, attitudes included the points of view of female and male students at Rowan University toward women’s roles during February and March 2008.

2. Gender Roles: “A set a behavioral norms associated with males and with females, respectively, in a given social group or system. The perception of Western culture, in recent times, is that the female gender role is dichotomized into either being a stay at home-mother or a career woman” (Wikipedia, 2006, p. 1).

3. Juggling: “Juggling is a special form of role combination. Objects have weights and sizes of their own, and the juggler must contend with these and with forces of gravity. Time is of the essence. A responsibility that is not caught in time can end in trouble, suddenly and dramatically” (Crosby, 1991, p. 7).

4. Roles: “The actions and activities assigned to or required or expected of a person or group” (WordNet, 2006b, p. 1).

5. Students: Female and male undergraduate students at Rowan University during 2007-2008 academic year. Class status may vary from freshman to senior level.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of undergraduate female and male students at Rowan University toward women’s roles?

2. Is there a significant relationship between students’ attitudes toward women’s roles and the following demographic information: age, class level, class status, major, gender, and race?
Overview of the Report

Chapter two presents a review of scholarly literature; this chapter addresses the relevant information pertaining to women and their roles, development, life courses, mother and daughter conflict, societal views, demographic trends, women and education, and women’s health.

Chapter three describes the methodology. The details of the context of the study, population and sample selection and demographics, the data collection instrument, the data collection procedure, and data analysis are included in this description.

Chapter four presents the findings or results of the study. The research questions in the introduction of this study form the main focus of this section. A report of the statistical significance and narrative explanation are used to summarize the data.

Chapter five summarizes and discusses the most important findings of the study, and offers conclusions and recommendations for practice and further research.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Women’s Roles

According to Astin and Kent, the 1970s saw numerous changes in societal attitudes, especially regarding women’s roles. Women were taking jobs outside of the home at increasing rates; marrying later and deferring childbearing were becoming more common than ever before. Women’s rights became a major political issue, as people of both sexes became aware of sex-role stereotypes. Astin and Kent believed that economic forces were also a factor, as inflation soared and the job market tightened, affecting aspirations, self-esteem, and values of college students, especially women (as cited in Hafner, 1985).

Generations later, researchers are still looking at this issue, though women are now taking on many more roles. Sheehy (1995) stated that “young women are still dizzied by the eternal problem of how one balances it all-marriage, family, and career-without at least one plate crashing” (p. 43). Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997) found that many women spoke of their lives as “juggling acts,” feeling overwhelmed by trying to balance all of their commitments such as work, children, family and household duties, yet still finding time for what they want to do.

Many surveys have been conducted over the last 30 years, with most researchers using the self report instrument “Attitudes toward Women Scale” (AWS) developed in 1972 by Spence and Helmreich (1978). The survey was originally created as a 55
item scale, but Spence and Helmreich decided to create a shorter version and conducted a comparison study between the long and short versions and found that they are almost perfectly correlated. This was deemed to be the best scale to use to measure the attitudes of women (Stein & Weston, 1976). Stein and Weston stated that the attitudes of college women toward women were only recently being investigated in the 70s; their results found that the seniors held more liberal attitudes toward women than women in the underclass, and students in education and business tended to be more traditional when it came to their attitudes toward women.

Slevin and Wingrove (1983) focused their research on three generations of women and their attitudes toward the female role in contemporary society, looking at similarities and differences. They stated that the main concern for most researchers was the extent to which younger women were more liberal than the older generations, and the factors associated with liberal versus traditional views. Scholarly attention shifted in the 1990s from whether gender-role attitudes change to why they change (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Loo (1998), studied the attitudes toward women’s roles in society, and found that the interest in attitudes toward women broadened in the 1990s. He listed three purposes of his study: a) to assess attitudes toward women’s roles in society for current sample in the mid-1990s; b) to compare his current sample against historical sample from 20 years ago; and c) to comment on the relevance of the AWS 25 years after its introduction. Loo found that attitudes of both men and women toward women’s roles became more liberal since the 1970s. He also noted that the gender gap was still present according to the scores on the AWS and
that women were still more liberal in the areas of vocational, educational, and intellectual roles and marital relationships and obligations.

Astin (1998) noted that student attitudes changed toward the concept that “married women should confine their activities to the home and family.” The most change occurred between 1967 and 1974; where there was a 50% reduction in support (from 56.6% to 28.3%); the value placed upon “raising a family” dropped (from 71.4% to 55.0%), and the number of students who planned on marrying within a year after college dropped (from 22.9% to 16.6%). Also, more students were agreeing that “parents should be discouraged from having large families,” as the percentage increased from 42.2% to 68.5% (Astin, 1998, p. 121).

Psychological Aspects

There are benefits to having varied roles in life. According to Crosby (1991), no matter how satisfying a life role may be in the beginning, women should not confine themselves to one alone or they may waste away psychologically and emotionally. Change and balance are healthy; seeing different faces and hearing different voices is imperative for anyone, not just women. According to Miller (1986), some women who are housewives and mothers are made to feel they are of little worth, so they may create roles for themselves to heighten their self-esteem.

