

*National
Organization of
Mothers
Of
Twins
Clubs, Inc.*

**SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT SURVEY FOR
MOTHERS OF MULTIPLES**

RESEARCHER: National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.

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PURPOSE: To determine what percentage of mothers of multiples are employed and to answer these questions: Do mothers of multiples work for financial reasons or for fulfillment? Do mothers of multiples feel their working affects their children? How do they manage? How does working add stress to their already stressful lives?

METHOD: This survey was to be completed only by mothers of multiples who are employed or who have ever been employed since the birth of their multiples. It was distributed to the membership of NOMOTC. 643 responses were received.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. At the time of the survey, 46% were employed full-time, 41% were employed part-time; and 13% were not employed.
2. The mother's ages were: <20 (0.5%); 21-30 (23%); 31-40 (61%); 41-50 (13%); 51-60 (2%); and >60 (0.5%).
3. Twintypes of the participants included: Identical girls (15%); fraternal girls (20%); identical boys (16%); fraternal boys (16%); boy/girl (26%); triplets (2%); and unknown twintype boy or girl (5%).
4. 2% of the respondents had more than one set of multiples.
5. The ages of the multiples at the time of the survey were: 0-2 (27%); 2-4 (33%); 5-8 (21%); 9-12 (8%); 13-18 (4%); and >18 (7%).
6. At the time of the survey, 94% of the mothers were married; 1% were separated; 3% were divorced; 1% were widowed; and 1% had never married.
7. 91% said their husband was also employed, while 3% said he was not.
8. 21% said their income was higher than their husband's income. 7% of these women said that this had caused a problem in their marriage.
9. 9% of the respondents were working more than one job.

ABOUT THEIR JOB:

1. The participants' main source of income were in these fields: Arts (1%); Business (17%); Clerical (17%); Communication (4%); Education (16%); Government (4%); Law (2%); Medicine (17%); Sales (10%); Skilled Labor (4%); Technology (4%); Transportation (2%); and Unskilled Labor (2%).
2. 47% had flexible schedules, while the others did not.
3. 18% work weekends regularly; 32% work weekends sometimes.
4. 15% work nights regularly; 26% occasionally work nights.
5. 11% have to work on holidays; 22% sometimes have to work on holidays.
6. 15% were presently self-employed; 4% had been self-employed in the past.
7. 34% felt that the BENEFITS were one of the main reasons they worked.

WORK AND THE BIRTH OF MULTIPLES:

1. 87% had been employed before the birth of their multiples.
2. 46% had planned to go back to work after the birth; 37% planned to go back later; and 17% did not plan to return to work after the birth of the multiples.
3. The following is the amount of time the participants stayed off work after the delivery: 0-1 mo. (8%); 1-6 mos. (49%); 7-12 mos. (11%); 1-2 yrs. (10%); 3-5 yrs. (10%); > 5 yrs. (10%)
4. The respondents cited these reasons for their return to work:
To resume career (13%); to maintain identity other than "MOM" (11%); to be with adults (12%); financial responsibilities (23%); enjoy it (14%); to earn money for extras (15%); timing was right (5%); and to keep their job (7%). More than one response was accepted for this question.
5. 55% first worked only part-time when they returned to work.
6. 60% returned to the same job after the birth of their multiples.
7. Those who didn't return to the same job gave these reasons:
needed further education/training (1%); needed better pay (5%); needed a more flexible schedule (19%); and their position had been filled (7%).
8. 23% said they didn't return to work for a while because of the cost of having multiples in child care.
9. Only 19% said they WANTED to work right away.
10. 38% said they only wanted to return to work after the multiples were in school.
11. 69% said their work gave them a sense of fulfillment they couldn't find at home.
12. Those not working who still had children living at home said they weren't working because:
Child care was too hard to arrange (17%); Child care was too expensive (22%); they enjoyed just being a "MOM" (27%); there was no financial need (8%); and it was their "choice" (36%).

CHILD CARE:

1. The respondents had the following types of child care arrangements:
Day care center (16%); husband watches children (16%); extended family member (17%); before/after school child care (4%); paid sitter (34%); and N/A (13%).
2. 34% received a price break because of two or more children in care.
3. Only 21% felt that the multiples were sick more often since Mom went back to work.
4. 5% felt that their multiple faked illnesses to get their attention.
5. After the initial adjustment, most multiples (82%) seemed content to be away from Mom while she worked.

STRESS OF WORKING AND MOTHERING:

1. Only 6% of MOMs had to complete additional schooling to return to work after the birth of their multiples.
2. 23% resented the fact that they had to work because of finances.
3. 10% had to bring work home with them on a regular basis; 29% had to do this only occasionally.
4. 62% felt pressure to be a "Super Mom."
5. Those who answered yes to #4 felt the pressure to be a Super Mom came from:
themselves (51.5%); their husband (7%); their kids (3%); their job (2%); their friends (1%); and from their extended family (2%).
6. 63% said they found most days to be stressful.
7. 67% said their days OFF were stressful because of all the things they tried to get done.
8. MOMs said they coped with their guilt from being away from their family by:
Over-indulging their wishes (8%); promising more time with them on weekends (4%); yelling (8%); and just trying to make the best of it (61%).

- 9. Housework was done by the following people:
 Mom does it ALL (22%); Dad helps a lot (21%); Dad helps some (26%); kids help (4%);
 family effort (17%); and hired help (8%).
- 10. Those with hired help, had them come regularly (68%) or as needed (32%).
- 11. 58% get time off to be with sick children.
- 12. 49% of husbands took time off work to be with sick children; 26% had jobs that wouldn't allow
 it; and 14% didn't want to stay with sick kids.
- 13. Only 31% said they ate out several times each week.

MOM'S HEALTH:

- 1. 46% said they found their own health to be deteriorating because of trying to do so much (i.e.,
 they had more headaches, colds, back aches, etc.).
- 2. 27% had sought medical help only to be told that their symptoms were stress-related.
- 3. 15% had sought outside professional care to deal with the stress they were under.

CONCLUSION:

Working mothers of multiples work outside the home for the same reasons other moms do - financial needs, enjoyment and fulfillment, and "to get out of the house!" Their children seem to thrive the same as stay-at-home moms' kids but may miss their mom's companionship and eat a lot of "take-out" food. The stress is always there but MOMs find many different ways to cope with it. The main thing that is missing for working mothers of multiples is time for themselves!

Please see the many comments listed in the Fall 1994 article in *MOTC's Notebook*, "Employment Survey for Mothers of Multiples."