



Workin' Moms: A TV show portraying the financial and psychological issues of modern motherhood?

By Jill Çakmak supervised by Dr Antonia Mackay



Abstract

This project explored the financial and mental health difficulties of modern motherhood in comparison with the representation in the Netflix show *Workin' Moms* in the period 2012 to 2020. The Canadian show follows 4 mothers who start to get back to work after their maternity leave. To compare the media working mothers were interviewed to prove or disprove the portrayal of the ones from the Netflix show. General social understanding was evaluated through a questionnaire, to compare results with the research of experts such as Tina Miller in 'Making sense of Motherhood' (2005) and the Psychiatrist Ian Brockington in 'Motherhood and Mental Health' (1996) who tried to capture the difficulties of western motherhood.

"Your baby calling nanny "mom", yet? You think she likes it?"

('Pilot'
(2017) *Workin' Moms*,
season 1, episode 1.
Netflix)



Methodologies

- Questionnaire about working mothers, mental health and financial issues
- Interview with mothers about their experience when getting back to work
- Expert Interview about past experience with mothers and their children
- Secondary research of Sociologists specialising in gender studies
- Secondary research of mental health and maternity
- Secondary research of the financial circumstances of mothers in the US, UK and Canada



Results

- The research recognised that the TV show **successfully** communicates realistic ideals of motherhood, highlighting certain issues about **mental health** and **stress** related to the workplace and the household.
- The **financial aspects** of motherhood were not clearly outlined by Netflix's show; its **portrayal** is **limited** and does not consider underrepresented groups and low-income families.

Finally, changes must take place in order to support mothers in their identity change (from woman to mother) at the workplace, in the household and within the general social construct to limit stress and allay the potential judgement and stigmatisation within social interactions.

"I've always had a professional career, but suddenly [...] I was treated like I didn't have a brain because I was now a mom."
(a working Mom)



References

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