Crosby (1991) claims that psychological benefits of multiple roles are fulfilling for women. It is satisfying for women to “juggle” family roles and have paid employment even though it is difficult. The three most important benefits Crosby found while interviewing a number of different women were: variety, amplification, and buffering (1991). The lack of variety can prove detrimental to women if there is
too much of one particular role, according to Crosby (1991). The second, amplification, is important because if a woman encounters a problem at work, she could talk about the problem at home with her family for support, and vice versa (1991). The third benefit offers women ways of dealing with negative events at home and in the work place by not having too much of one or the other; instead, they may use the other as a buffer (1991).

Women’s Development

Psychosocial

Many women experience development differently depending on a number of issues. According to Mercer, Nichols, and Doyle (1989), who focused on the psychosocial development of women, women develop socially as well as biologically; the psychosocial development is a lifelong process in social and historical environment that is continually changing. Social transitions, such as leaving the parents’ home, marriage, and childbearing depends on biological maturation (1989). How women are treated in their different roles as daughter, sister, wife, mother, or woman make for different life experiences (1989). Overall, the transitions that a woman experiences over her life course varies in so many ways that each woman’s development is unique (Mercer et al.).

Psychological

Gilligan (1993) studied psychological theory and women’s development; through her research, she found that the factors influencing psychological development would include: differences in the body, in family relationships, and in societal and cultural position. One of her studies, which focused on college students, found that college
education can be an influential motivation to moral development in college students, as there is a constant interchange of thought and experience (Gilligan, as cited in Chickering & Associates, 1981).

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997) examined how both the family and school as institutions encouraged and delayed women’s development. Clinchy (2002) recommended that in order to get a better understanding of gender and epistemological development more longitudinal case studies need to be conducted in the future that concentrates on “development within rather than across domains” (as cited in Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Bernard (1981) discusses a few important themes in relation to the developmental process in undergraduate women which were (a) the desire to pursue careers increases during college, although some women are still focused on familial aspirations, (b) role development is continuously changing from year-to-year, and (c) students are uncertain about their choices.

Mother/Daughter Conflict

Mother and daughter conflict, according to Miller (1986), has taken different forms because “women are trying to construct their personhood in ways different from their mothers’ ways” (p.140). Conflict is being raised to a more conscious level, and is an indication of the transition that is occurring since women are entering a new terrain. Stake and Rogers (1989) claim that women are faced with many choices about family/home and job/career commitments, and examined these issues further.

Stake and Rogers (1989) discussed three factors that contributed to the attitudes of women regarding their life choices: historical period, stage of life, and cohort. They
found that (a) mothers' attitudes shifted to be more liberal in the 1980s and was based on a change in societal attitudes, (b) women may become more interested in achievement, and become more dominant through their different stages of life, and (c) women who were raised with the traditional attitudes are more likely to continue them. Overall, Stake and Rogers found that daughters and mothers had very different pictures of home and career. Daughters are growing up in an environment that is much more accepting of the idea of combining home and career. Bernard (1975) claims that the “generation gap” between mothers and daughters will be smaller; since the new ways of thinking have evolved over time, the new generations of women will be better educated, later to motherhood, have fewer children, take better care of their bodies, and have more services in their homes.

Women’s Life Courses

Contingency Schedules

Bernard (1981) describes young women as planning for their future based on *contingency schedules*: marriage, childbearing, professional training, and career initiation/career resumption. Bernard claims that there is no right or wrong schedule to follow, but stresses that the pros and cons should be examined by college students early on so they can understand their options. According to Bernard (1981), many young women do not allow marriage to interfere with their college education; only recently have young women come to think of marriage *and* career; in these cases, marriage and childbearing tend to come later than for women who are less educated.
Career Ambitions

Bernard (1982) states that:

Women are told that they are free to embark on careers, and then [we] make it almost impossible for them to succeed in them. We tell them they may have access to all privileges and prerogatives of professionals, and then punish them if they accept the challenge. (p. 48)

According to Bernard (1975), even though society talked about equal educational opportunities for both men and women, the development of women was discouraged rather than encouraged. Whenever independence was encouraged, it was considered a threat to women’s “careers” as bearers of children.

Societal Views

Society had mixed views on the issues surrounding higher education for women. The movement for women’s higher education came up against those who opposed such an idea, particularly some doctors and educators, fearful of the effects on women’s biological and social roles. Dr. Edward Clarke of Harvard University (1873) argued that higher education would damage women’s health and eventually inhibit their reproductive capacity. Some individuals even thought that the intellectual women who were college graduates and were either not marrying, marrying later, or who did not conceive, were committing “race suicide,” and labeled them as deviant (as cited in Goodchild & Wechsler, 1997).

Demographic Trends

According to Giele and Gilfus (1990), the most significant trend for educated women is balancing work and family life. Young women are not choosing one or the
other, but taking on multiple roles at one given time. Giele and Gilfus found that younger cohorts of women reached higher levels in their education and occupation, obtained more graduate degrees and secured a professional occupation than the older cohorts.

Bernard (1976) identified three demographic factors: marriage and fertility rates, growing appetite for education among women, and trends in the participation of women in the labor force, that would affect the “demand” for women’s continuing education. Since the 1970s undergraduate enrollment has been higher for women than men as more women are attending college than ever before.

This trend continues today. Avis Jones-DeWeever from the Institute of Women’s Policy Research stated in the *Gloucester County Times* that “women are going in directions that maybe their mothers and grandmothers never even thought of going” (“Women Catching Up,” 2006, p. A-4). Many more women are saying that education and career come before marriage, and more women are deserting traditional lifestyles of marriage, according to Daniel McGinn (2006) in *Newsweek*. “However, men are still dragging their feet in terms of domestic responsibilities. The male ego as head of household seems to have diminished to the point of disappearance,” said Rosanna Hertz, chair of women’s studies at Wellesley College and one of the researchers involved in the Elle/msnbc.com study, according to Allison Linn (2008) on *MSNBC.com*. The same survey also looked at whether men or women should pay on dates and found that most men would like to contribute to the bill after a few meals, but some females are unsure of sharing the tab. Some women are not sure while
others do not want the man to feel like he has the power if he pays, according to

Women and Education

Those individuals who supported higher education for women believed that higher education would better women’s self-confidence and self-concept, allowing them to better understand others, and making them more self-sufficient and less dependent on a man - at least until they entered marriage (Pearson, Shavlik, & Touchton, 1989). Even those women themselves who were receiving higher education reported increases in self-esteem, self-awareness, and openness to new ideas and people (Astin, 1998).

Though higher education for women can be a route to self-sufficiency, some women believe it to be problematic (Wolfe, 1991). Not all women had the opportunity to attend college for one reason or another, whether it was a lack of support from their families, available funding, or the self-confidence to pursue a continued education. Some women who did not attend college did make their mark in the world, but college educated women increasingly led others in achievement (Goodchild & Wechsler, 1997).

College education made it possible for a woman to approach the single life in a new way; life was no longer predetermined as a simple transition from daughter to wife to mother. In the past, many women seemed to drift after graduating college while postponing long-range decisions; countless young women explored different avenues before settling into a permanent pattern. Even wives and mothers felt a desire for extra familial activities, but if commitments outside of the home took time away
from domestic duties, such untraditional priorities brought with them societal disapproval (Solomon, 1985).

Women’s Health

In a study done in 1976 at the University of Michigan, Kessler and McRae focused on the mental health consequences for female married women. Kessler and McRae found that combining paid employment with marriage and motherhood actually lowered the risk of depression, unhappiness, and anxiety (Crosby, 1991). Kessler and McRae also claimed that a woman had a chance for increased happiness if she had many areas of interest and took part in multiple roles (as cited in Crosby, 1991).

Crosby (1991) found that participating in multiple roles does not assure happiness; however, as role quality is more important than role quantity. Having an awful job or awful marriage does not counteract the effects of the other, claims Crosby (1991). The stress of time pressure that comes with combining work and domestic responsibilities that more women have admitted to is causing more women to develop health issues such as: anxiety, ulcers, infertility, other diseases, and even death (Crosby, 1991). This still leaves the question of whether or not juggling is worth the risks.

Summary of the Literature Review

Evolutionist David Starr Jordan, Stanford University’s president, answered skeptics in 1906 by stating, “If the college woman is a mistake, Nature will eliminate her” (Jordan, as cited in Solomon, 1985). A century later, educated women have not been eliminated yet. After looking at the history of women and education and
assessing where it stands today it is clear that women have come a long way; but the fact is that women are still going through quite an adjustment in trying to keep the status of “superwoman,” as certain roles are still expected of them (Pearson, Shavlik, & Touchton, 1989).

This review of literature has addressed the relevant information pertaining to the women’s roles, development, mother and daughter conflict, the life courses of women, contingency schedules, career ambitions, societal views, demographic trends, women and education, and the health consequences that a woman may face if she takes on too many roles. Even though there is a considerable amount of research on the topic of women’s roles, most of the research that was found was from the 70s and 80s. There seems to be a lack of current information pertaining to how the younger generation of undergraduate students feel about these issues now. More research is needed on how college students feel about women’s roles in today’s society.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

The study was conducted at Rowan University, in Glassboro, NJ. The university is located in Gloucester County and is one of two higher education institutions in the South Jersey area. The total number of undergraduate students at Rowan University in Fall 2007 was 8240: 1279 Freshmen, 1600 Sophomores, 2261 Juniors, and 3100 Seniors (Rowan University, 2008). Historically known as the New Jersey State Teachers College at Glassboro, Rowan University now consists of six colleges: College of Business; College of Communications; College of Education; College of Engineering; College of Fine and Performing Arts; and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and offers 58 undergraduate majors.

Population and Sample

The target population for this study was all undergraduate female and male students in higher education in New Jersey during the 2007-2008 academic year. The available population was randomly selected undergraduate female and male students at the freshman, sophomore, junior and senior levels whose majors varied during the spring 2008 semester at Rowan University. An original sample of 10% was selected from the 8240 students and nth selection was used to select the students. Since there was a low response rate after the first trial, three more groups of 824 students were selected to receive the survey. The names of those students who already received the
survey were removed from the list. All students were emailed the initial survey and then a reminder email was sent to them a week later. Of the randomly selected names there were 384 freshmen (171 females, 213 males), 480 sophomores (234 females, 246 males), 678 juniors (360 females, 318 males), and 930 seniors (513 females, 417 males) who were emailed.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to assess students’ attitudes was a short version of the *Attitudes toward Women Scale* (AWS). This 25-item survey by Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp (1973) was originally developed as a 55-item survey by Spence and Helmreich (1978). The researchers conducted an item analysis on the data received from 241 female and 286 male students in introductory psychology at The University of Texas at Austin. The correlation obtained between the two scales was .969 for females and .968 for males, respectively (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1973) which indicated that the instrument was highly reliable.

Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp (1973) developed the short version of the *Attitudes toward Women Scale* to validly measure an individual’s attitude towards women’s roles. The shorter version is highly correlated with the full version of the AWS. This Likert-scale contains statements about the rights and roles of women. The survey items focus on areas of vocational, educational, and intellectual activities; freedom and independence; dating, courtship, and etiquette; drinking, swearing, and telling dirty jokes; premarital sex; and marital relationships and obligations. The items on the survey dealing with women’s rights to college and job opportunities and the place of women in business are listed under the vocational, educational, and intellectual
The items about the right of women to have the same freedom and independence as a man are included under the freedom and independence subscale. The dating, courtship, and etiquette subscale includes items on the right of women to propose marriage and pay for date expenses. The drinking, swearing, and telling dirty jokes subscale includes the items that look at these behaviors and if they are acceptable for women compared to men.

One item is in the premarital sex subscale and includes the only item on sexual behavior. The last subscale marital relationships and obligations, includes items on the roles of males and females within the family and home.

The survey (Appendix C) consists of two parts: Background Information and Attitudes Toward Women’s Roles. The first section collected demographic information including age, class level, class status, major, gender, and race. The second section asked students to indicate their level of agreement about each statement by choosing one of the four responses, ranging from agree strongly to disagree strongly.

A pilot test of the survey was conducted following approval from the Institutional Review Board of Rowan University (Appendix A). A graduate assistant at Rowan University was given the survey in order to test the readability and construct validity of the instrument. The graduate assistant did not encounter any problems with the survey questions and the survey was emailed to randomly selected students. In the email was a link to Survey Monkey where students took the survey and their results were kept in a database and later exported to Excel. The survey took approximately
several minutes to complete. A reliability analysis was conducted using a Guttman Split-half coefficient which equaled .865, indicating a highly reliable instrument.

Data Collection

The students selected to complete the survey were Rowan undergraduate level students who were randomly selected. Students were separated into lists of Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors and then broken down into male and female. The students were then selected using nth selection. The survey was emailed to a group of 824 students. Since there was a low response rate after the first trial three more groups of 824 students were selected to receive the survey. The names of those students who already received the survey were removed from the list. There were 38 undeliverable emails due to full mailboxes so the undeliverable emails were deducted bringing the final sample of students to 786.

The survey (Appendix C) was emailed in February and March 2008. An email was sent out to students with a link to the survey; this also acted as the consent form (Appendix B) informing the student that they must be 18 years of age or older to complete the survey. If the student completed the survey that meant that they consented that they were of age to participate in the survey. All surveys were completed online using Survey Monkey. The returned responses did not have any identifying information on the survey. A reminder email was sent to students several days after the initial survey was emailed. A thank you note was included in the email reminder to the students who already responded and asked those who had not responded to please do so. The reminder was sent so more students would complete
the survey in order to yield a higher return rate. There were no incentives given to students to complete the survey.

Data Analysis

Class level, class status (part-time or full-time), major, age, gender, and race were the independent variables in this study. The major variable was changed to college and all majors were converted to the college the major fell under in order to get a more accurate count due to the varied responses of the students. The second part of the survey collected information for these variables. The dependent variables were the attitudes that students had toward women’s roles. Variations in students’ attitudes were reviewed based on each of the six independent variables using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Data were analyzed to calculate frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to study the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variables as noted in research question one. A Pearson product moment correlation was used to examine the data in regards to the second research question.
CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Profile of the Sample

The subjects that were used for this study were selected from a random sampling of students on a list of currently enrolled students during spring 2008 semester at Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ, in February and March 2008.

Table 4.1 contains demographic variables on age, class level, class status, college, gender and race of the 381 students who participated in the survey. Of the surveys emailed, 418 surveys were returned, 383 surveys were complete, and 381 surveys had valid data, yielding a return rate of 48.5%. The students were all females and males between the ages of 18 to 31 or more, with the majority being White, Non-Hispanic (83.5%) and almost half (44.6%) were between the ages of 21 to 24. The gender of the students who completed the survey were mainly women (67.2%). The class status of the students was almost all full-time status (92.7%). The students who completed the survey were mostly seniors (36.2%) and juniors (29.4%). The students’ majors varied and the top colleges in which the majors were from were Education (30.2%), Liberal Arts and Sciences (29.1%), and Communications (15.7%).
Table 4.1

Demographic Variables of Age, Class Level, Class Status, College, Gender and Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>N=381</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 or more</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 24</td>
<td>170</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 20</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>353</td>
<td></td>
<td>92.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAS</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undeclared</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>124</td>
<td></td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>256</td>
<td></td>
<td>67.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am Indian / Alaskan native</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian / Pacific Islander</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Hispanic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose not to indicate</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of the Data

Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of selected undergraduate female and male students at Rowan University toward women’s roles?

The survey items were categorized into the six subscales: a) areas of vocational, educational, and intellectual activities; b) freedom and independence; c) dating, courtship, and etiquette; d) drinking, swearing, and telling dirty jokes; e) premarital sex; and f) marital relationships and obligations. The data were analyzed to show how many students agreed strongly, agreed mildly, disagreed mildly, and disagreed strongly.

Table 4.2 contains the areas of vocational, educational, and intellectual roles. There were 79.2% of the students who agreed strongly that there should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex and 91.8% who disagreed strongly that sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.

Table 4.3 contains the areas of freedom and independence. There were 63.6% of the students who agreed strongly that the modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy and 71.4% of the students who disagreed strongly that a woman should not expect to go exactly the same places or have the same freedom of action as a man.

Table 4.4 contains the areas of dating, courtship, and etiquette. There were 73.7% of students who agreed that a woman should be free as a man to propose marriage and 61.3% agreed that women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.
Table 4.5 contains the areas of drinking, swearing, and telling dirty jokes. Students agreed 51.2% that swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man. There were 79.3% of students who disagreed that telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative and 76.4% disagreed that intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.

Table 4.6 contains the area of premarital sex. Almost a third of students (73.5%) disagreed with the statement that women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.

Table 4.7 contains the areas of marital relationships and obligations. There were 85.3% of students who agreed strongly that both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce and 79.6% agreed strongly that under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.

Table 4.2

*Student Attitudes in the Areas of Vocational, Educational and Intellectual Roles*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AS Freq</th>
<th>AS %</th>
<th>AM Freq</th>
<th>AM %</th>
<th>DM Freq</th>
<th>DM %</th>
<th>DS Freq</th>
<th>DS %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex.</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=380 SD=.596</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M=2.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=380 SD=.710</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M=2.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=376 SD=.834</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M=2.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.

\[ n=378 \quad SD=.917 \]
\[ M=2.15 \]

The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.

\[ n=378 \quad SD=.778 \]
\[ M=2.53 \]

It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.

\[ n=376 \quad SD=.756 \]
\[ M=2.57 \]

Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.

\[ n=378 \quad SD=.644 \]
\[ M=2.65 \]

On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.

\[ n=378 \quad SD=.628 \]
\[ M=2.66 \]

Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.

\[ n=378 \quad SD=.475 \]
\[ M=2.88 \]

Table 4.3

Student Attitudes in the Areas of Freedom and Independence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AS</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>DM</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>DS</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freq</td>
<td></td>
<td>Freq</td>
<td></td>
<td>Freq</td>
<td></td>
<td>Freq</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=379 SD=.832</td>
<td>M=2.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=372 SD=.815</td>
<td>M=1.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service. 

\[ n=375 \ SD=1.023 \]
\[ M=1.86 \]

A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man. 

\[ n=377 \ SD=.723 \]
\[ M=2.60 \]

Table 4.4

**Student Attitudes in the Areas of Dating, Courtship and Etiquette**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AS</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>DM</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>DS</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A woman should be free as a man to propose marriage.</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5

**Student Attitudes in the Areas of Drinking, Swearing and Telling Dirty Jokes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AS</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>DM</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>DS</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than of a man.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ n=378 \ SD=.873 \]
\[ M=2.15 \]
Table 4.6

**Student Attitudes in the Area of Premarital Sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AS Freq</th>
<th>AS %</th>
<th>AM Freq</th>
<th>AM %</th>
<th>DM Freq</th>
<th>DM %</th>
<th>DS Freq</th>
<th>DS %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=377 SD=1.012
M=2.08

Table 4.7

**Student Attitudes in the Areas of Marital Relationships and Obligations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AS Freq</th>
<th>AS %</th>
<th>AM Freq</th>
<th>AM %</th>
<th>DM Freq</th>
<th>DM %</th>
<th>DS Freq</th>
<th>DS %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=380 SD=.501
M=2.82

Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry. | 301 | 79.6 | 56 | 14.8 | 10 | 2.6 | 11 | 2.9 |

n=378 SD=.639
M=2.71

The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income. | 236 | 62.8 | 73 | 19.4 | 39 | 10.4 | 28 | 7.4 |

n=376 SD=.944
M=2.38

Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending rather than with desires for professional or business careers. | 14 | 3.7 | 45 | 11.9 | 119 | 31.5 | 200 | 52.9 |

n=378 SD=.828
M=2.34

Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers. | 13 | 3.5 | 38 | 10.1 | 107 | 28.5 | 218 | 58.0 |

n=376 SD=.808
M=2.41
In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children. 

\[ n=380 \quad SD=0.768 \]
\[ M=2.56 \]

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between students’ attitudes toward women’s roles and the following demographic information: age, class level, class status, college, gender, and race?

A Pearson product moment was calculated for the relationship between age, class level, class status, college, gender, and race and attitudes (see Tables 4.8-4.11). All correlations were moderate or below and only the three highest moderate correlations out of 20 and the bottom two scores were reported.

Table 4.8 presents the only statement listed under premarital sex. The statement “women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés” \( (r = .127, p = .013) \) indicates that there is a weak, yet significant, negative correlation between attitude and age.

Table 4.9 presents the two bottom scores with the weakest correlations and both statements were under class status. The first statement “social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men” \( (r = .106, p = 0.00) \) indicates that there is a weak, yet significant, positive correlation between attitude and class status. The statement “women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés” \( (r = -.105, p = 0.00) \) indicates that there is a weak, yet significant, negative correlation regarding attitude and class status (Table 4.9).
Table 4.8

Correlation between Age and Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.</td>
<td>-.127*</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.9

Correlation between Class Status and Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.</td>
<td>-.105*</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.</td>
<td>.106*</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The three highest moderate correlations were presented under gender in the statements regarding attitudes toward if men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted ($r = .380, p = 0.00$), if the intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men ($r = .363, p = 0.00$) and if the husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income ($r = .349, p = 0.00$) indicating that there is a moderate, yet significant, positive relationship between attitude and gender (Table 4.10).
Table 4.10

*Correlation between Gender and Attitudes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired.</td>
<td>0.380**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.</td>
<td>0.363**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.</td>
<td>0.349**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is insulting to women to have the “obey” clause remain in the marriage service.</td>
<td>0.340**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.</td>
<td>0.317**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing laundry.</td>
<td>0.304**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending rather than with desires for professional or business careers.</td>
<td>0.286**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.</td>
<td>0.285**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.</td>
<td>0.281**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.</td>
<td>0.270**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.</td>
<td>0.269**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.  

Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.  

On the average, women should be regarded less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.  

Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.  

There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex.  

Women should take increasingly responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.  

Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.  

Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.  

The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.  

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).  
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).  

Table 4.11  
Correlation between Race and Attitudes  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.</td>
<td>.246**</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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31
In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children. \( r = .176^{**} \) \( p = .001 \)

**Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed)**

A Pearson product moment was also calculated for the relationship between age, class level, college, and race and attitudes. A weak, yet significant, positive correlation was found regarding attitude and race for the statements regarding women should be encouraged not to be sexually intimate with anyone before marriage \( (r = .246, p = 0.00) \) and if the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children \( (r = .176, p = 0.00) \) (Table 4.11). No significant correlations between the class level or college and attitudes toward women’s roles were presented.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

The undergraduate female and male students' attitudes toward women's roles were examined through this study. The study also looked at demographic factors (age, class level, class status, college, gender and race) to see if there was a significant relationship between those factors and the attitudes studied. The sample consisted of a random sampling of undergraduate students at Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ, in February and March 2008.

The survey distributed included two parts: Background Information, and Attitudes Toward Women's Roles. The first section collected demographic information; the second section consisted of 25 Likert-type statements regarding attitudes toward women's roles. The survey was emailed using Survey Monkey and included a cover letter that also served as a consent form. The survey was emailed to 824 students (38 emails were undeliverable bringing the number of surveys to 786); 418 started the survey and 383 completed surveys were returned, and 381 surveys were valid, yielding a return rate of 48.5%. To analyze the data from the completed surveys, descriptive statistics and correlations were calculated using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software.
Discussion of the Findings

The data analysis suggests that most of the selected students had a more profeminist, egalitarian attitude rather than a traditional, conservative attitude. In scoring the items, a high score (3) indicates a profeminist, egalitarian attitude and a low score (0) indicates a more traditional, conservative attitude. The mean score for this survey was 2.356. For the individual questions, the level of agreement was fairly high for the statement regarding sons should be encouraged more than daughters to go to college with a score of 2.88 (see Table 4.2). Most subjects strongly disagreed with this statement which indicates a profeminist, egalitarian attitude. The lowest score was on the statement regarding swearing and obscenities are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man. This score was a 1.57 which was the lowest score indicating that students had a traditional, conservative attitude toward this particular statement (see Table 4.5).

In the area of vocational, educational, and intellectual activities, many students agreed strongly that there should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex and almost all students disagreed strongly that sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters indicating that the views were liberal. This may be due to many more women being in the work force instead of staying home and also more women are attending college now than previous years.

In the area of freedom and independence, most students agreed strongly that the modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy and many students disagreed strongly that a woman should not
expect to go exactly to the same places or have the same freedom of action as a man indicating that the views were liberal and students think that women should be just as privileged as men.

In the area of dating, courtship, and etiquette, many students agreed that a woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage and many also agreed that women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together indicating that views were liberal. This may be due to the combination of men’s willingness to let women contribute and women feeling like if she does let the man pay then she is giving the power over to him, something that the women of this generation would prefer not to do.

In the area of drinking, swearing, and telling dirty jokes, students agreed that swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man and there were many students who disagreed that telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative and many disagreed that intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men indicating that views were liberal, although, it seems that the students think that these areas were inappropriate in general.

In the area of premarital sex, most students disagreed with the statement that women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés indicating that student views were liberal. This may be due to the traditional dating patterns no longer the norm and society being much more open about the topic of sex.

In the area of marital relationships and obligations, almost all students agreed strongly that both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce
and many also agreed strongly that under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry indicating again that student views were liberal. This could be because many more women are independent and are now working outside the home and there is less time to accomplish the multiple tasks.

The attitudes of the students were overwhelmingly liberal: it was evident from the findings that students strongly agreed that women and men should be equal, receive the same encouragement to further their education, and be entitled to the same opportunities that men are entitled, specifically in the area of certain jobs and promotions. These findings support prior research by Loo (1998), Astin (1998) and Slevin and Wingrove (1983). Slevin and Wingrove (1983) stated in their research that younger women were more liberal than the older generations. Loo (1998) found that attitudes of both men and women toward women’s roles became more liberal over the years. Most of the subjects in this study reported the same liberal attitudes.

Conclusions

This study confirms the findings of prior research. The selected students in this study were more liberal in their attitudes and did not believe women should be confined to the home and family (Astin, 1998). Many students were interested in achievement (Stake & Rogers, 1989). The stress of juggling multiple roles is becoming more of an issue as women take on more challenges. Although it was not a surprise that women are liberal it was surprising that the current generation of male students have liberal views toward women’s roles as well. The students’ attitudes may be an indicator, but there still is an uncertainty as to whether these undergraduate
students are really aware of the reality of these issues. It can be concluded from this study that if this trend continues female and males will continue to be even more liberal than conservative in the coming years.

Recommendations for Practice

1. Higher education institutions should incorporate some type of support group through a Women's and Gender Studies program for female and male undergraduate students so they can discuss gender roles and how to handle the stress accompanying expanded societal roles.

2. A new updated survey should be created to survey students in the future. The benefit of using an online survey compared to a paper-based survey was that email responses were received from some students regarding the survey. One student thought that the survey was sexist and that there should have been more options or at least an option so students can respond. A second student thought that the survey was biased and that students should be interviewed or the survey should consist of open-ended questions. A third student responded that he thought some of the questions were circumstantial in nature and that there are factors that one must know in order to answer some of the questions. The same student even went into detail about his own living situation with his girlfriend and how he is the one working full-time and does the cooking and cleaning. He thought that the stereotypes in the survey are not evident at this time and that a woman should do whatever she wants or does not want to do.
Recommendations for Further Research

After completing this study, the researcher suggests the following:

1. Further studies should be done by interviewing undergraduate students to learn more about what they are thinking regarding women’s roles and why.

2. A study could be done concentrating on non-traditional female students to see if the attitudes toward women’s roles are any different than those of traditional students.

3. A study can be done focusing on graduate students and their attitudes toward women’s roles.

4. A comparison study can be conducted to compare the views of female undergraduate and graduate students.
REFERENCES


http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/review_of_highereducation/v021/21.2astin.html


http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23413243/?GT1=43001


http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23244363?GT1=43001


APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter
January 2, 2008

Alicia Groatman
1312 Mays Landing Road
Folsom, NJ 08037

Dear Alicia Groatman:

In accordance with the University’s IRB policies and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to inform you that the Rowan University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your project:

IRB application number: 2008-101

Project Title: Attitudes Toward Women’s Roles: A Study of Selected Undergraduate Students at Rowan University

In accordance with federal law, this approval is effective for one calendar year from the date of this letter. If your research project extends beyond that date or if you need to make significant modifications to your study, you must notify the IRB immediately. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Please retain copies of consent forms for this research for three years after completion of the research.

If, during your research, you encounter any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects, you must report this immediately to the Associate Provost for Research (856-256-4053).

If you have any questions, please contact Karen Heiser (heiser@rowan.edu or 856-256-4167).

Sincerely,

Roberta Dihoff, Ph.D.
Chair, Rowan University IRB

c: Sisco, Burton, Educational Leadership, Education Hall

Office of the Associate Provost for Research
Memorial Hall
201 Mullica Hill Road
Glassboro, NJ 08028-1701
856-256-4053
856-256-4425 fax
APPENDIX B

Consent Form
Dear Student:

For my graduate studies in higher education, I am conducting a survey for my Seminar/Internship Higher Education Administration II course at Rowan University. My survey explores Rowan students' attitudes toward women's roles. I understand that your time is precious, but would greatly appreciate your participation. This survey is designed to take only a few minutes of your time.

While your participation in this survey is voluntary and you are not required to answer any of the questions herein, your cooperation and participation are important to the success of the project and are greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate, please understand that all responses are strictly confidential and no personally identifiable information is being requested.

You must be 18 years of age to complete this survey. Your completion of this survey constitutes informed consent and your willingness to participate.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at groatman@rowan.edu or Dr. Burton Sisco at sisco@rowan.edu.

To complete the survey, please use the URL below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=tQf6ifTCbhZPQ3Pz_2fyTGCw_3d_3d

The deadline to complete the survey is March 16, 2008.

Thank you,
Alicia Groatman, Graduate Student
APPENDIX C

Survey Instrument
## Survey of Student's Attitudes Toward Women's Roles

### 1. Part 1: Background Information

**Survey of Student's Attitudes toward Women's Roles**

While your participation in this survey is voluntary and you are not required to answer any of the questions herein, your cooperation and participation are important to the success of the project and are greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate, please understand that all responses are strictly confidential and no personally identifiable information is being requested. You must be 18 years of age to complete this survey. Your completion of this survey constitutes informed consent and your willingness to participate.

1. **Age:**
   - [ ] 18 to 20
   - [ ] 21 to 24
   - [ ] 25 to 30
   - [ ] 31 or more

2. **Class level:**
   - [ ] Freshman
   - [ ] Sophomore
   - [ ] Junior
   - [ ] Senior
   - [ ] Other (please specify)

3. **Class status:**
   - [ ] Full-time
   - [ ] Part-time

4. **Major:**
   - [ ]

5. **Gender:**
   - [ ] Male
   - [ ] Female

6. **Race:**
   - [ ] African American
   - [ ] American Indian or Alaskan Native
   - [ ] Asian or Pacific Islander
   - [ ] Puerto Rican
   - [ ] Other Hispanic
   - [ ] White, Non-Hispanic
   - [ ] Choose not to indicate

### 2. Part 2: Attitudes toward Women's Roles

**Survey of Student's Attitudes toward Women's Roles**
## Survey of Student's Attitudes Toward Women's Roles

1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than of a man.
   - Agree Strongly
   - Agree Mildly
   - Disagree Mildly
   - Disagree Strongly

2. Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.
   - Agree Strongly
   - Agree Mildly
   - Disagree Mildly
   - Disagree Strongly

3. Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.
   - Agree Strongly
   - Agree Mildly
   - Disagree Mildly
   - Disagree Strongly

4. Telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative.
   - Agree Strongly
   - Agree Mildly
   - Disagree Mildly
   - Disagree Strongly

5. Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.
   - Agree Strongly
   - Agree Mildly
   - Disagree Mildly
   - Disagree Strongly

6. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.
   - Agree Strongly
   - Agree Mildly
   - Disagree Mildly
   - Disagree Strongly

7. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service.
   - Agree Strongly
   - Agree Mildly
   - Disagree Mildly
   - Disagree Strongly
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A woman should be free as a man to propose marriage.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Survey of Student's Attitudes Toward Women's Roles

15. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.
- Agree Strongly
- Agree Mildly
- Disagree Mildly
- Disagree Strongly

16. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.
- Agree Strongly
- Agree Mildly
- Disagree Mildly
- Disagree Strongly

17. Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.
- Agree Strongly
- Agree Mildly
- Disagree Mildly
- Disagree Strongly

18. The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.
- Agree Strongly
- Agree Mildly
- Disagree Mildly
- Disagree Strongly

19. Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending rather than with desires for professional or business careers.
- Agree Strongly
- Agree Mildly
- Disagree Mildly
- Disagree Strongly

20. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.
- Agree Strongly
- Agree Mildly
- Disagree Mildly
- Disagree Strongly

21. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.
- Agree Strongly
- Agree Mildly
- Disagree Mildly
- Disagree Strongly
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<tr>
<td>22. On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.</td>
<td>Agree Strongly</td>
<td>Agree Mildly</td>
<td>Disagree Mildly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>